
VIRTUAL: Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes of

Thursday, April 6th, 2023

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Office of HIV Planning, 340 N. 12th St., Suite 320, Philadelphia PA 19107

Present: Michael Cappuccilli, Alan Edelstein (Co-Chair), David Gana

Guests:

Excused: Adam Williams (Co-chair), Ameenah McCann-Wood

Staff: Sofia Moletteri, Mari Ross-Russell, Beth Celeste, Tiffany Dominique, Kevin Trinh

Call to Order: A. Edelstein called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Introductions: A. Edelstein skipped the introductions.

Approval of Agenda:

A. Edelstein referred to the April 2023 Finance Committee agenda and asked for a motion to approve. **Motion:** M. Cappuccilli motioned; D. Gana seconded to approve the April Finance Committee agenda. **Motion passed:** 3 in favor, 1 abstaining. The April Finance Committee 2023 agenda were approved.

Approval of Minutes (March 2nd, 2023):

A. Edelstein referred to the March 2023 Finance Committee minutes. M. Cappuccilli said there was a paragraph that mentioned 4 regions instead of 3 regions. **Motion:** M. Cappuccilli motioned; A. Edelstein seconded to approve the amended March 2023 meeting minutes. **Motion passed:** 3 in favor. The amended March 2023 Minutes was approved.

Report of Co-chairs:

None.

Report of Staff:

None.

Discussion Items:

-Allocation Percentage Data-

M. Ross-Russell referred to the HIV Prevalence 2011 to 2021 with updated numbers document. She highlighted a 3-year period from 2019 to 2021. She said that from 2018 to 2019, the prevalence numbers in the PA counties had increased from 4,245 to 5,446, an increase of around 1,200 people.

M. Cappuccilli asked if Dr. K. Brady had approved the numbers from the new dataset from the State of PA. M. Ross-Russell said Dr. K. Brady had approved the dataset. She said the DHH staff members were unable to be present because they had other obligations. She said she would attempt to explain the situation with the dataset in their stead. M. Ross-Russell said that Philadelphia had been tracking the current residence of people living with HIV (PLWH) rather than the residence of the PLWH at diagnosis. She returned to the HIV Prevalence from 2011 to 2021 numbers and said that the chart displayed the current residence of PLWH.

The PA state epidemiologist reviewed the database and presented the Finance Committee with a closed dataset as opposed to the previous open dataset. M. Ross-Russell said that Dr. K. Brady had accepted the new dataset as fairly accurate. M. Cappuccilli asked if they needed to use the alternative method of using the last 10 years of Prevalence data for their allocations process. M. Ross-Russell confirmed that they did not have to use the method.

Referencing the HIV Prevalence from 2011 to 2021 numbers, she noted that prevalence numbers for Philadelphia had remained consistent from 2019 to 2021. She said there were some shifts with NJ's numbers where the prevalence numbers had gone down before going back up in the last 3 years. A. Edelstein asked if there was a narrative included with the new dataset. M. Ross-Russell said she would ask Dr. G. Obiri if there were documentation to go along with the dataset. M. Ross-Russell believed that Dr. G. Obiri had alluded in his original letter that the dataset was created according to county addresses.

A. Edelstein said it would be helpful if they had a brief overview of why the new dataset was preferred over the old one. He said the members of the Planning Council would have to review and digest this information.

M. Ross-Russell said she had just messaged Dr. K. Brady and was told that she would be sent a written message explaining why the numbers in the dataset were higher. M. Ross-Russell said that they would not receive the message at that point. A. Edelstein said that as long as it was before next week when they would need to explain the situation to the Planning Council.

M. Ross-Russell referred to the Draft EMA Allocations 2023-2024 document she had sent to the committee before the meeting. She said the top part of the document listed the current plan for the current fiscal year in 2023-2024 using the old 2020 prevalence data. She noted that the document had a small typo that said "2022-2023" instead of "2023-2024." She said that under the current plan, Philadelphia had increased the Philadelphia allocation by \$186, 821. Under Philadelphia's number, the document showed that the PA counties allocation had decreased by \$267, 554 and that the NJ allocation had increased by \$80,000. She asked the committee to bring their attention to the second half of the document. She said that this was the draft allocation using the new dataset that they had obtained. She noted that there were significant shifts with the new

data. Philadelphia county would lose \$355,706. NJ would lose \$84,032 in the allocation. The PA counties would gain \$439, 739. M. Ross-Russell said if they had held onto the current numbers that they do now, the shifts would be greater when they do the allocations in July. M. Ross-Russell said she would create an additional spreadsheet using the new 2020 dataset before they could discuss this with the Planning Council on allocations.

M. Cappuccilli asked when they would receive the final award. M. Ross-Russell said they should have received it last month. She suspected the final award release was still pending and would be arriving in April.

