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COMMISSION ON HIV



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HIV PREVENTION PLANNING WORKGROUP Virtual Meeting

Agenda and meeting packet will be available prior to the meeting at <http://hiv.lacounty.gov/Planning-Priorities-and-Allocations-Committee>

Wednesday, July 26, 2023
4:00PM-5:30PM (PST)

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**PREVENTION PLANNING WORKGROUP
Virtual Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, July 26, 2023 @ 4:00 – 5:30pm**

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AGENDA

- 1. Welcome and Introductions (4:00-4:10 pm)**
- 2. COH Executive Director/Staff Report (4:10-4:20pm)**
 - a. COH Bylaws Review Taskforce | UPDATES
- 3. Co-Chairs' Report (4:20-4:30 pm)**
 - a. Planning, Priorities and Allocations Committee June 18 Meeting
- 4. Begin Review of Prevention Planning Standards (4:30-5:15)**
- 5. Next Steps and Agenda Development for Next Meeting (5:15-5:20 pm)**
- 6. Public Comment + Announcements (5:20-5:30 pm)**
- 7. Adjournment (5:30 pm)**



VIRTUAL MEETING—PREVENTION PLANNING WORKGROUP (PPW)
Wednesday, May 24, 2023 | 4:00-5:30PM
MEETING SUMMARY

Attendees:

Dr. William King (Co-Chair)	Kevin Donnelly	Beverly
Miguel Martinez (Co-Chair)	Richard Salazar	David
Greg Wilson (Co-chair)	Vicki	Amanda Wahnich
Joseph Green	Robert Aguayo	
Commission on HIV (COH) Staff: Cheryl Barrit, Jose Rangel-Garibay, Lizette Martinez		
Division of HIV and STD Programs (DHSP) Staff: Pamela Ogata, Paulina Zamudio,		

1. Welcome and Introductions

Miguel Martinez, Co-Chair, welcomed attendees and led introductions.

2. Co-Chairs’ Report

a. Planning, Priorities, and Allocations (PP&A) Committee May 16 Meeting

- M. Martinez provided a brief recap of the PP&A held on May 16. The meeting included an update on the Prevention Planning Workgroup’s progress on status neutral recommendations,
- Meeting highlights included a discussion on prevention and its role within the PP&A committee, proposed reallocations for the 2023 fiscal year that will be moved to the full body Commission on HIV (COH) meeting due to lack of quorum and a submission deadline, and a discussion on the second unmet needs report focusing on individuals out of care. There was also a discussion on Medi-Cal expansion to individuals ages 26-49 years beginning January 2024 and impacts on allocations and services.
- The next PP&A meeting will be Tuesday, June 20 at 1:00-3:00pm at the Vermont Corridor.

3. Continue Status Neutral Discussion and Recommendations

- M. Martinez provided a recap of the initial discussion around status neutral from the March PPW meeting.
- M. Martinez shared the Prevention Planning Workgroup – Status Neutral Recommendations document that reflected the CDC Status Neutral key points along with PPW’s recommended edits specific for Los Angeles County; see meeting packet for details. Key recommendations include incorporating STIs,

focusing on the entire service delivery system and specifying priority populations.

- M. Martinez reminded the workgroup that the COH had previously developed a Comprehensive HIV Continuum Framework that encompasses prevention and care strategies but also include the social determinants of health; see meeting packet for the framework.
- A new graphic utilizing the CDC Status Neutral Framework PPW recommendations and Comprehensive HIV Continuum Framework was created to encompass the workgroups vision of status neutral for LA County; see meeting packet for the Status Neutral HIV and STI Service Delivery System framework. Minor edits were suggested to name the social determinants of health at the bottom of the graphic and include STI into the top double-sided arrow. The framework will be presented at the next PP&A meeting.
- Commission staff, L. Martinez, provided an update on potential speakers for capacity building opportunities identified in the Knowledge, Attitudes and Beliefs (KAB) survey. Speaker recommendations were provided at the March PPW meeting and staff has begun reaching out to secure speakers. Essential Access Health was contacted for the Sexual Health/STI training, and the PrEP training will be provided at the November annual meeting to ensure all Commissioners receive the information.
- Dr. King requested a follow up presentation from SAPC on the Syringe Services Programs for the July PPW meeting to gather more info on progress to date including expansion efforts, as well as policies and procedures around HIV/STIs (including screening, referrals, linkages, etc.). P. Zamudio recommended reaching out to Dr. Sid Puri for the requested presentation.
- M. Martinez mentioned that the Universal Standards were currently posted for public comment. C. Barrit, COH Executive Director, reminded the group that the Universal Standards form the foundation for all service standards and include the Patient Bill of Rights and that the Standards and Best Practices (SBP) Committee is committed to reviewing them biannually to make sure they are up to date. The SBP committee also works collaboratively with the Consumer Caucus to ensure consumer input. Public comment period ends on June 5th.
- Dr. King asked C. Barrit asked how other Committees or Caucus feel about incorporating status neutral approaches into their work. C. Barrit noted all committees and caucus embrace status neutral and potential opportunities that status neutral brings to the COH.

4. 2023 Revised Workplan Review

M. Martinez presented the revised 2023 workplan for approval. The workplan was approved by consensus. See meeting packet for details.

5. Next Steps and Agenda Development for Next Meeting

- Commission staff will reach out Dr. Puri to schedule an updated presentation around SAPC's syringe services programs and policies related to HIV prevention and care.
- Begin review of the prevention service standards. Staff to share standards ahead of the July PPW meeting.
- Dr. King will share examples of status neutral programs for feedback ahead of the next PP&A meeting.

6. Public Comment + Announcements – P. Zamudio asked the group if agencies are getting any information/news about any high-risk behaviors or activities, access to services and general feelings towards Mpox within their respective communities as agencies may hear trends before DHSP does. She noted DPH will be launching the new MPox campaign ahead of pride season and it would be great to get public feedback on strategies. P. Zamudio added the importance of hearing about high-risk activities from providers, particularly underground sex parties and human trafficking, to develop strategies to address these issues. Strategies for navigating interventions with underground sex parties were discussed. P. Zamudio also noted an increase in the use of “poppers” and the impact on risk taking behaviors. R. Aguayo recommended providing key questions on Mpox to providers to focus the conversation to get needed feedback.

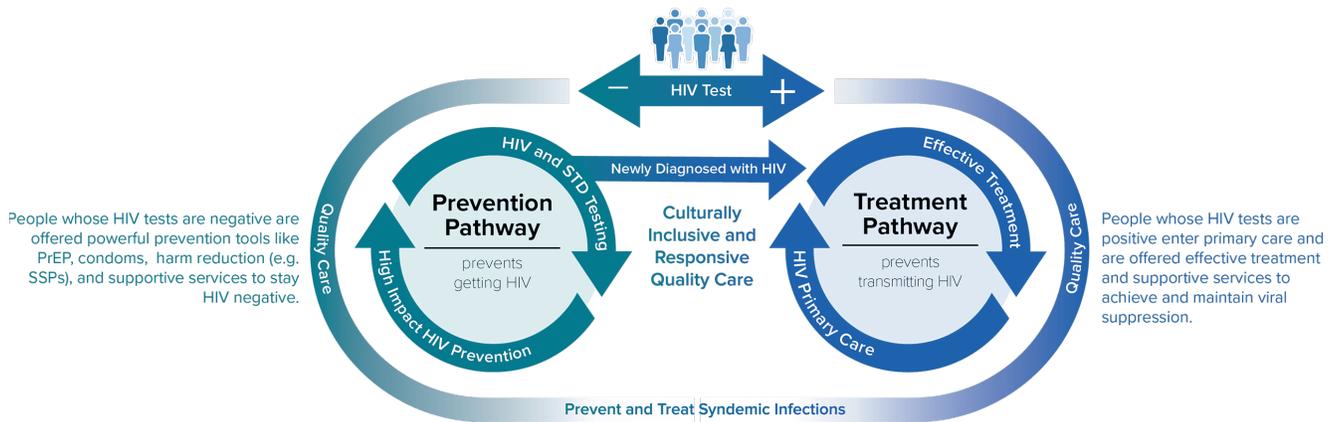
7. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned by M. Martinez.



Prevention Planning Workgroup – Status Neutral Recommendations

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/policies/issue-brief/Issue-Brief-Status-Neutral-HIV-Care.pdf>

Status Neutral HIV Prevention and Care



Follow CDC guidelines to test people for HIV. Regardless of HIV status, quality care is the foundation of HIV prevention and effective treatment. Both pathways provide people with the tools they need to stay healthy and stop HIV.

