



NoFLAC News

*The Official Newsletter of the Northwest
Florida AIDS Consortium—Winter 2015*

OPENING NOTES

Wow—2014 is going to be a hard year to top! With new case managers and the implementation of eligibility specialists, patient care should be running smoother than ever. All of the hard work put into reducing the presence of HIV in our community will start to be brought to light in 2015. AHF is now housing all their employees under one roof (which if you have visited AHF, you know it is beautiful) creating more convenience for clients in the Pensacola area. The MSM subcommittee has been working diligently to create a protocol for PrEP and PEP that we hope to see hospitals start using this year. OASIS has started out with a BANG by recording an hour-long show that will be broadcasted by BlabTV—for information on how to watch BlabTV, please visit <http://blabtv.com/about/>. We hope to see you all at each of our quarterly NoFLAC meetings as none of this would be possible without the dedication and persistence of Area 1's consumers and advocates.

MEET AREA 1'S NEWEST CASE MANAGER, NASHIRA PALMER!



My name is NaShira Palmer. I am a December, 2013 graduate of Troy University Montgomery with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology. My love for the beach and sunny weather prompted my relocation to the Fort Walton Beach area from Union Springs, Alabama in July of 2014. Although my family resides in Alabama and Kentucky, I have two small Yorkshire Terriers, Jojo and Jada, that I consider to be my children. So with that in mind, I do not live here alone. I am beyond thankful and blessed to have met Ms. Banu Pugh who has provided me with this opportunity to be able to serve the community and provide support and awareness to any and all who are in need. Here with the Okaloosa AIDS Support & Informational Services, I will finally be able to make a difference in the lives of people in need.

WE'RE GLAD TO HAVE YOU NASHIRA!



BABY FEVER?

Submitted by Debbie Carty, Area 1 HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator and Maurice Moody, Area 1 HIV/AIDS Prevention and Training Consultant and EIC Consultant

Motherhood is beautiful and a wonderful gift. It has tremendous highs and, yes, some lows; however, the amount of love, joy and laughter that children bring into one's life is simply priceless. Wanting to become a mother is natural and instinctive. It's nicknamed Baby Fever (an irresistible, inexplicable urge to make a baby). All mothers long for and desire a healthy, bouncing baby. Entering pre-natal care is key to ensure this, and every expecting mother should be tested for HIV at the beginning of her pregnancy and later at the 28-week gestation.

Expecting mothers who are HIV positive can deliver a healthy and vibrant baby, who is HIV negative! Out of roughly 4 million babies who are born each year in the U.S., fewer than 200 are born with HIV. However, one baby born infected is one baby to many.

Today there are more ways than ever to ensure you have a safe pregnancy with a healthy baby who is HIV free. An HIV-positive mother who is not receiving HIV treatment during pregnancy, labor, or delivery has a 25% chance (1 in 4) of passing the virus to her baby. Conversely, the good news is an HIV positive woman has less than a 1% chance of passing on her HIV infection to her baby, if appropriate medical treatment is given, if the virus is successfully suppressed by medication, if—in certain situations- a scheduled cesarean delivery (C-section) is performed, and if the mother does not breastfeed (HIV can pass from mother to child in breast milk).¹

Preconception care. What is it? This means that, ideally, optimal health should be attained by the HIV infected partner before attempting conception. Optimal health includes antiretroviral therapy with a maximum suppression of HIV infection also known as undetectable viral load. Consultation with an expert is also recommended for both concordant (both partners are HIV+) and serodiscordant (only one partner is HIV+) couples so that approaches can be tailored to the specific needs of each couple. Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, or PrEP, is a new, once-a-day regimen of Truvada taken by the negative partner to reduce the risk of sexual transmission of HIV.² Ask your doctor about PrEP to help you determine if this treatment option is right for you or your partner. Even an unplanned pregnancy can have a happy ending if mom gets into care as soon as possible and follows her doctor's instructions.

¹www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/gender/pregnantwomen/facts/

²http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/PrEP_GL_Clinician_Factsheet_Pregnancy_English.pdf

2015 HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAYS

February 7 National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 6-12 National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS

March 10 National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 20 National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

April 10 National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

May 18 HIV Vaccine Awareness Day

May 19 National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

May 19 Hepatitis Testing Day

June 8 Caribbean American HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

June 27 National HIV Testing Day

September 18 National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day

September 27 National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

October 15 National Latino AIDS Awareness Day

December 1 World AIDS Day

*HIV awareness days are intended to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in the most affected populations in the U.S. Awareness days are usually observed by special testing and media events. To learn more, visit <http://aids.gov/news-and-events/awareness-days/>.