A. Edelstein suggested gradually implementing the new dataset into the equation for allocations throughout multiple years instead of using the new dataset immediately. He had hoped that a gradual implementation would reduce the impact of a dramatic change in allocation. He said that taking \$355,000 in funding from one country would be disruptive to services. M. Cappuccilli said that would mean they would be committed to using false numbers for multiple years. A. Edelstein said he was concerned that places such as Philadelphia county who have a significant portion of the epidemic would receive less resources that they could not afford to lose. He regretted that they could not have another meeting to discuss the issue. M. Ross-Russell said their next steps would depend on the final award. She said there is a possibility that of a level award, there would be an increase in funding. She said this increase could offset the effects of the reduction in allocations for Philadelphia. She added that they should remember that there was carry-over funding that they could use to offset the reductions. M. Ross-Russell said that gradually moving towards the correct allocations could be more problematic. A. Edelstein said he had withdrawn his suggestion.

A. Edelstein said there were three columns in the spreadsheet representing different possible amounts of funding the final award could be. He asked if estimating for this many scenarios was normal. M. Ross-Russell confirmed this was the normal procedure. A. Edelstein asked the committee if there was an alternative method to allocating the funds other than using the 2020 dataset. M. Ross-Russell said that using the 2020 numbers would be consistent with theory policy. Her concern was that the spreadsheet was created with the 2020 dataset and not the 2021 dataset, which they would be using in July. A. Edelstein confirmed with M. Ross-Russell that the 2021 dataset was not available when they had created the spreadsheet. M. Ross-Russell said she had not completed an allocation spreadsheet for the 2021 dataset for this fiscal year because she had doubted that she would receive the 2022 dataset soon. A. Edelstein confirmed with M. Ross-Russell that they had used the 2020 dataset for the summer allocations and that this was normal procedure.

A. Edelstein asked if they could use the 2021 dataset. M. Ross-Russell said that she could after creating the spreadsheet and having it peer-reviewed. M. Cappuccilli said that there was nothing stopping them from using the 2021 dataset and confirmed with M. Ross-Russell that the dataset was adequate. M. Ross-Russell said she was saving the 2021 dataset to be used for the next summer fiscal year. A. Edelstein asked if they propose a vote to use the 2021 data. He asked what the process would be like if they had decided to use the 2021 data. M. Ross-Russell said that she believed that all they had to do was be able to explain the 2021 data and not have it negatively affect the allocations of each county by having the numbers fluctuate drastically. A.

Edelstein said the data should only fluctuate for one year and then return to a consistent pattern. M. Ross-Russell said this would be the expectation as long as they use the most recent data as opposed to using the current dataset and then updating it next year.

A. Edelstein asked again if they could decide as a committee to use the 2021 numbers and then send it forward to the Planning Council. M. Ross-Russell agreed with this suggestion. She added that since they have both data sets for 2020 and 2021, the Planning Council could decide which numbers they wanted to use. A. Edelstein suggested that they should persuade the Planning Council to choose the 2021 data with a recommendation. A. Edelstein said they should explain their position. He asked the committee for their input. M. Cappuccilli and D. Gana agreed with A. Edelstein's suggestion.

Motion: M. Cappuccilli motioned to bring a proposal to use the 2021 prevalence data for the allocations process to the HIV Integrated Planning Council (HIPC), as recommended by the Finance Committee. D. Gana seconded the motion.

Motion passed: 2 in favor and 1 abstaining. The motion to vote on using the 2021 prevalence data as the basis for allocation in the next HIPC meeting was passed.

M. Ross-Russell sent the new allocations spreadsheet using the 2021 data to the committee. A. Edelstein said that Philadelphia county and the PA counties would receive less money. Philadelphia county would lose \$446,324 in allocations instead of losing \$355,706. The PA counties would see an increase of \$421,970 instead of \$439,739 with the 2020 dataset. The NJ counties' allocation would be increased to \$24, 354 instead of decreasing by \$84, 032.

-Third Quarter Spending Report-

M. Ross-Russell referred to the 3rd Quarter Spending Report. The 3rd Quarter Spending report included information about the 3 regions in the EMA, systemwide information, Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI), MAI Systemwide and carryforward funds. M. Ross-Russell said the Systemwide funds and the MAI Systemwide had represented funds that were unspent because of vacant positions in the city government. She said the Planning Council support budget had been underspent. She said this was included because they had open positions for 6 months. A. Edelstein asked if the committee was a part of the Systemwide category. M. Ross-Russell confirmed he was correct. M. Ross-Russell said that the document had represented the entire EMA spending report. She noted that EMA had an underspending of \$1,748,339.

M. Ross-Russell asked the committee to direct their attention to the spending in Philadelphia. She said that the underspending in Philadelphia had originated in ambulatory outpatient medical care and case management. She said ambulatory medical care had underspending due to invoicing. She said case management had underspending due to turnovers. She said this spreadsheet was created using the information she had at the time and if there were any corrections or feedback between now and the HIPC meeting, she would revisit this spreadsheet to make the changes.