CDC	Recommended edits
Does not include STIs	Includes STIs
Status Neutral HIV Prevention and Care	Status Neutral HIV & STI Service Delivery System
<p>Status neutral HIV service delivery is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare that encompasses HIV testing, treatment, and prevention services. • HIV treatment and prevention that is offered alongside other local medical healthcare services frequently used by the community—for example, sexual health, transgender and other LGBTQ-focused care, healthcare for people who use drugs, and general primary care. • Service delivery that recognizes and includes broader social services that support the path to optimal HIV and other health outcomes—like housing, food, transportation, employment assistance, 	<p>Status neutral HIV & STI Service Delivery System provides increased emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service delivery - supportive services for both HIV+ and HIV- individuals. Need to identify resources to support HIV- individuals in need of supportive services (e.g., housing, mental health, etc.) • Culturally affirming, stigma-free HIV and STI delivery system – with providers who are supportive and provide a culturally affirming and stigma-free service delivery system. Increase need for providers with lived experience and are racially/culturally/ethnically diverse



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<p>harm reduction services, and mental health and substance use disorder services—regardless of the HIV status of the people seeking care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Culturally affirming, stigma-free HIV treatment and prevention, delivered by supportive and accepting providers who have been trained to recognize and address implicit racial/ethnic, sexual orientation, and other biases (thoughts and feelings that providers are not consciously aware of), and provided in settings that consider and prioritize a positive experience for the person seeking services.	
<p>Target Populations: Focus on HIV- or HIV+</p>	<p>Target Populations: Focus on priority populations identified via data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Latinx men who have sex with men (MSM)• Black/African American MSM• Transgender persons• Cisgender women of color• People who inject drugs (PWID)• People under the age of 30• People living with HIV who are 50 years of age or older



Existing DPH Programs

	Existing Program	Program Recommendations
Don't Think Know	<p>Free at home Chlamydia and Gonorrhea testing for cisgender women and transgender men ages 12 to 24. Vaginal swab test only. Website also includes free condoms & treatment resources</p> <p>Expanding to build partnerships with community agencies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Host or participate in outreach events• Be mail sites for clients• Become direct distributor (4-5 opportunities) <p>Software platform can used to expand other home testing options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Urine, anal, oral specimens (opens the door for cisgender males/trans women)• Other STDs (HIV, Trichomoniasis, syphilis, etc.)	
Syringe Exchange Programs	<p>Total of 7 Engagement and Overdose Prevention Hubs throughout LAC funded by SAPC. Uses a combination of fixed sites, mobile sites (mobile van near another agency), and field-based sites (engagement with encampments)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide needs based/low threshold access to syringes• Provide sharps containers and education on disposal• Provides Naloxone• Provides safe injection supplies (tourniquets, alcohol swabs, water, band aids, cotton balls, cookers)• Provides safe smoking supplies (pipes, lip balm, straight shooters)• Provides wound care supplies	



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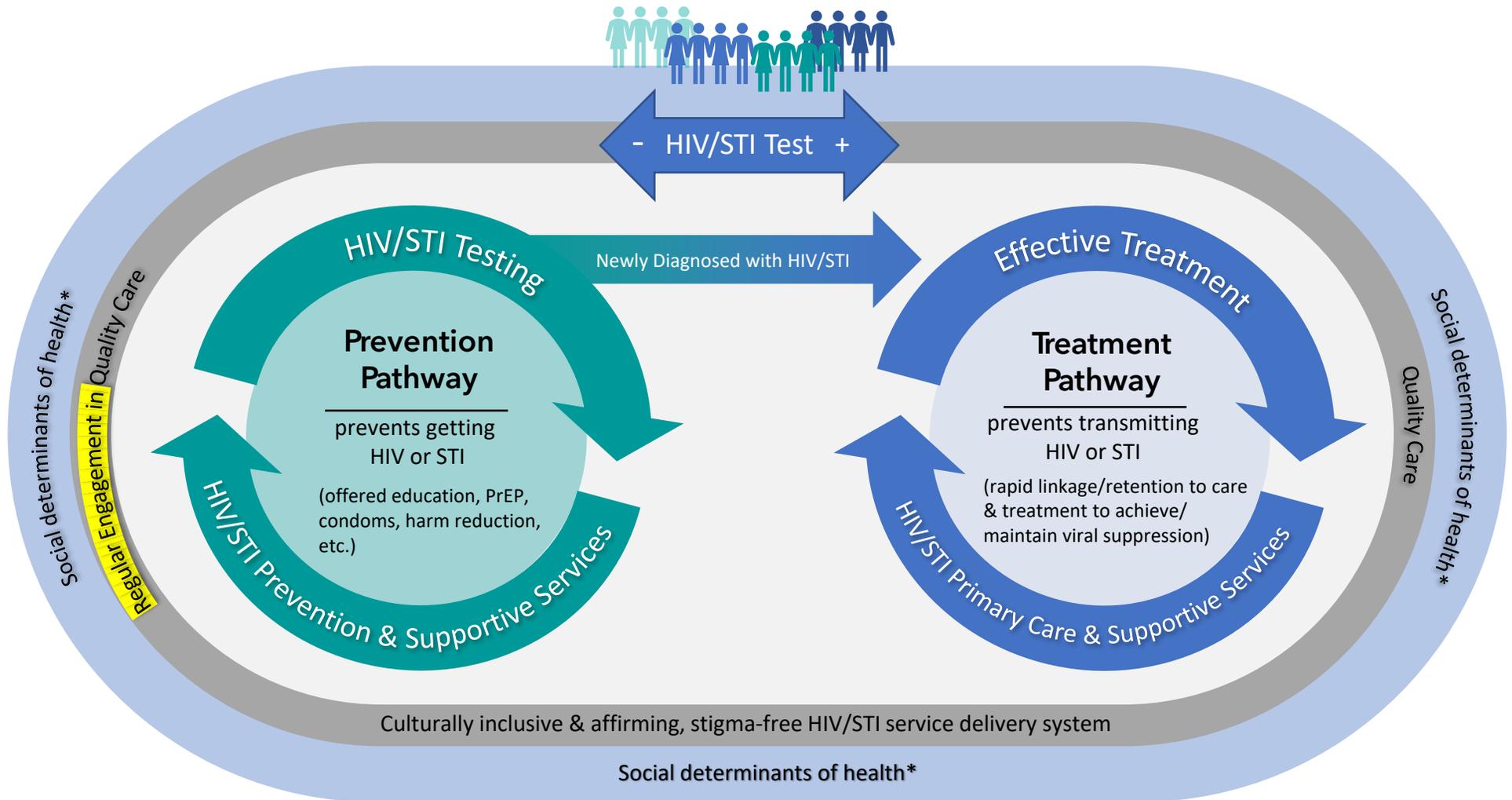
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- Provides direct or referred testing for: HIV and HCV
- Provides referrals for treatment: HIV/HCV, substance use treatment, specialized mental health, or medical care.

Challenges:

- Staff comfort level in discussing HIV/STI testing and how/where to refer patients for treatment
- Adding HIV/STI testing seems overwhelming given the number of harm reduction services that are provided
- Difficulty gathering individual level data on patients (SAPC utilize aggregate data)

Status Neutral HIV and STI Service Delivery System



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Revised 7/17/23

* Social determinants of health include economic stability, education access and quality, health care access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, and social and community context.

See [Healthy People 2030](#) for more details on the social determinants of health.



LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON HIV PREVENTION SERVICES STANDARDS



Approved the Commission on HIV 06/14/18

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background 2

Universal Standards.....8

Core Prevention Components 11

 Assessment 17

 HIV/STD Testing and Retesting 21

 Linkage to HIV Medical Care and Biomedical Prevention 24

 Referral and Linkages to Non-biomedical Prevention 27

 Retention and Adherence to Medical Care, ART, and Other Prevention Services 30

Expert Reviewers..... 32

Key Resources and Documents Used..... 35

BACKGROUND

PURPOSE: HIV Prevention Service Standards outline the essential elements of service delivery a provider agency must adhere to when implementing HIV prevention services. The purpose of the service standards is to ensure consistent high-quality service delivery throughout Los Angeles County. Service standards establish the minimal level of service delivery. Providers are encouraged to exceed this minimal level if able to, given their capacity and scope.

Commented [ML1]: Include STI throughout where applicable/appropriate

A multitude of factors at the structural-, environmental-, interpersonal-, and individual-level impact the risk of HIV infection. Therefore, a multitude of strategies (e.g. housing, employment, social marketing, counseling, condom distribution, etc.) may also serve to prevent the acquisition of HIV. Because it is not feasible to create standards for every potential prevention service, the HIV Prevention Service Standards described in this document focus on ensuring that every individual at risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV infection is successfully connected to and retained in the prevention service(s) that are appropriate for them at any given point in time.

