

This newsletter is organized to align the updates with Strategies from the ***Laying a Foundation for Getting to Zero: California's Integrated HIV Surveillance, Prevention, and Care Plan*** (Integrated Plan). The [Integrated Plan](#) is available on the Office of AIDS' (OA) website.

INSIDE:

- HIV Awareness
- Updates
- Strategic Plan
- Strategy A
- Strategy B
- Strategy G
- Strategy J
- Strategy K

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

Lauren Granillo accepted a promotion to Research Scientist III in the Care Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM) in ADAP and Care Evaluation and Informatics Branch (ACEI) Branch. As the lead research scientist in the CEM section of the ACEI Branch, Lauren will work on developing the new HIV Care Connect (HCC) system that will replace ARIES, as well as federal reporting and program evaluations.

Lauren started her career with the state at the Department of Developmental Services as a graduate student assistant and then research data analyst working on risk mitigation and adverse event prevention. She then came over to OA as a research scientist II working in the Surveillance and Prevention Evaluation and Reporting (SuPER) Branch as the data manager for the California Medical Monitoring Project. Prior to coming at the state, Lauren worked on a variety of projects at UC Davis looking into environmental and nutritional factors that impact developmental health while she worked on her PhD in Epidemiology.

Outside of work, Lauren enjoys getting outdoors and volunteering doing park clean-ups on the weekends, reading in the early morning, or walking along the Davis Arboretum! She is also always trying new Pinterest recipes and probably has too many coffee making devices for one apartment.



Lauren is excited for the opportunity to work in the ACEI Branch, and we are very excited to have her join CEM as well!

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Join the [Training & Health Equity Collaborative](#) in partnership with [Pacific AIDS Education & Training Center](#), [UCLA CHIPTS](#), [APLA Health](#) and [San Francisco AIDS Foundation](#) on



- For directors, managers, and administrators please use the “Administrator” ticket; and
- For those that work in government institutions and **do not provide services or manage services**, please use the “Government” ticket.

Any questions may be sent to JB Del Rosario at janbing.delrosario@ucsf.edu.

HIV AWARENESS

September 18 National HIV/AIDS and Aging Awareness Day (NHAAD).

NHAAAD is observed to bring awareness to the increasing number of people living long and full lives with HIV. It is also meant to highlight the complex issues related to aging with HIV such as pre-existing health conditions, social and mental health needs, and treatment for adults 50 and older.

September 27 National Gay Men’s HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NGMHAAD).

NGMHAAD is observed to bring attention to the issues related to HIV/AIDS among gay and bisexual men and encourage testing and learning about the many prevention options available. This day also encourages conversation around stigma, prevention, and the autonomy in knowing your status.

GENERAL UPDATES

➤ COVID-19

OA is committed to providing updated information related to COVID-19. We have disseminated a number of documents in an effort to keep our clients and stakeholders informed. Please refer to our [OA website](#) to stay informed.

September 18-19 in Sacramento, CA for their first ever Collaboration in Care Conference: Improving HIV and Aging Services!

Experts from across the Western U.S. will share best practices in case management, clinical care, social services, community building, and more! Continuing education credits will be available for select sessions. **Registration for this conference is FREE.**

The agenda and hotel accommodations can be found at the following website: collaborationincare.org

Registration is open on eventbrite: <https://collaborationincare2023.eventbrite.com>.

There are three different ticket types:

- For any direct service providers please use the “Service Provider” ticket;

> Mpox

OA is committed to providing updated information related to mpox. We have partnered with the Division of Communicable Disease Control (DCDC), a program within the Center of Infectious Diseases and have disseminated a number of documents in an effort to keep our clients and stakeholders informed. Please refer to the [DCDC website](#) to stay informed.

[Spanish mpox digital assets](#) are available for LHJs and CBOs.

> Racial Justice and Health Equity

The Racial & Health Equity (RHE) workgroup aims to gain insight and understanding of racial and health equity efforts throughout the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and take next steps towards advancing RHE in our work. The workgroup has formed subcommittees to address community stakeholder engagement challenges, improve OA policy and practices to support RHE and increasing OA knowledge and attitude on RHE among leadership and staff.

> HIV/STD/HCV Integration

Now that the Emergency Declaration has ended and the COVID-19 response is winding down, we are reinitiating our integration discussions and moving forward with the necessary steps to integrate our HIV, STI, and HCV programs into a single new Division. We will continue to keep you apprised on our journey!

> Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE)

The CDC has announced that California has received a Part A Supplemental PrEP Award in the amount of \$375,000. This grant is aimed at improving social marketing and PrEP navigation training in the six EHE counties: Alameda, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernadino, and San Diego. We will be sharing more about

this project in future editions of *The OA Voice*.