M. Ross-Russell said there was not much underspending in the drug reimbursement program. She was surprised that there was underspending in mental health therapy. She reasoned that there was underspending because they had used telehealth instead of in-person therapy sessions. She said there was underspending in outpatient substance abuse treatment. She believed there was underspending in this service category because the service was underutilized. She said it was because people were still uncomfortable with attending in-person meetings. M. Ross-Russell recalled an article that both she and T. Dominique had read about a common belief that fentanyl had protected them from COVID-19 and other illnesses. She believed that people had decided to stop taking vaccines and other services because of this belief. She said the information about underspending had come from the last quarter up to November 2022.

Emergency financial assistance, emergency financial assistance/AIDS Pharmaceutical assistance, emergency financial assistance in housing and food bank/home-delivered meals had overspent their budget. M. Ross-Russell explained there was overspending because people were using the COVID-19 support programs before instead of the Ryan White-funded service. M. Ross-Russell anticipated that more people would be using the Ryan White-funded services now that some COVID-19 support programs were expiring. She said that transportation had underspent their budget because people were still afraid of taking risks by being in crowded places. T. Dominique asked if transportation had included SEPTA. M. Ross-Russell replied that transportation had primarily included SEPTA.

M. Ross-Russell continued down the spreadsheet to spending in the PA counties. She said that ambulatory care underspending was due most likely to invoicing. She said case management services had underspent their budget due to most likely turnovers and changes in personnel. She said that mental health therapy, nutritional services and substance abuse treatment had gone over their budgets slightly. She said that oral healthcare had underspent its budget slightly. She said that emergency financial assistance and emergency financial assistance AIDS pharmacy assistance and food bank/home-delivered meals had underspent their budgets. She said this information was surprising considering that emergency financial assistance and food bank/home-delivered meals were overspent in other locations. M. Ross-Russell said she would need to investigate why these services appear to be underutilized. She had said that housing assistance was underspent by 61%. She said that transportation services were over budget by 14%. She said the PA counties were underspent by 6% or \$152,208. She said in some instances, underspending could be attributed to late invoicing or processing.

M. Ross-Russell reviewed the finances for New Jersey. She said that ambulatory care and case management were underspent. She said likely due to late invoicing and staff turnovers. She said that mental health services were underspent by 12%. Oral health care was also underutilized and underspent its budget by 6%. She said that emergency financial assistance pharmacy and emergency financial assistance housing were underspent by 84%. She said that food bank and home-delivered meal services had underspent their budget by 80%. Like with the PA counties, M. Ross-Russell said she would do a follow-up to understand why these services had been underspent. M. Ross-Russell said that New Jersey had typically overspent its transportation budget by this time of the year. Currently, transportation services have underspent their budget by 20%.

M. Cappuccilli asked why there was more spending for emergency financial assistance in Philadelphia than there was in the PA counties. M. Ross-Russell believed that there were multiple factors that could have attributed to this. She said that many of the COVID-19 support programs had expired. She said that Philadelphia could have a greater volume of people who need the services more than the other counties. She added that many people could underutilize a service because they were not aware that the service was available.

M- Ross-Russell reviewed the systemwide expenditures. She said that information and referral services underspent by 48%. She believed that this was underspent because the services have had three open positions. She said that they would not get a clear picture of the staffing issue until the end of the month. She said that the Planning Council support had underutilized their budget by 23% because they have not been able to use all of their resources such as the conference room. M. Ross-Russell reviewed the MAI expenditures and found that MAI had overspent its budget by 4%. She said this may have been a clerical error.

A. Edelstein asked if A. McCann-Woods or another person representing the city government would be available next week at the HIPC meeting. M. Ross-Russell said that there would be a city representative available next week. She added that she would be attending a 2 day CDC/HRSA meeting and said the co-chairs for the meeting would be attending virtually. A. Edelstein asked if there wasn't a representative at the meeting, would M. Ross-Russell be able to send the report to the city. M. Ross-Russell said she would be able to send a report concerning some of the categories that showed unusual underspending. She said she would also ask why there was more emergency financial assistance spending in Philadelphia.

Any Other Business:

None.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

A. Edelstein called for a motion to adjourn. **Motion:** M. Cappuccilli motioned, D. Gana seconded to adjourn the April 2023 Finance Committee meeting. **Motion passed:** All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Trinh, staff

Handouts distributed at the meeting:

- April 2023 Meeting Agenda
- March 2023 Minutes
- OHP 3rd Quarter Spending Ryan White Part A (EXCEL)
- Draft ema allocations 2023-2024 Final with new PLWH numbers (EXCEL)
- HIV Prevalence 2011 to 2021 with updated numbers (EXCEL)