Commented [ML2]: Consider including language iterating STI infection increases risk for HIV acquisition.

Additionally, because there are many different types of organizations that may provide prevention services, it should be understood that not every category of prevention standards described herein will be applicable to all agencies. For example, an agency that provides HIV/STD testing only, will not necessarily be expected to provide adherence services for clients who are accessing PrEP.

A NEW ERA OF HIV PREVENTION: The overall approach to HIV prevention has shifted drastically in recent years, due largely to major improvements in HIV medication, or antiretroviral therapy (ART). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “people who take ART daily as prescribed and achieve and maintain an undetectable viral load have effectively no risk of sexually transmitting the virus to an HIV-negative partner. When ART results in viral suppression, defined as less than 200 copies/ml or undetectable levels, it prevents sexual HIV transmission.”¹

Commented [MM3]: Need to also include status neutral to this section

Commented [ML4]: Consider including specific mention of “U=U”

Treatment advancements have also ushered in a new era of HIV prophylaxis for HIV-negative individuals, specifically HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and HIV post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). PrEP is a daily pill taken by individuals who are HIV-negative before they are potentially exposed to HIV. PrEP, when taken consistently, is a highly effective prevention intervention. PEP is a 28-day course of an antiretroviral regimen taken within 72 hours of a high-risk HIV exposure to prevent HIV seroconversion.

Commented [MM5]: Update with Injectable PrEP

Given these scientific breakthroughs, the central tenets of today’s HIV prevention efforts focus on biomedical prevention interventions, including the viral suppression of HIV-positive individuals and widespread access to PrEP, particularly for populations that are

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/dcl/dcl/092717.html>

disproportionately impacted by HIV disease (i.e., Black and Latinx gay/bisexual/same-gender loving men, and transgender women of color).

DEFINITION OF HIV PREVENTION SERVICES: HIV Prevention Services are those services used alone or in combination to prevent the transmission of HIV. *Biomedical* HIV prevention refers to HIV prevention methods that use antiretroviral treatment (ART) to decrease the risk of HIV transmission by reducing the viral load of people living with HIV (PLWH) and/or by reducing the susceptibility of HIV infection among HIV-negative individuals (via PrEP and PEP).

GOALS OF HIV PREVENTION EFFORTS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY: Aligned with the Los Angeles County Comprehensive HIV Plan (2017-2021)² and the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS)³, the overarching goals of HIV prevention efforts in Los Angeles County are to:

Commented [ML7]: Update as needed to align with new integrated plan

1. Reduce new HIV infections, and
2. Reduce HIV-related disparities and health inequities.

Furthermore, these service standards support the Los Angeles County HIV/AIDS Strategy for 2020 and Beyond goals:

1. Reduce annual HIV infections to 500 by 2020
2. Increase the proportion of persons living with HIV who are diagnosed to at least 90% by 2022
3. Increase the proportion of diagnosed people living with HIV who are virally suppressed to 90% by 2022

METHOD/HIGH IMPACT PREVENTION: In order to achieve our goals, we must implement a *High-Impact Prevention*⁴ approach that utilizes combinations of scientifically proven, cost-effective, and scalable interventions targeted to the populations most disproportionately impacted by HIV in Los Angeles County, as indicated by those populations with the highest HIV incidence rates and the lowest rates of viral suppression. The Los Angeles County Comprehensive HIV Plan (2017-2021), based on the most recent surveillance data, identifies the following populations that experience the highest HIV incidence rates in Los Angeles County:

Commented [ML6]: Update to new Integrated HIV Plan and confirm populations listed below.

- Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)
- Black/African American MSM, Transwomen, and Cisgender Women
- Transwomen
- Young Men (18-29) who have Sex with Men (YMSM)
- Persons living in the Metro, South, and South Bay Service Planning Areas (SPAs)

² Los Angeles County Commission on HIV and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Division of HIV and STD Programs. Los Angeles County Comprehensive HIV Plan (2017-2021), September 2016.

³ The National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States: Updated to 2020. <https://www.aids.gov/federal-resources/national-hiv-aids-strategy/nhas-update.pdf>

⁴ High-Impact HIV Prevention: CDC's Approach to Reducing HIV Infections in the United States. <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/policies/hip/hip.html>

Among people living with HIV, the following populations have the lowest rates of viral suppression in Los Angeles County:

- Persons who inject drugs (PWID)
- Youth (18-29 years)
- Cisgender women
- Transgender persons
- Blacks/African Americans
- American Indians/Alaska Natives

In addition, there are many other populations and sub-populations highly impacted by HIV, including, but not limited to:

- Latino MSM
- Asian/Pacific Islander MSM
- Latina Cisgender women
- People between the ages of 13-17
- People over the age of 50
- Incarcerated populations
- Stimulant users
- Commercial Sex Workers
- Sex and needle-sharing partners of individuals who are HIV-positive

FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS: The Los Angeles County Commission on HIV's *Comprehensive HIV Continuum Framework*, depicted in Figure 1, below, was used to guide the development of the HIV Prevention Service Standards. The *Comprehensive HIV Continuum* is an aspirational framework that builds upon the social ecological model to underscore the importance of addressing HIV care and prevention across several dimensions. The connected boxes depict the complementary and supportive nature of primary and secondary prevention in controlling the HIV/STD disease burden. The green boxes depict the HIV Care Continuum (focused on people living with HIV), while the blue boxes depict the HIV Prevention Continuum (focused on HIV-negative individuals).

Commented [ML8]: Use LAC Status Neutral framework with brief description on core tenants.

Figure 1: The Los Angeles County Commission on HIV *Comprehensive HIV Continuum Framework*



Commented [ML9]: Replace with status neutral graphic

Standards Development Process: The development of the HIV Prevention Service Standards included the input and feedback of service providers, consumers, members of the Standards and Best Practices Committee (SBP), and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Division of HIV and STD Programs. In addition, four Expert Review Panels (ERPs) composed of subject matter experts were convened to provide extensive critique on proposed standards. Moreover, two community meetings were convened to further vet the proposed standards. All comments were thoroughly reviewed by the SBP Committee resulting in recommended revisions.

Commented [MM(10): Beyond our review for update what is our role in the update through SOC?

In order to guide the development of the HIV Prevention Service Standards, SBP Committee members, ERPs, and community stakeholders considered the following questions:

1. Are the standards up-to-date and consistent with national standards of high-quality HIV and STD⁵ prevention services?
2. Are the standards reasonable and achievable for providers?
3. Will the services meet consumer needs?
4. Are proposed standards client-centered?
5. What are the important outcomes we expect for people receiving these services? How can we measure whether or not the service is working for them?

⁵ For the purposes of this document, we chose to use the term STD (Sexually Transmitted Disease), rather than STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection). Factors that we weighted in making this decision included: perceived stigma; literal meaning of *disease* versus *infection*; and alignment with county, state, and national departmental names.

See Dr. H. Hunter Handsfield's article, "Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Infections, and Disorders: What's in a Name?" (<http://www.ncsddc.org/blog/sexually-transmitted-diseases-infections-and-disorders-what's-name>).

UNIVERSAL HIV PREVENTION SERVICE STANDARDS: In order to achieve the goals of reducing new HIV infections and HIV-related disparities, HIV prevention services in Los Angeles County must include the following universal standards:

Whole Person Care: Preventing HIV is typically one priority among many in the lives of people accessing our services. Therefore, HIV prevention services are most effective when they are delivered with the *whole person* in mind. Whenever possible, programs and services should attend to clients' overall physical health, mental health, and spiritual health, as guided by each individual client.

Address the social determinants of health: Social determinants of health are the economic and social conditions that influence the health of individuals and communities.⁶ Social determinants shape the contexts that either increases or decreases an individual's risk of exposure to HIV. Because HIV disparities are inextricably linked to social determinants, interventions or services that focus on social determinants (e.g., racism, homophobia, transphobia, housing, education, employment, healthcare, etc.) are necessary to reduce these disparities. The implementation of such structural interventions typically requires a great deal of time and effort on behalf of multiple stakeholders, given that social determinants are deeply entrenched and institutionalized in our society. For this reason, many [HIV prevention agencies engaged in HIV/STI prevention](#) may not have the capacity to implement structural or social level interventions. However, HIV/STI prevention services should minimally reflect an understanding of the role of social determinants in their design (e.g. consider a client's competing priorities related to housing and employment) [and implementation](#). [HIV prevention Agencies](#), no matter how small, should strive to complement traditional HIV/STI prevention services, with services that help to address social determinants (e.g. resume writing workshops).