ENDING THE EPIDEMICS STRATEGIC PLAN OA/STD

CDPH, OA and the Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Branch (STD CB) introduced the California Strategic Plan's Implementation Blueprint at an informational webinar on August 31st. The webinar was for HIV/STI/HCV Stakeholders throughout California.

The meeting recording and materials will be distributed via our Stakeholder Listserv within the next couple of weeks. [Additional resources](#) to help orient you to the Strategic Plan's Implementation Blueprint are linked below. Thank you to all who attended and asked some great questions. And thank you for all you do to end the syndemic of HIV, STIs and HCV in California!

- <https://facenteconsulting.com/cdph-technical-assistance-request-portal/>



Dear Healthcare Providers,

The Pacific AIDS Education & Training Center – Central Valley & Northern Interior, in collaboration with OA, would like to invite you to [register for our upcoming webinar](#):

What's New with Flu, RSV, and COVID-19 Vaccines

Wednesday, October 4, 2023, 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Speaker: Caterina Liu, MD, MPH • CDPH, Public Health Medical Officer, Immunization Branch

Audience: Medical providers, nurses, pharmacists, medical assistants, public health providers, case managers, health educators, navigators, clinic managers, program managers

Description: This 90-minute webinar will discuss epidemiology, seasonality, and new vaccine recommendations for influenza, RSV, and COVID-19. The content will also include guidelines for these and other vaccines for people with HIV.

Learning Objectives: Describe current flu and COVID-19 vaccination recommendations for people with HIV. Summarize new RSV vaccine options. Review approaches to address patient vaccine concerns.

CEU credits (1.5 units) are pending, with further information to follow. Please email aetc@ucdavis.edu with any [questions or difficulties](#).

STRATEGY A

Improve Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Utilization:

➤ PrEP-Assistance Program (AP)

As of August 28, 2023, there are 204 PrEP-AP enrollment sites and 189 clinical provider sites that currently make up the PrEP-AP Provider network.

A [comprehensive list of the PrEP-AP Provider Network](https://cdphdata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6878d3a1c9724418aebfea96878cd5b2) can be found at <https://cdphdata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6878d3a1c9724418aebfea96878cd5b2>.

[Data on active PrEP-AP clients](#) can be found in the three tables displayed on page 6 of this newsletter.

STRATEGY B

Increase and Improve HIV Testing:

OA continues to implement its Building Healthy Online Communities (BHOC) self-testing program to allow for rapid OraQuick test orders in all jurisdictions in California.

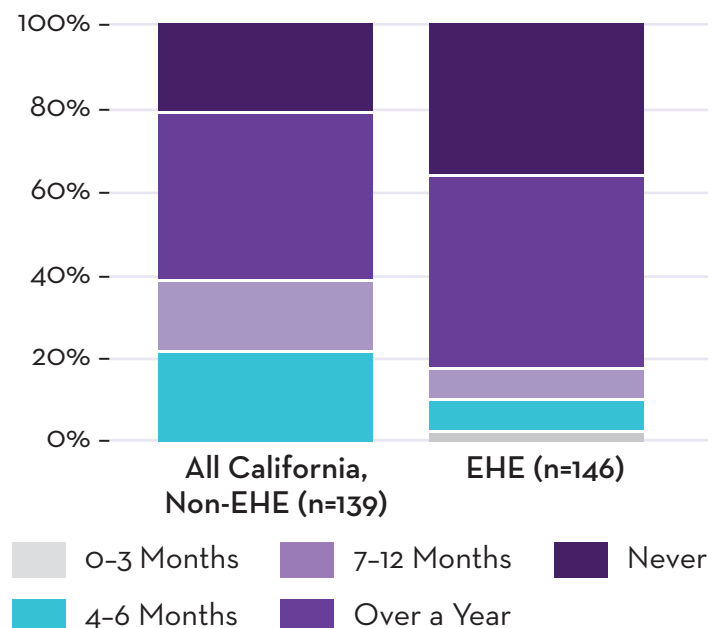
TAKEMEHOME



The program, [TakeMeHome](https://takemehome.org) (<https://takemehome.org>), is advertised on gay dating apps, where users see an ad for home testing and are offered a free HIV-home test kit.

In July, 139 individuals in 24 counties ordered self-test kits, with 120 (86.3%) individuals ordering 2 tests. Additionally, OA's existing TakeMeHome Program continues in the six California Consortium Phase I Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) in America counties. In the first 35 months, between September 1, 2020, and

HIV Test History Among Individuals Who Ordered TakeMeHome Kits, July 2023



July 31, 2023, 6691 tests have been distributed. This month, mail-in lab tests (including dried blood spot tests for HIV, syphilis, and Hepatitis C, as well as 3-site tests for gonorrhea and chlamydia) accounted for 83 (86.9%) of the 146 total tests distributed in EHE counties.