MARRIAGE EQUALITY ACROSS THE PANHANDLE

Information retrieved from <http://fox10tv.com/2015/01/06/first-same-sex-couples-tie-the-knot-in-escambia-county/>

As of January 6, 2015, same-sex couples now have equal marital rights in Florida. Patrick Rogers, who has worked as the executive director for HIVevolution—A Project of OASIS also served as a Senior Pastor for United Church of Christ. He was among a few ordained ministers who made many people's dreams come true on this historic day at the Escambia County courthouse. Upon marrying the first same-sex couple in Escambia County, Patrick says, "With this family it's just, man it's incredible. God's here and blessing this union". Unfortunately, not everyone is on board with same-sex weddings in the courthouse. Last week, Santa Rosa and Okaloosa were among five counties who had taken a stance against gay marriage by ending courthouse weddings. This has since more than doubled. Counties still participating in courthouse weddings are expecting huge crowds to accommodate.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS is an inter-active, multisession, small-group, skills-building program for persons living with HIV/AIDS. Whether you just learned you are HIV positive, are just beginning to absorb this information, or it's something you have been living with for a while, there are many situations where the decision of whether or not to disclose your HIV status must be made. In a number of circumstances that means trying to balance honesty with protecting the right to privacy. There are no absolute answers that are right for everyone. **It really is a fun time—and we feed you!**

The first Healthy Relationships session of the new year will be held February 27th and 28th in Fort Walton and will be for MSMs.

If you are interested in attending, or would like to be notified about future workshops, call Doug at OASIS @ 850-314-0950.



A PHARMACIST'S ROLE IN PATIENT CARE

Juan F. Mosley II is a graduate of Florida A & M University where he received his Doctorate in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Upon graduation he completed a HIV residency which focused on the Aids Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) at Bond Community Clinics Inc. and the Leon County Health Department in Tallahassee, FL. Since that time he has also received certifications in medication therapy management, a consultant pharmacist license and the American Academy of HIV Pharmacist certification (AAHIVP).



Dr. Mosley has worked in various capacities within the community setting and is currently an Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice at Florida A & M University College of Pharmacy in Crestview, FL. He works concomitantly with the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County and the Escambia Community Clinics Inc. where he provides HIV and primary care services. Dr. Mosley is an advocate for HIV awareness and enjoys being able to educate others about appropriate HIV management options.



WORLD AIDS DAY—DECEMBER 2014

For those who missed it—the World AIDS Day events in Area 1 Florida were a memorable, educational, and loved-filled for all of those who attended. “Getting to Zero” was the theme of this year’s World AIDS Day. Maurice Moody says this means, “Zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS-related fatality. And, as an optimist, I believe we can do that.” The World AIDS Day committee held a press conference at the Lakeview Center which was broadcasted by WEAR and WUWF and articles were posted in the PNJ, InWeekly, and on www.PensacolaToday.com. The commemoration held in downtown Pensacola was quite a success; several proclamations were read by mayor Ashton Hayward and Reverend. Dr. Jim Merritt and Dr. Susan Walch gave an exuberant speech on the progress we have made in the fight against HIV/AIDS (don’t you just love her?!). The community gathered in Fort Walton Beach for a memorable dinner and viewing of the documentary, *Deep South*. Members of the Gay-Straight Alliance at UWF tagged the famous “Graffiti Bridge” to urge people to get tested. AIDS Healthcare Foundation tested *45 people* on World AIDS Day.



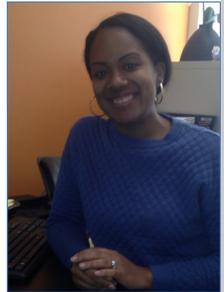
FORMER SPICE GIRL APPOINTED UNAIDS GOODWILL AMBASSADOR



Fashion designer Victoria Beckham skipped the grand opening of her store in London to speak at the United Nations in New York on September 25, 2014. She was inspired following a visit to Cape Town as part of the Born Free initiative, which tackles the issue of HIV being transmitted from mothers to their children. Victoria recently turned 40 and feels an obligation to immerse herself in helping others, particularly women and children fighting HIV/AIDS. “This is the beginning of an important journey for me. As a woman and a mother, I have a responsibility to support other women,” she told reporters. Executive Director Michel Sidibe said he welcomed Beckham’s involvement and commitment. According to UNAIDS, in 2013, 240,000 infants were infected by HIV. One third of HIV+ pregnant women didn’t have access to medicine that can save their lives and their unborn children’s lives. With access to proper healthcare and education, transmission can drop below 5%. Watch her pledge at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2778968/Scientists-trace-birth-HIV-Urban-change-capital-Congo-1920s-led-spread-disease-Africa-beyond.html>.

AHF AND YOUR BENEFITS

Submitted by H.B. Hatton, Program Development Manager, AHF
AHF AIDS Healthcare Foundation officially moved in September of 2014 to our new location at 4300 Bayou Blvd, Suite 17D in Madison Park office complex in Pensacola. If you have not seen the new location, please feel free to call and schedule a day and time to see the new facility. We consolidated into one location bringing our healthcare, pharmacy, lab, prevention & testing and benefits counseling under one roof.