Strength-Based: A strength-based approach to service design and provision seeks to understand and develop clients' strengths and capabilities that can lead to improved health and quality of life. Services that focus solely on individuals' deficits, needs, problems, or pathologies tend to focus only on what a client needs to "fix" about themselves, thus emphasizing negative behaviors rather than emphasizing resiliency and protective factors. Furthermore, when we emphasize what a client is lacking, a dependency is created on the provider and a process of disempowerment occurs. A strength-based approach focuses on individuals' strengths, resources, and the ability to recover from adversity; allowing a client to focus on opportunities and solutions rather than problems and hopelessness. A strength-based approach results in different questions being asked (see Assessment section below) and facilitates an openness and exploration on behalf of the provider-client relationship.

⁶ World Health Organization, Commission on Social Determinants of Health. Geneva: WHO; 2008. Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health. Final report of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health

Sex-Positive: When services are delivered from a “sex-positive” framework or attitude, they are free from judgment about clients’ sexual behaviors, including the behavior itself (as long as it is consensual); the number and type of sexual partners; and the frequency of sexual behaviors (Center for Positive Sexuality). A sex-positive attitude also serves to destigmatize sex, and may also serve to reduce other forms of stigma experienced by clients related to being gay, being transgender, living with, or being at risk for HIV, etc. Being sex-positive does not mean that you ignore behaviors or circumstances that may increase someone’s risk of acquiring HIV or STDs. On the contrary, when clients know that they will not be shamed or judged for the behaviors they engage in, they then will be more likely to disclose important facts and likely will be receptive to information from providers that helps them reduce their risk and/or build upon protective factors.

Cultural humility: All HIV prevention organizations should strive to deliver culturally responsive services. Culturally responsive services are those that are respectful of, and relevant to, the beliefs, practices, culture and linguistic needs of diverse consumer/client populations and communities.⁷ Cultural responsiveness describes the capacity to respond to the issues of diverse communities. It thus requires knowledge and capacity at different levels of intervention: structural, community, organizational, and individual. Culturally responsive services acknowledge that power imbalances exist between groups of people and cultures based on historical and institutional oppression and privilege; that we are not simply “different” from one another. Culturally responsive agencies also create a physical environment that is welcoming, warm, and that communicates a sense of safety for clients.

Cultural humility is a lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby the individual not only learns about another’s culture, but one starts with an examination of her/his own beliefs and cultural identities (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). This critical consciousness is more than just self-awareness but requires one to step back to understand one’s own assumptions, biases and values (Kumagai & Lypton, 2009). Individuals must look at one’s own background and social environment and how it has shaped experience. Cultural humility cannot be collapsed into a class or education offering; rather it’s viewed as an ongoing process. Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) state that cultural humility is “best defined not as a discrete end point but as a commitment and active engagement in a lifelong process that individuals enter into on an ongoing basis with patients, communities, colleagues, and with themselves” (p. 118). This process recognizes the dynamic nature of culture since cultural influences change over time and vary depending on location. Throughout the day, many of us move between several cultures, often without thinking about it. For example, our home/ family culture often differs from our workplace culture, school culture, social group culture, or religious organization culture. The overall purpose of the process is to be aware of our own values and beliefs that come from a combination of cultures in order to increase understanding of others. One cannot

⁷ Adapted from: Curry-Stevens, A., Reyes, M.-E. & Coalition of Communities of Color (2014). *Protocol for culturally responsive organizations*. Portland, OR: Center to Advance Racial Equity, Portland State University.

understand the makeup and context of others' lives without being aware and reflective of his/her own background and situation.

To practice cultural humility is to maintain a willingness to suspend what you know, or what you think you know, about a person based on generalizations about their culture. Whereas cultural *competency* implies that one can function with a thorough knowledge of the ~~mores-~~ mores and beliefs of another culture, cultural *humility* acknowledges that it is impossible to be adequately knowledgeable about cultures other than one's own. What you learn about your clients' culture stems from being open to what they themselves have determined is their personal expression of their culture.⁸ Tenets of cultural humility include:

- 1) Lifelong learning & critical self-reflection
- 2) Recognizing and challenging power imbalances for respectful partnerships, and
- 3) Institutional accountability

Data driven and outcome-based: Data-driven and outcome-based program planning ensures that programs and services address specific needs in the community and lead to specific outcomes in mind, and including includes an evaluation component which enables you to capture data (Ryan et al, 2014). More specifically, data-driven and outcome-based programs and services:

- are designed based on quality data and with specific HIV/STI-related outcomes in mind
- are responsive and relevant to the communities we serve
- are developed in response to specific drivers or causes of HIV-related problems in our communities
- are aligned with local and national HIV/STI prevention goals
- require the collection and utilization of process and outcome data in order to continuously improve
- show meaningful results that demonstrate the value of our services
- contribute to the body of knowledge in the HIV/STI field

Elicit community feedback: Responsive services are services that are designed and/or delivered with continuous feedback from the populations served. Feedback should help to ensure that the services are culturally appropriate, effective in preventing HIV, respectful of clients, strength-based, sex-positive and destigmatizing, and easily accessed. Feedback methods may include client satisfaction surveys, focus groups, secret shoppers, and other means to continuously assess quality of services.

⁸ Cultural humility: Essential foundation for clinical researchers, Katherine A. Yeager, PhD, RN and Susan Bauer-Wu, PhD, RN, FAAN

CORE PREVENTION COMPONENTS

Summary of Core Prevention Service Components: The HIV Prevention Service Standards detailed in this document seek to ensure the provision of a core set of integrated HIV prevention services aimed at preventing the acquisition and transmission of HIV and STDs. The Core Prevention Service Components are: Assessment, HIV/STD Testing and Retesting, Linkage to HIV Medical Care and Biomedical Prevention Services, Referral and Linkage to Non-Biomedical Prevention Services, and Retention and Adherence to HIV Medical Care and Prevention Services. These categories, in addition to their corresponding data indicators, documentation needs, and population-based outcomes, are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Core Prevention Service Components

Core Prevention Service Components	Data Indicators	Documentation Needs	Population- Based Outcomes
<p>1. Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of clients/patients who complete assessments • Number of participants screened for: connection to a medical home; primary care engagement; insurance coverage; HIV status; STDs; immunizations; pregnancy; mental health; substance abuse; experiences of trauma and violence; housing and employment status; and sexual and needle- sharing behaviors that may increase their risk of HIV acquisition or transmission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed assessments indicating specific areas or topics assessed and type of assessments used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease the number of new HIV infections • Decrease the number of STDs • Increase the number of persons with known HIV status • Increase the number of persons treated for STDs
<p>2. HIV/STD Testing and Retesting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of persons tested/screened for HIV and STDs • Number of persons tested/screened for HIV and STDs who have never tested/screened before • Number of persons who test positive for an STD who are treated or referred to treatment • Percentage of high-risk⁹ negative clients having documentation of HIV/STD testing every 3 months • Type and number of outreach and recruitment methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of HIV/STD testing in client files and data management system • Documentation of type and frequency of outreach and recruitment methods • Documentation of clients treated for STDs or referred to treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of newly diagnosed clients that have their first HIV medical visit within 72 hours of their diagnosis. • All service provides should strive towards linking newly- diagnosed PLWHA to anti-retroviral therapy within 72 hours of diagnosis.

