



OPENING NOTES

We hope you all enjoyed the holiday season! Can you believe we have closed out another year? 2018 is now in its infancy and there is still so much work to be done. We have made huge strides in 2017 and we have the opportunity to set higher goals for ourselves in 2018. Here are a few things to keep in mind.

Our community calendar is up and running for the 2018 calendar year so be sure to check it out by visiting <http://www.noflacweb.org/calendar->.

For those who have yet to attend a NoFLAC meeting, we would like to encourage you to get involved. Our next meeting will be held January 18th at the Department of Health in Okaloosa County, 221 Hospital Drive NE, Fort Walton Beach at 11:00am. Our contact information is always posted on the back page of the newsletter so give us a shout if you have any questions!



A NOTE FROM THE HAPC

The Importance of Self-Care:

With so much going on during the busy holiday season coupled with the stress that spending time with family can cause, it's no wonder you might feel worn down and drained. And when we are stressed, self-care is usually the first thing to fall by the wayside when in actuality, it is more important than ever in order to prevent burnout. The bad thing about burnout is, if left untreated, it can lead to more serious issues such as depression, chronic fatigue, insomnia, headaches and increased illness just to name a few. So how do you know if you are suffering from burnout? Here are a few signs that you may want to take time out for some much needed self-care:

Exhaustion; inability to concentrate; angry outbursts or unusual mood swings; feelings of cynicism, frustration and other negative emotions; an overall sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment

If you are experiencing one or more of these symptoms, it is time to take some action such as treating yourself to a relaxing, stress-free weekend. Get some extra sleep and unplug from technology. Whether you take up meditation, listening to music, reading a book, taking a walk or binge watching Game of Thrones, think about what you'll do to relax, and designate time for it. If you've tried all this and symptoms still persist, it's time to talk to your doctor to rule out any physical issues and get a referral to a mental health professional. As many as one in five people struggle with mental illness and then add a chronic illness to the mix and you have a recipe for a real crisis. Fortunately, our area has many qualified mental health professionals ready to offer assistance including our own Ryan White Part B providers: Marvin Chaffin, LMHC, Melissa Nelson, LMHC and Mickettric Mann MSW, LCSW, MCAP. Just give your Ryan White case manager a call for information on making an appointment. Don't suffer in silence and don't wait too long or it may take its toll on your health and relationships in some unexpected ways.

References:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/high-octane-women/201205/where-do-you-fall-the-burnout-continuum>

HIV AND ORAL HEALTH



Retrieved from: <http://aumag.org/2017/11/22/justin-time-hiv-oral-health/>

Persons living with HIV must take extra care of their bodies. This includes ones oral health (specifically teeth and gums). Here are a few things to be aware of.

Oral warts (human papillomavirus, or HPV) can be transmitted sexually. Solution: The warts in your mouth can be frozen off or cut out.

Dry mouth and tooth decay can happen to anyone. Habits such as drinking coffee, alcohol, carbonated drinks, high sugar intake, and smoking cigarettes can give someone dry mouth and tooth decay. Solution: Drink water! Water can help cleanse the mouth and body, prevent dry mouth and cleanse your kidneys and liver, whose health is paramount when living with HIV.

Candidiasis (thrush) is basically a fungus or yeast that grows in your mouth. The symptoms are white lumps or red rashes inside your mouth. It is mostly found on the inside of your cheeks. Thrush can be very painful but there is hope. Solution: Talk to your doctor about being prescribed anti-fungal medicines. Some medicine come in gel form. These medicines may ease your pain, but thrush will have to come out of your system on its own.

Canker sores (aphthous ulcers) are open sores in your mouth and the back of your throat. They are usually caused by the types of food people eat, i.e., tomatoes, juices or anything acidic, and spicy foods. Solution: Some creams and gels work and, along with drinking water, should help soothe the pain.

Cold sores (herpes simplex type 1) happen to just about everyone, but with people infected with HIV the sores come back more often and more severe than in people who do not have HIV. Solution: Antiviral drugs are available to manage the symptoms and reduce the longevity and intensity of the outbreaks.

Gum disease (gingivitis) is a major problem for people living with HIV. This condition causes pain and bleeding, and, if it goes unchecked by a dentist, then teeth will decay and fall out. Solution: Brush your teeth daily. However, it is just as important to floss. When you first start this process, flossing might hurt or your gums may bleed but it will subside in time. Try to floss every night before you go to bed. The number-one thing that is a turn off to any man/woman is bad breath.

Kaposi's sarcoma (KS), a type of cancer, can look like dark purple spots on the gums and on the back of the tongue. Solution: When a HIV-positive person goes on antiretroviral therapy, the chance of having KS decreases exponentially.

