

HIV HEALTH AND SUPPORT SERVICES - HS

Broward County continues to be a county with one of the highest HIV/AIDS populations in the United States. From initial surveillance reporting through December 2007, 24,257 Broward County residents have been diagnosed with AIDS or HIV (non-AIDS), with 14,357 (69%) persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). Among living PLWHA, 7,680 have AIDS (53%) and 6,677 have HIV (non-AIDS (47%). For FY 2008-2009, Broward County received \$15.1 million in Ryan White Part A funding under HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006. This source of funding continues to be the primary funding mechanism for health and support services for people living with AIDS and HIV in Broward County.

The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006 is set to sunset on September 30, 2009. **The Broward County Board of County Commissioners urges** Congress to reauthorize the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006 for an additional four year period.

Funding allocations for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006 are largely based on a formula which only takes into consideration the place of residence of persons at the time of initial diagnosis. Under current law, if a person diagnosed with HIV in one area of the country moves to a different area of the country, the allocation is not transferred to that new area, but remains at the point of diagnosis. This is referred to as the "migration factor". It is estimated that thirty-four percent (34%) of all persons in Broward County with a positive diagnosis were tested elsewhere; a policy shift which results in a severe financial burden on Broward County. **The Broward County Board of County Commissioners urges** Congress to revisit funding disparities as a result of the migration factor, and continue the "hold harmless provision" for the original Eligible Metropolitan Areas hardest hit by the HIV epidemic.

The growing gap between increasing HIV/AIDS cases and fluctuating funding creates significant challenges in sustaining access to high quality HIV care. Although Broward County, as an Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA), is aggressive in achieving efficiencies in the use of Part A funds, the system of care is reaching its critical mass. Without additional funding, the EMA will be forced to consider the rationing of life-sustaining medical care and treatment to meet the documented increased demand for health related services. **The Broward County Board of County Commissioners supports** full funding of the FY09 grant application in the amount of \$16.5 million, which will support stabilizing the lives of persons living with HIV/AIDS by increasing access to core medical and support services and housing through increased funding of the Ryan White Care Act and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA).

Formula funding for Ryan White Part A is based on the numbers of diagnosed cases in an EMA. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) receives these numbers from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) who, in turn, receives them from The Florida Department of Health (FDOH). Due to a switch from paper reporting to electronic reporting and an error derived from that transition, FDOH significantly underreported Broward County's cases for calendar year 2007. The corrected numbers were not provided to the CDC until past their reporting deadline. As result Broward County's numbers were underrepresented. **The Broward County Board of County Commissioners urges** the CDC to allow for revisions to their numbers based on mitigating circumstances.

The Broward County Board of County Commissioners urges Congress to increase funding for the Health Resources and Service Administration for its Ryan White Part A Formula,

Supplement and Minority AIDS Initiative programs in order to adequately address the HIV/AIDS needs of the community.

The Broward County Board of County Commissioners strongly supports development and implementation of a National AIDS Strategy for the United States. The Strategy should be designed to reduce HIV incidence, increase access to HIV-related care, and reduce racial disparities in the epidemic through:

- reliance on evidence based programs;
- ambitious and credible treatment targets and annual reporting on progress towards achievement;
- identification of clear priorities across federal agencies, assignment of responsibilities and development of timelines;
- inclusion of all elevated risk groups, specifically African Americans and gay men;
- addressing of social factors that are associated with increased risk of infection;
- strengthening of research efforts;
- involvement of all sectors including governmental, private, research, community, civil rights, faith based, and people living with AIDS.

The Board also supports increased funding for core medical services consisting of AIDS pharmaceutical assistance, outpatient/ambulatory health services, oral health care, medical case management, mental health services, medical nutrition therapy, and substance abuse services-outpatient. Increased funding of support services is also supported for food bank, medical transportation, legal services and outreach services. Furthermore, **the Broward County Board of County Commissioners supports** all of the following:

- HIV testing of inmates upon incarceration in order to reduce the impact of transmission;
- increased funding of the Ryan White Care Act;
- continued funding for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program to ensure that pharmaceutical assistance provided under the Ryan White Part A program is only used as a last resort.
- full funding of the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program to meet the housing need for people living with HIV/AIDS and eliminate current waiting lists;
- rapid development of regulations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to implement the recent change in law that allows people living with HIV to enter the U.S. as visitors or immigrants.