Commented [ML12]: Consider adding Mpox vax eligibility and referral if needed

Commented [ML13]: Consider including HCV testing

Commented [ML14]: Disclose which STDs and screen at all anatomic sites of exposure, as needed

Commented [ML15]: Consider offering PEP/doxyPEP if screening indicates exposure

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Core Prevention Service Components	Data Indicators	• Documentation Needs	• Population- Based Outcomes
3. Linkage to HIV Medical Care and Biomedical Prevention Services	<p>HIV-positive individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of HIV- positive clients linked to HIV medical care within 72 hours of receiving a HIV- positive test result. Number of HIV- positive clients lost to care who re-engage in HIV medical care within 30 days of interaction with provider <p>HIV-negative individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of high-risk HIV-negative clients receiving education on PrEP Number of high-risk¹⁰ HIV-negative clients who are interested in PrEP Number of high-risk HIV-negative clients interested in PrEP that are linked to a PrEP Navigator. Number of high-risk HIV-negative clients who received a PrEP prescription Number of high-risk HIV-negative clients receiving education on PEP Number of high-risk HIV-negative clients who received PEP within 72 hours of exposure Number of high-risk HIV-negative clients who accessed PEP and transitioned to PrEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of linkage to HIV medical care Documentation of re-engagement in HIV medical care Documentation of PrEP and PEP education Documentation of client interest in learning more about PrEP (i.e. responded affirmatively to the question, “Would you like to learn more about PrEP or PEP?”) Documentation of linkage to a PrEP services (may be internal or external linkage) If available, documentation of PrEP or PEP prescription (may be client self-report) Documentation of former PEP clients who currently access PrEP Documentation of PrEP and PEP clients who are referred to medication adherence services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of out-of-care previously diagnosed clients that are re-engaged in HIV medical care within 30 days of their identification. Increase the number of HIV positive clients that have at least 2 medical visits per year at least 3 months apart. Increase the number of HIV-positive persons that are virally suppressed (<200 copies/ml) Increase the number of HIV negative clients that are given accurate PrEP and PEP information Increase the number of high-risk HIV negative individuals accessing HIV PrEP and HIV PEP, as needed

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Commented [ML16]: Include STI + linked to care

Commented [ML17]: Consider including partner services counseling and referral

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Commented [ML18]: Education should extend beyond PrEP. Taken from CDPH - Provide comprehensive preventative sexual health counseling and education to all sexually-active individuals to include HIV/STI screening, doxy-PEP, HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis ()/HIV post-exposure prophylaxis (), (e.g. Hepatitis A/B, , ,), and/or contraception where warranted.

Commented [ML19]: Consider “Status neutral” navigator that can assist with PrEP navigation and other medical and supportive services that are needed

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Commented [ML20]: Include doxy-PEP

⁹ “High risk” is defined as someone who has an HIV positive sex partner; a history of bacterial STD diagnosed in the past 12 months; a history of multiple sex partners of unknown HIV status; or other risk factors that increase HIV risk, including transactional sex (such as sex for money, drugs, housing); or someone who reports sharing injection equipment such as those used to inject drugs or hormones.

Commented [ML21]: Review definition of high risk; align with status neutral recommendations

Core Prevention Service Components	Data Indicators	Documentation Needs	Population- Based Outcomes
<p>4. Referral and Linkage to Non- Biomedical Prevention Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of high-risk HIV-negative and HIV- positive clients that are referred to needed non-biomedical prevention services, as indicated via the assessment process. This may include referrals to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behavioral interventions • risk-reduction education • syringe exchange • housing services • mental health services • substance abuse services • food pantries • employment services • health insurance navigation • Number of high-risk HIV-negative clients who have not accessed primary care in over one year linked to primary care medical visit within 90 days of assessment.¹¹ • Number of external and internal¹² condoms distributed free of charge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of referrals in client files and data management system • Documentation of linkage to primary care (may be client self-report) • Documentation of condom availability or distribution 	<p>Same as above</p>

Commented [ML22]: Include Counseling or information related to returning to or leaving the work force, health insurance and disability benefits, and public assistance programs

Commented [ML23]: Consider including legal services, financial literacy, emergency financial assistance,

¹¹ Assuming that primary care is available to the client, which may not always be the case (i.e. for undocumented individuals, individuals who speak a language other than English, transgender individuals, etc., affordable and accessible primary care may not always be available).

¹² “External” and “internal” condoms are also known as “male” and “female” condoms, respectively, but are not referred to as such in this document since their use is not necessarily aligned with one’s gender identity.

Core Prevention Service Components	Data Indicators	Documentation Needs	Population- Based Outcomes (from CHP)
<p>5. Retention and Adherence to HIV Medical Care, ART, and Other Prevention Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of HIV- positive clients who receive HIV medical care at least 2 times per year, at least 3 months apart • Number of HIV- positive clients who adhere to their HIV medications • Number of HIV- positive clients who remained engaged in prevention service as needed • Number of PrEP and PEP clients referred to medication adherence interventions or support services. • Number of PrEP and PEP clients who access medication adherence interventions or support services. • Number of HIV- negative clients who remained engaged in prevention service as needed • Number of PrEP clients who adhere to PrEP medication per adherence plan determined with PrEP provider • Number of PEP clients who adhere to PEP for 28-day course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of provision of service(s) • Documentation of client engagement in service(s) • Documentation of adherence to ART, PrEP or PEP medication (optimal adherence for PrEP is 90% and 95% for ART of prescribed doses) • Documentation of PrEP and PEP clients who access medication adherence services 	<p>Same as above</p>

Commented [MM(26): Need to review for person first language

Commented [ML24]: Consider adding follow up testing for STIs 3 months after treatment

Commented [MM(25R24): Should we pull out a specific section on STD outcomes

Commented [ML27]: Consider including doxyPEP

ASSESSMENT

Client assessments are often the first in-depth interaction a client has with a provider agency, and thus can foster a lasting positive relationship built on trust and respect, if conducted correctly. Conversely, an assessment that a client perceives to be judgmental or disrespectful in any way can impede the client's willingness or ability to secure necessary prevention services.

Commented [MM(28): Perhaps it would be more accurate to say "Experiences as" ?

Standards for Assessment:

Assessments should be conducted by trained personnel.

The training should include basic client-centered counseling techniques (e.g., how to communicate in a non-judgmental manner, the use of appropriate body language, etc.), and should also include elements that are specific/relevant to the type of assessment(s) conducted. For example, providers should be trained in how to utilize specific mental health and/or substance abuse screening tools (e.g., Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2)), if the assessment utilizes such tools.

The assessment process should include the following activities and or elements (not necessarily in this order):

1. Explain the purpose of the assessment and obtain verbal consent to continue
2. Conduct the assessment in private, with no other clients, and preferably no other staff members able to hear the conversation
3. Gather relevant information to determine the client's needs, risks, and strengths, when appropriate
4. Inform the client of the services available (internally and externally) and what the client can expect if they were to enroll
5. Establish the client's eligibility for services, including HIV status, if relevant, and other criteria
6. Inform the client of any documentation requirements for the assessment (e.g., income verification for insurance purposes)
7. Collect required county, state, federal client data for reporting purposes
8. Collect basic client information to facilitate client identification and client follow-up
9. Begin to establish a trusting client relationship.

Commented [MM(29): Consider adding language around telehealth/online sessions

Assessments should be a cooperative and interactive endeavor between the staff and the client, and should be conducted in a strength-based manner.

The assessment should highlight clients' skills, competencies and resilience in addition to their challenges and needs. Included below are some examples of strength-based questions¹³ that may be asked during an assessment, or over the course of multiple assessments, as appropriate:

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1. What is working well (either in general, or with respect to a certain subject, e.g.

adherence, overall health, etc.)?

2. Can you think of things you have done in the past that have helped with ____?
3. What small thing could you do that would make ____ better?
4. Tell me about what a good day looks like for you? What makes it a good day?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you say ____ is? What might make that score a little better?
6. What are you most proud of in your life?
7. What inspires you?
8. What do you like doing? What makes this enjoyable?
9. What do you find comes easily to you?
10. What do you want to achieve in your life?
11. When things are going well in your life – tell me what is happening?
12. What are the things in your life that help you keep strong?
13. What do you value about yourself?
14. What would other people who know you say you are good at doing?
15. You are resilient. What do you think helps you bounce back?
16. What is one thing you could do to have better health, and feeling of wellbeing?
17. How have you faced/overcome the challenges you have had?
18. How have people around you helped you overcome challenges?
19. What are three things that have helped you overcome obstacles?
20. If you had the opportunity, what would you like to teach others?
21. Without being modest, what do you value about yourself, what are your greatest strengths?
22. How could/do your strengths help you to be a part of your community?
23. Who is in your life?
24. Who is important in your life?
25. How would you describe the strengths, skills, and resources you have in your life?
26. What could you ask others to do, that would help create a better situation for you?
27. What are the positive factors in your life at present?
28. What are three (or five or ten) things that are going well in your life right now?
29. What gives you energy?
30. What is the most rewarding part of your life?
31. Tell me about a time when you responded to a challenge in a way that made you feel really on top of things?
32. How have you been able to develop your skills?
33. How have you been able to meet your needs?
34. What kind of supports have you used that have been helpful to you? How did the supports improve things for you?
35. Tell me about any creative, different solutions you have tried. How did this work out?

¹³ Adapted from “50 First Strength-Based Questions” (<http://www.changedlivesnewjourneys.com/50-first-strength-based-questions>).

Clients should be the primary source of information during an assessment.

However, if appropriate and with client consent, assessments may include additional information from case manager(s), medical or psychosocial providers, caregivers, family members, and other sources of information.

Assessments should be conducted in a client-centered manner that accommodates clients who are unable or otherwise hesitant to attend the appointment at the provider agency.

