

Say what? Key messages!

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA), HIV Prevention Program and Community Services Program have prioritized four sexual health messages for clients. Staff obtained input from stakeholders, including the Oregon HIV/Sexually Transmitted Infection/Viral Hepatitis Integrated Planning Group members, Part B care staff (outside the Portland metropolitan area) and clients and staff at local service agencies.



The following messages were determined to be most important:

- 1) Regular testing for STDs and hepatitis is just as important as regular HIV testing.
- 2) Prepare before you party. Protect yourself and your partners.
- 3) Taking your medications helps protect your partners.
- 4) You're not alone. We are here to help.

These messages are intended to be used across the continuum of care so that clients hear consistent information when receiving various services (e.g., testing, partner notification, case management). Staff members are encouraged to post these messages by their desks for easy reference. A one-page document with talking points is available at <http://1.usa.gov/VBiU0C>.

Rapid HIV home testing

The FDA-approved OraQuick rapid HIV test is now available for in-home use. The oral-swab test kit can be purchased for approximately \$40 at pharmacies such as CVS and Walgreens, as well as the OraSure website (<http://www.orasure.com>).

The availability of a rapid HIV home test reflects a shift away from the belief that all individuals need pre- and post-test counseling. This new option helps empower people to make their own health care decisions about when and how they get tested. Most importantly, home testing may help increase the number of people who learn their status and access care and treatment. Even as public health resources are diminishing in Oregon, there is a clear need to expand HIV testing and decrease

the proportion of HIV-positive Oregonians diagnosed late in the course of infection (40%!).



OraSure offers around-the-clock referral services for home test users and hopes to launch a

similar test for hepatitis C in the near future. Clients who inquire about rapid HIV home testing should be assured that the test is FDA-approved and encouraged to follow the test directions.

For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/R7ryfO>.

New technology-based programs

Oregon is implementing new technology-based HIV prevention programs with demonstration project funding from CDC. These projects are intended to make services easily accessible to clients, to conserve staff time and resources required for face-to-face interaction and to support the goals of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy. Programs include:

- 1) An HIV test reminder service targeting men who have sex with men (MSM) and persons who inject drugs (PWID). Reminders will be sent every three-six months via text message, email or voice message.
- 2) An HIV medication adherence and prescription refill reminder service for people living with HIV, delivered via text message, email or voice message.
- 3) Weekly sexual health message services for HIV-negative and HIV-positive people, delivered via text message, email or voice message.
- 4) Social Networks Strategy (SNS) HIV testing programs with online components, including recruitment, promotion and recruiter training.
- 5) HIV prevention promotion on partner agency websites, including the use of badges (graphics with links to HIV-related websites).

Through a competitive funding process, OHA awarded funding to Internet Sexuality Information Services (ISIS) in September 2012. ISIS was funded to develop and implement the messaging systems described above (1–3) and a social marketing campaign promoting the services. The messaging services are expected to become available in mid-November. Once available, any Oregonian may use them. More information about the services is forthcoming.

Through a separate competitive funding process, OHA awarded funding to three additional contractors in September 2012. HIV Alliance and the Multnomah County Health Department (MCHD) are implementing SNS using new technologies. HIV Alliance and Cascade AIDS Project (CAP) are partnering with agencies to add HIV prevention content on their websites. HIV Alliance, MCHD and CAP are also funded to help enroll clients in reminder services.

Upcoming events

Transgender Day of Remembrance

Nov. 20

Learn more at <http://www.transgenderdor.org>.

World AIDS Day

Dec. 1

Visit <http://www.WorldAIDSDayNW.org> to register or submit an event.

Program contacts

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