Shingles (herpes zoster) can show up in the body as a painful rash, blisters, or lesions, which can show up on one side of the body, usually on the face, which includes the mouth, ears, pharynx (nasal or oral cavity), ears and larynx or torso area. Solution: In 2006, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a vaccine called Zostavax. Zostavax is a live, attenuated vaccine that contains the same strain of virus.

These conditions are all potentially very serious and you should see a dentist or doctor immediately to stay on top of your oral health. It's important! As you grow older with HIV, the virus could grow stronger. Preventative measures should be taken to ensure good healthy teeth and gums. Brush your teeth every day and try to floss before bed. I know that I sound like a toothpaste commercial, but oral health is a serious issue for everyone but especially people living with HIV.

OASIS FLORIDA! *Submitted by William Bedwell, OASIS Florida*

As of January 1st, Okaloosa AIDS Support and Informational Services and HIVolution now operate as OASIS Florida in Area 1 (Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton Counties) with 2 locations in Fort Walton Beach and Pensacola. Existing programs and services remain with an updated, new look!



OASIS FLORIDA SELECTED AS OFFICIAL 2018 FLORIDA AIDS WALK BENEFICIARY

For the first time in the history of the Florida AIDS Walk, a Northwest Florida community-based, AIDS services agency has been selected to be one of the official beneficiaries of the event! Team OASIS Florida will be taking an active part in the battle against HIV and AIDS on Sunday, March 18th during the 5K fundraising walkathon along Fort Lauderdale Beach, to raise awareness of the escalating spread of HIV/AIDS in Florida, while generating funds to provide care for those already affected by the disease. OASIS Florida Executive Director, William Bedwell, will serve as Team Captain.



For over thirty years, HIV/AIDS has plagued **men, women and children** in all of our communities, and while advances in medicine and treatment have been made, the rate of HIV-related death and new infections is still far too high. OASIS Florida won't stop this fight until HIV/AIDS is a thing of the past! To truly make a difference, Team OASIS needs caring people like you to sponsor their participation in the walk. Every dollar raised will be doubled or "matched" and all funds will benefit OASIS Florida and remain in Area 1! To sponsor Team OASIS Florida, please make a tax-deductible donation to their campaign on the Florida AIDS Walk website

<https://floridaaidswalk.donordrive.com/team/OASISFlorida>

And remember, all monetary gifts, large or small, make a direct impact on the goal to save lives here in NW Florida and beyond. Together, we are making a difference!

MEET... STEVEN MATSHESHU-NOJIRI—LSF

Submitted by Michele Bradley, BSW Ryan White/HOPWA Program Manager, Lutheran Services Florida

Steven Matsheshu-Nojiri is a published author, linguist, and ethnographer with a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of North Florida. While most of Steven's immediate family is of Japanese descent, Steven himself is of First Nations (Ilnu) and French Canadian descent. As such, he has a deep interest in the history, language, and cultures of Native North America and Japan.



Steven moved to Pensacola ten years ago. Since arriving, he has worked in Law/Investigations and as a Ryan White Case Manager. While working as a Ryan White Case Manager, Steven decided to follow in his mother's footsteps and explore Special Education. He passed the certification tests to be a Special Education Teacher and took a position as an ESE teacher. Steven excelled in special education until recently returning to his passion of working as a HOPWA case manager in the Ryan White program.

CLEAR: CHOOSING LIFE: EMPOWERMENT! ACTION! RESULTS!

Submitted by Meki Singleton, Health Educator Consultant, Okaloosa

Do you need help making healthy choices for your life? **CLEAR** is a self-help class for people 16 and older living with HIV or at high risk of getting HIV. This class focuses on you (the client) in a one-on-one setting.

The goal of the program is to provide skills needed to improve your quality of life. Please contact Meki Singleton, Health Educator Consultant, at 850-344-0582 if you are interested or for more information.

TRUVADA FOR PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS

Submitted by David Chmiel, Human Services Program Specialist

HIV-serodiscordant couples, in which one partner is HIV-positive and the other is HIV-negative, are now recognized as a priority for HIV prevention interventions. To address this priority all 67 county health departments in Florida will offer the daily HIV prevention pill Truvada by the end of 2018.

It has been recommended that gay and bisexual men consider taking pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, for HIV prevention. According to many health care professionals an ideal candidate for this treatment is HIV-negative men or women with HIV-positive partners. These relationships are called serodiscordant.

For many of these couples, PrEP may offer a security in intimacy among both partners that is beneficial physically, mentally, and emotionally, where HIV is concerned. The fear of a condom breaking during sex or not being used properly can be lessened with the knowledge that medication taken for PrEP, when administered properly, can reduce the risk of HIV infection by 96 to 99 percent. With this added level of protection, the drug has also opened the doors to more serodiscordant relationships.