Diverse methods of interaction (e.g., text-based, via social apps, in-person) should be supported, given that confidentiality policies are adhered to.

Assessments that are conducted should align with the client's reason(s) for accessing services and point of entry. For example, a client who is interested in accessing HIV/STD testing, PEP, or PrEP should not have to endure a lengthy assessment before accessing these services. Clients should be able to access services as expeditiously as possible. However, in some situations, or at a different point in time, a longer assessment may be appropriate.

~~Whenever possible, c~~Collect demographic information in a manner that is affirming of various identities and of intersecting identities.

For example, allow clients to identify their race or ethnicity using whatever categories best fit for them. When asking questions related to gender identify, consider using the two-step question that captures a transgender person's current gender identity as well as their assigned sex at birth: 1. What is your current gender identity? 2. What sex were you assigned at birth (on your original birth certificate)? Also, ask all clients what pronoun(s) to use to address them (he, she, they) (Center of Excellence for Transgender Health).

If appropriate, assess for barriers to accessing services and remaining engaged in services.

If barriers are identified, assist the client in identifying potential solutions.

Specific topics or areas should be assessed only if the provider can offer support, resources, referrals, and/or services in response.

For example, if questions are asked pertaining to a client's history of trauma, the provider should be prepared to handle a client's potential range of emotions. Given that providers/agencies have resources, referrals, and/or services at hand, consider including the following topics in client assessments:

- Connection to spirituality
- Intimate partner violence
- Trauma
- Sex-trafficking

The assessment process should utilize a health promotion approach.

This includes using information collected during the assessment/ screening to identify appropriate messages that promote health-seeking behavior and minimize risk-behaviors or circumstances. The intention is to offer information and suggest services and interventions that are tailored to the specific person (and their partners, if relevant) and to highlight current health promoting behaviors and overall strengths of the client. Health promotion includes provision of information or resources related to:

- overall health (may include overall physical health, nutrition, oral health, spiritual health, [mental health](#), and emotional health)
- behavioral interventions (e.g., brief or intensive risk reduction strategies that encourage safer sex and use of sterile drug-injection equipment, substance use treatment)
- biomedical interventions (e.g., PrEP, STD services, special reproductive and pregnancy services)
- clarifying concepts and misinformation about HIV transmission, acquisition, or prevention methods
- specialized counseling and support to members of HIV-serodiscordant relationships
- a variety of condoms (e.g. external, internal¹⁴, non-latex, etc.) and lubrication options
- new, sterile syringes through syringe services programs, pharmacists, physicians, or other legal methods to persons who lack consistent access to sterile drug-injection equipment

The assessment process should include assessing for medical and social factors that impact HIV acquisition and transmission.

Individuals at high risk for HIV acquisition or transmission can experience significant personal, social, and structural challenges, such as poverty, mental illness, substance use, unstable housing, and lack of regular medical care. Assessments should include questions pertaining to these medical and social factors that influence HIV acquisition or transmission.

¹⁴ “External” and “internal” condoms are also known as “male” and “female” condoms, respectively, but are not referred to as such in this document since their use is not necessarily aligned with one’s gender identity.

HIV/STD TESTING AND RETESTING

HIV and STD testing often serve as the first point of entry in the HIV Care and Prevention Continuum and for many, the key opportunity to facilitate linkage to a comprehensive array of services. Individuals at high risk for HIV should be tested every 3-6 months, regularly assessed for risks and needs, and linked or re-linked to other HIV prevention services, depending on their needs.

Commented [ML30]: Consider rephrasing to “Status Neutral HIV and STI Service Delivery System”

Agencies should implement a streamlined model of HIV testing that includes delivering key information, conducting the HIV test, completing brief risk screening, providing test results, providing referrals and/or ensuring linkages to services tailored to the client’s status and specific needs.

Standards that apply to HIV/STD testing include¹⁵:

Commented [MM(31): How do we incorporate reference to at home testing for both HIV and STDs?

- HIV/STD testing must be voluntary and free from coercion. Patients/clients must not be tested without their knowledge/written consent.
- Opt-out HIV screening (notifying the patient/client that an HIV test will be performed, unless the patient/client declines) is recommended in all settings.
- Use of antigen and antibody (Ag/Ab) combination tests is encouraged unless persons are unlikely to receive their HIV test results. However, providers should be alert to the possibility of acute HIV infection and perform an (Ag/Ab) immunoassay or HIV RNA in conjunction with an antibody test. Persons suspected of recently acquired HIV infection should be referred immediately to an HIV clinical-care provider.
- Preliminary positive screening tests for HIV infection must be followed by additional testing to definitively establish the diagnosis.
- Agencies should adhere to local and state public health policies and laws to ensure they deliver high-quality HIV testing services that are culturally competent and linguistically appropriate.
- HIV testing should be simple, accessible, and straightforward. Minimize client barriers and focus on delivering HIV test results and on supporting clients to access follow-up HIV care, treatment, and prevention services as indicated.
- To reach populations at high risk for HIV infection, sites should employ strategic targeting and recruitment efforts, establish program goals, and monitor service delivery to ensure targeted testing is achieving program goals.
- To provide the most accurate results to clients, sites should use HIV testing technologies that are the most sensitive, cost-effective, and feasible for use at their agency. Establishing relationships with facilities offering laboratory-based HIV testing is important for referring clients who may have acute HIV infection.

¹⁵ Adapted from *Implementing HIV Testing in Nonclinical Settings: A Guide for HIV Testing Providers*. https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/testing/cdc_hiv_implementing_hiv_testing_in_nonclinical_settings.pdf

- Sites should consider offering HIV testing services for couples or partnered relationships to (a) attract high-risk clients who are not otherwise testing and (b) identify HIV-discordant couples and previously undiagnosed HIV-positive clients.
- Diagnostic HIV testing and opt-out HIV screening should be a part of routine care in all health-care settings while also preserving the client's option to decline HIV testing and ensuring a provider-client relationship conducive to optimal clinical and preventive care.
- Inform clients at high-risk for HIV/STDs about 1) methods to reduce the risk of HIV/STD acquisition; 2) STDs that can facilitate HIV acquisition; 3) the benefits of screening for STDs (that are often asymptomatic) and STD treatment
- Assess these risk factors for HIV/STD transmission:
 - Sexual, alcohol, and drug-use triggers (boredom, depression, incarceration, sexual violence, sex work, abuse) and behaviors that may lead to HIV/STD transmission
 - Recent sex and/or needle-sharing partners who were treated for HIV/STDs, and/or other behaviors they may have that contribute to possible HIV acquisition
 - Past and recent HIV/STD diagnosis, screening, and symptoms
 - Survival sex work
 - Sense of self-worth
- Lack of basic health information and/or information pertaining to HIV/STD risk
- Offer external and internal condoms, and lubrication options
- Personnel from every HIV and STD testing site should be knowledgeable about the HIV and STD burden in their health district. Report cases of HIV/STDs according to jurisdiction requirements and inform clients diagnosed with HIV and/or STDs that case reporting may prompt the health department to offer voluntary, confidential partner services

Commented [ML32]: See comments in table above

STD Testing services must follow these guidelines, adapted from the CDC:¹⁶

1. All adults and adolescents ages 13 and older should be tested at least once for HIV.
2. Annual chlamydia screening of all sexually active cisgender women younger than 25 years, as well as older cisgender women with risk factors such as a sex partner who has a sexually transmitted infection
3. Annual gonorrhea screening for all sexually active cisgender women younger than 25 years, as well as older cisgender women with risk factors such as a sex partner who has a sexually transmitted infection.
4. Syphilis, HIV, hepatitis B, chlamydia and gonorrhea screening for all pregnant women, starting early in pregnancy, with repeat testing as needed, to protect the health of mothers and their infants.
5. Screening at least once a year for syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhea, and hepatitis C for all sexually active gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM), as

¹⁶ Access this link for more information:
http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/Providers/LAC_ONLY_STDScreeningRecs-5-2017.pdf

well as sexual active transgender women who have sex with men. MSM or transgender women who have sex with men, who have unprotected sex should be screened more frequently for STDs (e.g., at 3-to-6 month intervals).

6. Sexually active gay and bisexual men and sexually active transgender women who have sex with men may benefit from more frequent HIV testing (i.e., every 3 to 6 months).
7. Anyone who has unprotected sex or shares injection drug equipment should get tested for HIV at least once a year.

In populations for whom no recommendations exist, screening should be based on risk factors, local epidemiology, and prevalence of specific STDs in the service area. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Division of HIV and STD Programs' (DHSP) mapping project¹⁷ depicts STD and HIV burden by health district throughout Los Angeles County. This project ranks geographical areas (health districts) in order of highest to lowest HIV and STD burden by analyzing several important driving factors including number of infections, number of people infected, the population size, geographic size, and results from hot spot analyses.