That being said, Christina Kennedy is your benefits counselor. She will be calling you to schedule your benefits appointment counseling and will often try to coordinate her appointment with your appointment to see your healthcare provider or even your lab work. During this appointment, paperwork will be completed which verifies your home address and contact information, updates of who you allow to have access to information about your healthcare, and also other types of information such as how you would like us to contact you and going over general guidelines for Ryan White eligibility and obtaining your updated Certificate of Eligibility.

If you have any questions about Benefits Counseling with AHF or would like to schedule your appointment please call Christina. She can be reached at 850-476-3131.

ADAP UPDATES

Submitted by Donna Trease RN, Community Health Nurse

These past few months have been quite busy due to all the changes in our ADAP program. Our staff, with the help of case managers, were able to assist several clients file for an exemption so that they would not have to pay the Affordable Care Act penalty fee for not having insurance. ADAP has also been able to provide insurance, free of charge, to several clients who fell within certain guidelines set by the State office. We hope to be able to transition more clients next year. Many of the ADAP clients in Escambia County participated in Healthy Relationships, a workshop provided by OASIS and learned a lot about disclosing and relationships with friends, family, and romantic partners. Fortunately, we have moved back to our office on Fairfield and resumed services on December 9th. Thanks to our friends at the Northside location, clients were able to continue getting their medication without interruption while the Fairfield office was being repaired. Thank you for everyone's assistance in allowing the program to run smoothly and I look forward to a fantastic new year with everyone.

UPCOMING ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Upcoming NoFLAC Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended our last meeting in October! At our meetings we go over updates for all the organizations in our area and discuss any changes within the HIV/AIDS community. Our next one-hour meeting will be held at 11am on January 15th at the FDOH—Escambia County in conference rooms 302 and 303. Please join us for our first meeting of the new year and let your voice be heard!



HIV/AIDS 501 Classes

Becoming a tester for one of our test sites in 2015? Contact Maurice Moody at 850-595-6500 ext. 1503 to sign up for a HIV/AIDS 501 class. Classes are held at the FDOH—Escambia County from 9-3pm on the first two days and 9-12 on the third day. The dates for 501 classes in 2015 are February 3-5, April 7-9, June 9-11, August 11-13, and October 13-15.

Okaloosa County Minority HIV/AIDS Task Force, Inc.

Come join one of Okaloosa County's Minority HIV/AIDS Task Force meetings to learn about this non-discriminatory, volunteer, community based organization dedicated to education, empowerment, support and service to the HIV/AIDS disease. Meetings will be held on January 26 and February 23 at 5:30 pm at New Life MBC, 285 Duggan Avenue, Crestview, FL. Contact Tonsiaweda Hayes at 850-682-4186 for more information.



Family Dinner

The Gay Grassroots group of NW Florida invites you to Happy Chi-na Restaurant, 4810 Mobile Hwy in Pensacola at 6:30 pm the *first Thursday of each month* for a family gathering. Come catch up with old friends or make new friends at this affordable buffet dinner.

Florida Department of Health in Escambia County

The FDOH—Escambia County Fairfield location has reopened! The ADAP office location and phone numbers remain the same.

Tobacco Cessation Classes

The FDOH—Escambia County will be beginning smoking cessation classes again. The first two classes will be from 5:30-7:30 pm on January 27th and February 24th. To register contact Vanessa Phillips at 850-595-6500 ext. 1830.

If you have questions or comments for the website staff or would like to submit an article to be posted in the NoFLAC newsletter, please email staff@noflacweb.org. We are always open to suggestions!

AREA 1 HIV/AIDS SERVICES

All numbers are in the 850 area code unless otherwise specified

AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF)

470-8071

Appetite for Life

470-9111

Area 1 HIV/AIDS Program

595-6345

Case Management Services at Sacred Heart Hospital

416-6833

CDC – AIDS Information

1-800-232-4636 and 1-800-232-6348 TTY

Children’s Medical Services – ID Clinic

484-5040 (Pensacola)

HIV Care Center, Inc.

Center for Prevention & Treatment of Infections.

476-3131

A Safe Port Counseling Center

850-723-0042

HIVevolution

429-7551

Lutheran Services Florida

497-7157

OASIS

314-0950 (Ft. Walton Beach)

Okaloosa County Health Department

Ryan White Part C Clinic

833-9240 ext. 2153 (Ft. Walton Beach)

SHAPE Program of Lakeview Center

494-7171

The Florida AIDS Hotline

1-800-FLA-AIDS (352-2437)

The Seton Center (OB/GYN)

416-2400

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Submissions may be sent via email to staff@noflacweb.org.

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