So far, multiple studies over several years have found the side effects of PrEP to be negligible or minimal, though they do vary by person. As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention puts it, PrEP is just another tool in the toolkit of HIV prevention. In the end, it is up to every couple, serodiscordant or not, to determine the health and happiness strategy that fits best. Many doctors, even in major urban areas, are uninformed that the drug Truvada can be used as HIV prevention though it was approved by the Food and Drug Administration three years ago for this purpose. Lack of information about PrEP, combined with preconceptions about the sexual behavior of those who use it, still prevent physicians from prescribing PrEP to their patients. Here in the four counties that make up Area 1, (Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton), the following physicians and county health departments are currently providing PrEP services:

AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) - 4300 Bayou Blvd 17D, Pensacola, FL 32503 850-476-3131 Most insurances accepted. Uninsured patients are charged a flat fee of \$200 per visit.

Dr. Vishnu Behari - 6160 N. Davis Highway, Suite 10-A, Pensacola, FL 32504 850-208-3848

Dr. Issa Ephtimios - 9013 University Pkwy, Suite H, Pensacola, FL 32514 850-912-8433

Dr. Patrick Anastasio – 917 Mar Walt Dr, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547 850-862-3979 Insured patients only, not accepting new Medicaid patients

FDOH-Escambia County – 1295 West Fairfield, Pensacola, FL 32501

850-595-6500 x1507 Medicaid and uninsured only. Eligibility program w/ sliding fee scale available.

FDOH-Okaloosa County - 221 Hospital Dr. NE, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548

850-833-9055 Eligibility program w/ sliding fee scale available.

FDOH-Walton County, Dr. Venita Morell - 362 FL-83, Defuniak Springs, FL 32433 850-892-8015 Eligibility program w/ sliding fee scale available

Dr. Mitchell E. Whitehead – Baptist Medical Group Primary Care- Airport, 5100 N. 12th Avenue, Suite 201, 850-437-8485

**Truvada for PrEP is available free of charge through Gilead's Patient Assistance Program for qualifying applicants.*

The goal of the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County is to increase the use of PrEP for HIV prevention by increasing educational outreach to physicians and the community. In many cases assistance can be provided by a dedicated "Navigator" to guide serodiscordant couples through the often confusing PrEP process. For more information contact the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County at (850) 595-6500.

QUIT TOBACCO TODAY



Tobacco Free Florida offers a number of free resources to help tobacco users quit.

- Telephone Counseling
1.877.U.CAN.NOW (1.877.822.6669)
Talk to a tobacco counselor who can help you QUIT
- Online Help
You're only a few clicks away from QUITTING, visit quitnow.net.
- Face to Face Counseling
Quit Smoking Now offers group support weekly for 6 weeks.
Tools to Quit is a 90-minute, one time cessation class.

Call 850-682-2552 or 850-595-6500 ext 1830 to

SCHEDULE A QUIT DATE

FREE classes are held every 3rd Thursday
at 5:00 pm CT at 1295 W. Fairfield Dr.
in conference room 302/303.

January 18

February 15

March 15

April 19



MY QUIT DAY IS: _____



Tobacco Free Florida in Escambia County

1295 W. Fairfield Dr. | Pensacola, FL 32501 | 850-595-6500 ext 1830

GILEAD SCIENCES \$3,600 TO \$4,800



Gilead Sciences is set to increase the limit on its Advancing Access Co-pay Support program for Truvada, from \$3,600 to \$4,800, starting January 1, 2018. PrEPcost.org includes this co-pay support in its estimates, and the site's results now reflect the higher co-pay support limit.

HIV Outreach Program

HIV is a Community Issue



Anyone can be infected with HIV

Your socioeconomic status, community, culture and choice of sexual partners can all make you vulnerable to HIV.

What is DOH-Okaloosa doing?



Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa) has launched an HIV Outreach Program with the following goals:

- **Providing testing to everyone.** It is recommended that everyone age 13 and up to have at least one HIV test in their lifetime. Prevention and treatment options are available at DOH-Okaloosa to stop the spread of HIV.
- **Reducing stigma by raising awareness.** HIV testing should be a part of everyone's regular health routine to keep ourselves and our community healthy.

How can you help?

DOH-Okaloosa needs **local nonprofits, community-based organizations, churches**, as well as **public and private businesses** to partner together and allow us to provide **information and free, confidential HIV screenings** at your facilities.

*HIV is testable, preventable and treatable.
With your help, we can keep our community healthy.*



Contact Information: Aaron C. Hill, MPH
Senior Health Educator/Program Manager
850-428-0205 • Aaron.Hill@flhealth.gov
www.HealthyOkaloosa.com

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. These meetings provide consumers a great opportunity to get to know their providers and to let their voices be heard. Our next one-hour meeting will be held at 11am on January 18th at the Department of Health-Okaloosa in Fort Walton Beach, 221 Hospital Drive N.E. Fort Walton Beach, FL.