Commented [ML33]: Align with new recommendations:
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/California-STI-Screening-Recommendations.aspx>

¹⁷ <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/dhsp/Mapping.htm>

LINKAGE TO HIV MEDICAL CARE AND BIOMEDICAL PREVENTION SERVICES

Commented [ML34]: Include STIs and procedure for care

Once HIV status is determined and the needs of clients are identified via the assessment and/or screening process, they should be connected to appropriate services to address those needs in the most expeditious manner possible.

For both recently diagnosed and previously diagnosed HIV-positive clients, linkage to/re-engagement in HIV medical care is a critical component of the HIV Care Continuum. Likewise, for high-risk HIV-negative individuals who have recently been tested for HIV and STDs, linkage to biomedical interventions (i.e. PrEP and PEP) is a priority.

Linkage to Care Definition: Linkage to care is the first time a newly-diagnosed person living with HIV (PLWH) attends an appointment with an HIV medical service provider following their HIV diagnosis.

Linkage to Care Standard (Service Expectation): Newly-diagnosed PLWH receives ART within 72 hours of diagnosis.

*It is recognized that service providers that provide the full array of HIV prevention and treatment services must be supported and trained to build their capacity in order to reach this standard.

Standards for linking newly-diagnosed persons to HIV medical care and re-engaging previously diagnosed HIV-positive persons who have fallen out of care to HIV medical care include:

- Develop written protocols to ensure linkage to HIV care within 72 hours after diagnosis or re-engagement in care within 30 days after identification (for those out of care);
- Inform persons about the benefits of starting HIV care and antiretroviral treatment (ART) early (even when feeling well);
- Assess possible facilitators and barriers to linkage and retention and provide or make referrals for other medical and social services that may improve linkage and retention;
- Help persons enroll in health insurance or medical assistance programs that provide HIV care or cover costs of care;
- Collaborate with other health care providers, case managers, navigation assistants, nonclinical community-based organizations, and health department personnel to provide services that promote prompt linkage to and retention in care, disclosure and partner services;
- Track outcomes of linkage and retention services and provide follow-up assistance to persons who have not started HIV medical care within 72 hours after diagnosis or within 30 days for those out of care;

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- Train staff to comply with laws, policies, and procedures to protect patient confidentiality when exchanging personal, health, or financial information used for linkage and reengagement services;
- Provide staff training and tools to increase competence in serving patients with differing health literacy levels;
- Train clinical providers about the most recent U.S. Department of Health and Human Services guidelines that advise offering ART to all persons (regardless of CD4 cell count) for health benefits and preventing HIV transmission;
- Help schedule the first HIV medical visit, seeking same-day or priority appointments, when possible, especially for newly diagnosed persons;
- Provide transportation assistance to the first visit, when possible;
- Verify attendance at first visit by contacting the patient or the HIV health care provider
- If the first visit was not completed, provide additional linkage assistance until visit is completed or no longer required; and
- If providing HIV medical care, offer convenient scheduling whenever possible (e.g., same-day or priority appointments, extended hours).

Identify and utilize specific strategies designed to overcome barriers to successful linkage. Such strategies may include:

- Co-locating HIV testing and HIV medical care services
- Multiple case management sessions
- Motivational counseling
- Reminders for follow-up visits
- Help enrolling in health insurance or medical assistance programs
- Assist clients in securing documentation necessary to access medical services
- Transportation services to the health care facility
- Providing or linking to other medical or social services (e.g., substance abuse treatment, mental/behavioral health services, ~~child care~~childcare)
- Maintaining relationship between patient and a consistent care team

Standards for linking HIV-negative persons to biomedical prevention interventions include:

- If agencies do not provide PrEP services, they must develop written protocols/MOUs with agencies/clinics that do provide PrEP, outlining the referral and linkage process
- Inform clients about the benefits of biomedical interventions to prevent the acquisition of HIV
- Ask all high-risk HIV-negative clients if they are interested in learning more about PrEP or PEP
- Connect all high-risk HIV-negative clients to a PrEP Navigator (in-house or external) within 24 hours (or 2 business days)
- Provide immediate, active, and, if necessary, repeated, linkage services to clients with an expressed interest in PrEP, and the immediate need for PEP
- Counsel and refer individuals exposed to HIV within a ~~72-hour~~72-hour time range for evaluation to a PEP program or Emergency Department as appropriate.

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- Provide follow-up assistance to clients who are not able to link to a PrEP Navigator
- If an agency provides PrEP, assess the client's readiness to engage in PrEP services and barriers and facilitators to starting services
- Help schedule appointments to see a PrEP Navigator or PrEP provider (in-house or external)
- Offer convenient scheduling whenever possible (e.g., same-day or priority appointments, extended hours)
- Maintain a client-friendly environment that welcomes and respects new clients
- Provide reminder (and accompaniment, if possible) for first appointment, using the client's preferred contact method(s)
- Offer support to encourage attendance (e.g., directions, transportation resources, such as Metro [tokens-passes](#) or ride shares)
- Identify and utilize specific strategies designed to overcome barriers to successful linkage. Such strategies may include:
 - Co-locating HIV testing and biomedical interventions
 - Client accompaniment to access services
 - Multiple case management sessions
 - Motivational counseling
 - Providing trauma-informed care
 - Providing crisis intervention counseling
 - PrEP navigation
- Offer guidance and assistance on how to obtain financial assistance for PrEP through private- or public-sector sources
- Assist with health insurance and other benefits, including linkage to health insurance navigators, case management and client navigation, and intervention-specific programs (e.g., PrEP medication and co-pay assistance programs)

Commented [ML37]: Consider "navigation assistance"

REFERRALS AND LINKAGES TO NON-BIOMEDICAL PREVENTION SERVICES

Although numerous HIV prevention related services exist throughout Los Angeles County, clients in need of services may not be willing or able to access them. For example, an undocumented transgender woman may want to access regular primary ~~care, but~~ care but may not feel comfortable doing so if she fears transphobia or legal implications. For this reason, while the ultimate goal is *linkage* to a needed service, oftentimes *referrals* are all an agency can be held accountable for.

Standards related to referring clients to non-biomedical services focus on active referrals rather than passive referrals. The latter defined as telling a client about a service and or giving them a phone number and leaving it up to them to initiate contact. Conversely, active referrals address barriers to accessing services by helping the client make contact with a service provider or agency. This may include scheduling the appointment with the client and/or accompanying them to their first appointment.

Based on information obtained via the assessment process, clients may be in need of any number of prevention services; specialty services that address medical needs (e.g. primary care); and/or social needs (e.g. needs related to housing, employment etc.). Whenever possible, agencies should strive to provide specialty services onsite. If this is not feasible, providers need to ensure that clients are referred to external specialty services. How these services are prioritized depends upon the need of each ~~particular~~ individual client.

The standards for actively referring clients to non-biomedical prevention services include:

- Developing written protocols/MOUs with other HIV/STD prevention and primary care providers and social service agencies to ensure linkage to appropriate prevention services
- Assisting clients with enrolling in health insurance by actively referring them to a benefits counselor
- Actively referring clients who are not accessing regular care to a medical home or primary care provider
- Assessing possible facilitators and barriers to accessing services
- Tracking outcomes of referral services (i.e. track linkages) and providing follow-up assistance to clients who have not been linked to prevention services
- Helping schedule the first prevention-related service appointment
- Linking all newly diagnosed individuals with HIV, syphilis or gonorrhea to the LAC DHSP Partner Counseling and Referral Services.
- Actively referring to mental/behavioral health services, substance use services, behavioral interventions and other psychosocial and ancillary services (e.g. housing, employment, nutritional and social support)
- Providing transportation assistance to the first visit, when possible
- Offering convenient scheduling whenever possible (e.g., same-day or priority appointments, extended hours)

- Maintaining a client-friendly environment that welcomes and respects new clients
- Providing reminders for first appointment, using the client's preferred contact method
- Offering support to encourage attendance (e.g., directions, transportation resources, such as Metro [tokens-passes](#) or ride shares)
- Identifying and utilizing specific strategies designed to overcome barriers to successful linkage. Such strategies may include:
 - Co-locating HIV testing and prevention services
 - Multiple case management sessions
 - Motivational counseling
 - Trauma-informed care
 - Crisis intervention counseling
 - Navigation assistance
- Maintaining a relationship with a consistent prevention team
- Offering assistance with health insurance and other benefits, including active referrals to health insurance navigators
- Make available [online](#) directories of providers, agencies, telemedicine agencies, and professional advice hotlines that offer specialty services. Ensure that these resources are gay- and trans-affirming and otherwise culturally appropriate.
- Develop and participate in provider networks that offer specialty services for persons with HIV, especially persons who are uninsured or underinsured or who live in underserved areas
- Develop written protocols, memoranda of understanding, contracts, or other agreements that define financial arrangements, staff and agency responsibilities for providing linkages, making referrals, and the tracking of referral completion and satisfaction
- Establish policies and procedures to safeguard the confidentiality of personal and health information exchanged during the linkage/referral process
- Train staff and any specialty service providers in the following topics:
 - ◆ Staff roles and responsibilities within the agency
 - ◆ Issues such as sex trafficking, substance use, etc. that can provide a better understanding of their clients' needs
 - ◆ Identifying specialty service providers who serve the community
 - ◆ Tailoring of services to personal characteristics (e.g., language, location, and insurance status)
 - ◆ Inter- and intra-agency referral procedures
 - ◆ Maintaining confidentiality of collected personal information
 - ◆ Advocating for persons who need specialty services
 - ◆ Minor consent for HIV/STD testing (consent from youth aged 13 and older)
- Engage case managers, navigation assistants, or other staff to provide service coordination for persons living with or at risk for HIV who have complex needs
- Routinely provide print or audiovisual materials that describe specialty services provided onsite or through referrals

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—Monitor the quality of referrals for specialty services to inform quality improvement strategies (e.g., proportion of referred persons who obtained specialty services), client satisfaction, and barriers and facilitators

• ~~Monitor the quality of referrals for specialty services to inform quality improvement~~

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~~strategies (e.g., proportion of referred persons who obtained specialty services), client satisfaction, and barriers and facilitators~~

- Routinely assess agency staff regarding knowledge and comfort to offer the prevention services the agency is providing
- Include services related to economic empowerment and job-readiness
- Empower immigrant communities to access available services

Commented [MM(39)]: Consider update of language on this bullet...support or center immigrants in ...

RETENTION AND ADHERENCE TO HIV MEDICAL CARE, ART, AND HIV PREVENTION SERVICES

Commented [ML40]: Consider adding retesting for STIs 3 months after treatment

Retention to HIV medical care is described as at least 2 medical care visits per year, at least 3 months apart. Adherence to ART is described as the extent to which a person takes ART according to the medication instructions. An adherence to ART of 95% is required as an appropriate level to achieve maximal viral suppression and lower the rate of opportunistic infections (Patterson DL et al). Sustained high adherence is essential to suppress viral load in HIV positive individuals and, in turn, improve health outcomes and prevent HIV transmission. Adherence to ART is also critical to maximize the benefit of PrEP and PEP among HIV-negative individuals. Additionally, a key component of the Comprehensive HIV Continuum is retention and adherence to prevention services to facilitate ongoing access to the full array of services, including behavioral interventions, psycho-social services, etc.

Commented [ML41]: Replace, see above

Standards related to retention and adherence to HIV medical care and ART include:

- Develop protocols to update patient contact information at each visit (e.g., residence, phone number(s), payment method)
- Develop procedures to routinely assess factors that enable or hinder attending [in person and virtual](#) visits
- Establish procedures to identify patients at risk for lapses in care and services that support their continued care
- Establish methods to monitor timing and completion of each patient's scheduled medical visits
- Schedule follow-up HIV medical care visits
- Provide reminders for all visits, using the person's preferred method of contact
- Reinforce the benefits of regular HIV care for improving health and preventing HIV transmission to others during in-person encounters or outreach by phone, email, or other methods
- Periodically assess facilitators and barriers to retention and motivate the person to overcome the barriers
- Verify if the person attended follow-up visits, even when the patient was seen in another clinical setting
- Participate in multidisciplinary teams with health educators, service linkage facilitators, community health workers, case managers, nurses, pharmacists, and physicians to assess and support adherence to antiretroviral treatment
- Provide adherence support tailored to each person's regimen and characteristics, according to provider role, authority, and setting
- Provide or refer to medication adherence interventions
- Offer advice on how to obtain sustained coverage or subsidies for ART through private- or public-sector sources

Standards related to retention and adherence to prevention services, including biomedical prevention services, include:

- Inform clients about the benefits of sustained adherence to PrEP and PEP. Optimal PrEP

Commented [ML42]: Include doxyPEP

adherence is 90% of prescribed doses.

- Reinforce the benefits of prevention services
- Regularly assess facilitators and barriers to retention, and supporting clients to overcome identified barriers
- Regularly assess clients' need for prevention services: *Have their needs changed? Do they no longer need services? Do they need different services?*
- Provide adherence support tailored to each client's needs and characteristics, and/or connect clients to medication adherence interventions
- Work with client to develop a plan for stopping PrEP, when appropriate (e.g. temporarily, long-term, or quitting use) and transitioning to other prevention options, including addressing relationship issues and health issues that increase HIV/STD risk
- Provide or make referrals for services to address factors that may impair adherence (e.g., comorbidity, financial, psychosocial, and structural issues)
- Offer advice on how to maintain financial assistance for PrEP through private- or public-sector sources
- Advise clients to take PrEP medications as prescribed; provide information about the regimen, and check for understanding in the following areas:
 - Details of the regimen, including dosing method and schedule, dietary restrictions, and what to do when drinking alcohol or when missing doses
 - Consequences of missing doses
 - Potential side effects
 - Potential interactions with other prescription, nonprescription, and recreational drugs, alcohol, and dietary supplements that may impair PrEP medication effectiveness or cause toxicity that could impair adherence
 - Advising the client that PrEP does not protect them from other STDs and pregnancy
- Routinely assess the client's questions, concerns, or challenges regarding PrEP use to identify potential problems
- Assess self-reported adherence at each visit using a nonjudgmental manner
- Assess and manage side effects at each visit
- Consider assessing PrEP prescription refills or pill counts, if feasible, when needed to supplement routine assessment of self-reported adherence
- Address misinformation, misconceptions, negative beliefs, or other concerns about PrEP regimen or adherence
- Acknowledge the challenges of maintaining high adherence over a time and offer long-term adherence support, especially when health coverage, insurance, or other life circumstances change
- Promote disclosure of challenges to adherence, and when disclosures occur, address them in a nonjudgmental manner
- Apply motivational interviewing techniques during routine adherence assessments. These include:
 - asking about the methods clients have successfully used or could use to increase adherence
 - asking about recent challenges to adherence and how they could be overcome

- Offer advice, tools, and training tailored to individual strengths, challenges, and circumstances to support adherence. Examples of advice include:
 - linking taking PrEP to daily events, such as meals or brushing teeth
 - using pill boxes, dose-reminder alarms, or diaries as reminders
 - carrying extra pills when away from home
 - actions to take if pill supply is depleted or nearly depleted
 - avoiding treatment interruptions when changing routines (e.g., travel, erratic housing, or legal detention)
- Encourage persons to seek adherence support from family members, partners, or friends, if appropriate
- Provide or refer to medication adherence interventions

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Key Resources Used to Help Inform the Development of the Prevention Service Standards

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Resources and Services Administration, National Institutes of Health, American Academy of HIV Medicine, Association of Nurses in AIDS Care, International Association of Providers of AIDS Care, National Minority AIDS Council, and Urban Coalition for HIV/AIDS Prevention Services. Recommendations for HIV Prevention with Adults and Adolescents with HIV in the United States, 2014: Summary for Health Departments and HIV Planning Groups. 2014. <http://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/26065>.

Department of Public Health, Division of HIV and STD Programs, Request for Statement of Qualifications for Biomedical HIV Prevention Services. July 2015.

Expert Review Panels and Key Informant Interviews

Federal Response: HIV Prevention

<https://www.hiv.gov/federal-response/federal-activities-agencies/hiv-prevention-activities>

Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) PS18-1802: Integrated Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Surveillance and Prevention Programs for Health Departments
<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/funding/announcements/ps18-1802/index.html>

Healthy People 2020 Evidence-Based Resources

<https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/tools-resources/Evidence-Based-Resources>

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Pre-exposure Prophylaxis for the Prevention of HIV Infection in the United States – 2017 Update: A Clinical Practice Guide. U.S. Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Promising Practices Database. Thinkhealthla.org

Recommendations for Inclusive Data Collection of Trans People in HIV Prevention, Care & Services. Center of Excellence for Transgender Health.
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<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/full/10.1377/hlthaff.2013.1155>

What is positive Sexuality? Center for Positive Sexuality.
<http://positivesexuality.org/education/presentations/what-is-positive-sexuality/>