Escambia County Night Clinic (Free HIV/Syphilis Testing!)

Come on out to FDOH - Escambia County for free rapid Syphilis & HIV testing so you can know your status. Available 4:30 - 6pm on February 1st, March 1st, and April 5th.

HIV/AIDS 500/501 Training Schedule

Are you a HIV tester/counselor in need of scheduling your next 500/501 update? To register for the HIV/AIDS 500/501 training or update, email Ken Griffin at Kenneth.Griffin@flhealth.gov with subject "500/501 Training" or "500/501 Update" respectively.

Classes are held at the FDOH in Escambia County in Conference Room 302 – 303 1295 West Fairfield Drive, Pensacola, FL

AIDS 500/501 Training—3 Day AIDS 500/501 Training

Days 1 & 2 (9:00 am - 4:00 pm CST); Day 3 (9:30 am – 1:30 pm CST)

Tuesday, January 16 – Thursday, January 18

Tuesday April 17 – Thursday April 19

Tuesday July 17 – July 19

Tuesday October 9 – Thursday, October 11

Online Course Completion (2 Days)

Day 1 (9:00 am – 3:00 pm CST); Day 2 (9:00 am – 3:00 pm CST)

Tuesday March 13 – Wednesday March 14 (2 days)

Tuesday September 11 – Wednesday, September 12 (2 day)

AIDS 501 Update (10:00 am – 12:00 pm CST)

Wednesday, February 14

Wednesday, May 16

Wednesday, August 15

Wednesday, November 14

ManREACH gathering April 13-15th

The mission of North Florida ManREACH is to build heart-centered connections and community among gay/bi/queer/trans men in North Florida. The cost of this 3-day gathering is only \$50 and includes cabin accommodations, all meals, and activities. Call OASIS at 850-314-0950 for info.

MSM Subcommittee Meeting

Come join us as we discuss HIV prevention strategies for the MSM population. We will be meeting on March 21st at 11am at 207 E. Main Street, in downtown Pensacola.

Upcoming Awareness Days:

February 7th—National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 10th—National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 20th—National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

April 10th—National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

April 18th—National Transgender HIV Testing Day

May 18th—HIV Vaccine Awareness Day

May 19th—Hepatitis Testing Day

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

May 25-28—Memorial Day Weekend

June 5th—HIV Long-Term Survivors Awareness Day

June 27th—National HIV Testing Day

** If you will be hosting an event or performing testing for these events please contact Loretta Turner at Loretta.Turner@flhealth.gov for availability of brochures/incentives. If you're interested in partnering with the FDOH with HIV testing in the mobile unit, contact Ken Griffin at Kenneth.Griffin@flhealth.gov.



7008 N. Palafox Street
Pensacola, FL 32503

Phone: 850-497-7157
Email: NoFLACinfo@gmail.com
Website: www.noflacweb.org

Together We Can Achieve More.

Let us help you get connected to all the services in Northwest Florida for people living with HIV and AIDS. We are the planning body for Ryan White services and we want to assist in creating success, resources, and fuller lives for those living with HIV/AIDS. Please visit www.noflacweb.org for all of our online resources or call our Lead Agency at 850-497-7197 to get connected with a case manager.

NoFLAC News is published quarterly by the Northwest Florida AIDS/HIV Consortium. Submissions may be sent via email to noflacinfo@gmail.com.

NoFLAC News Staff reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and content.

ADAP UPDATE

Submitted by Donna Trease, Senior Registered Nurse, Escambia

The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County ADAP program has finished up the year with a few great changes. For qualified clients who work and make between \$12,060-\$48,240 per year, ADAP can provide premium assistance from a variety of qualified insurance plans selected by ADAP. This allows the client to pick up his or her medication from a retail pharmacy instead of the health department. Clients will be able to pick up their medications after business hours and on the weekends. For clients that pick up their medicine at the health department a new program that allows for a 90 days supply is being offered to eligible clients. Eligible clients are on time with their ADAP 6 month re-enrollments, have picked up their medications on time 11 out of 12 months, have labs drawn for their provider appointments and maintain an undetectable viral load.

ADAP is also working with newly diagnosed clients to get their medications to them sooner. Newly diagnosed clients fill out ADAP enrollment paperwork at their first visit so that they can get in to care faster and get their medications quickly. Because of the close working relationship and hard work of Sacred Heart, Lutheran Services, AHF, and Florida Department of Health in Escambia County, we are able to get clients into care quickly. This type of teamwork has been working great in Okaloosa county with OASIS and FDOH-Okaloosa partnering to get clients in care and on medicine faster.



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