Additional Key Characteristics	EHE	All California, Non-EHE
Of those sharing their gender, were cisgender men	70.2%	74.7%
Of those sharing their race or ethnicity, identify as Hispanic or Latinx	31.0%	55.8%
Were 17-29 years old	48.6%	38.9%
Of those sharing their number of sex partners, reported 3 or more in the past year	47.1%	51.7%

Since September 2020, 758 test kit recipients have completed the anonymous follow up survey from EHE counties; there have been 190 responses from the California expansion since January 2023. Highlights from the survey results include:

	EHE	All California, Non-EHE
Would recommend TakeMeHome to a friend	94.4%	94.7%
Identify as a man who has sex with other men	65.3%	67.9%
Reported having been diagnosed with an STI in the past year	9.1%	7.9%

STRATEGY G

Improve Availability of HIV Care:

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has released its draft of the 2022-23 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for public comment prior to submittal to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The CAPER reports on specified federal housing and economic assistance allocated by the state, which includes the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program, for the period July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

The CAPER draft is available on [HCD's website](https://www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-and-research/plans-and-reports) at <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/policy-and-research/plans-and-reports>, for public comment from through September 17, 2023 at 5 PM PST.

There will also be a public hearing on September 7th at 1 PM. For an invite to the hearing or to submit any questions or public comments, [contact HCD](mailto:CAPER@hcd.ca.gov) at CAPER@hcd.ca.gov. More information is available on [their website](#).

STRATEGY J

Increase Rates of Insurance/ Benefits Coverage for PLWH or on PrEP:

As of August 28, 2023, the number of ADAP clients enrolled in each respective ADAP Insurance Assistance Program are shown in the [chart at the top of page 7](#).

(continued on page 7)

Active PrEP-AP Clients by Age and Insurance Coverage:

Current Age	PrEP-AP Only		PrEP-AP With Medi-Cal		PrEP-AP With Medicare		PrEP-AP With Private Insurance		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
18 - 24	319	9%	1	0%	---	---	35	1%	355	10%
25 - 34	1,223	34%	1	0%	1	0%	235	7%	1,460	41%
35 - 44	858	24%	---	---	3	0%	168	5%	1,029	29%
45 - 64	383	11%	1	0%	21	1%	92	3%	497	14%
65+	18	1%	---	---	190	5%	8	0%	216	6%
TOTAL	2,801	79%	3	0%	215	6%	538	15%	3,557	100%

Active PrEP-AP Clients by Age and Race/Ethnicity:

Current Age	Latinx		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		White		More Than One Race Reported		Decline to Provide		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
18 - 24	199	6%	---	---	42	1%	13	0%	2	0%	65	2%	1	0%	33	1%	355	10%
25 - 34	856	24%	2	0%	135	4%	94	3%	5	0%	284	8%	8	0%	76	2%	1,460	41%
35 - 44	636	18%	5	0%	88	2%	40	1%	5	0%	210	6%	8	0%	37	1%	1,029	29%
45 - 64	289	8%	---	---	41	1%	16	0%	2	0%	135	4%	1	0%	13	0%	497	14%
65+	22	1%	---	---	3	0%	3	0%	---	---	181	5%	---	---	7	0%	216	6%
TOTAL	2,002	56%	7	0%	309	9%	166	5%	14	0%	875	25%	18	1%	166	5%	3,557	100%

Active PrEP-AP Clients by Gender and Race/Ethnicity:

Gender	Latinx		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		White		More Than One Race Reported		Decline to Provide		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	78	2%	---	---	6	0%	8	0%	1	0%	15	0%	---	---	5	0%	113	3%
Male	1,715	48%	6	0%	282	8%	152	4%	13	0%	832	23%	18	1%	145	4%	3,163	89%
Trans	183	5%	---	---	18	1%	5	0%	---	---	16	0%	---	---	7	0%	229	6%
Unknown	26	1%	1	0%	3	0%	1	0%	---	---	12	0%	---	---	9	0%	52	1%
TOTAL	2,002	56%	7	0%	309	9%	166	5%	14	0%	875	25%	18	1%	166	5%	3,557	100%

All PrEP-AP charts prepared by: ADAP Fiscal Forecasting Evaluation and Monitoring (AFFEM) Section, ADAP and Care Evaluation and Informatics Branch, Office of AIDS. Client was eligible for PrEP-AP as of run date: 08/31/2023 at 12:02:04 AM
Data source: ADAP Enrollment System. Site assignments are based on the site that submitted the most recent application.

ADAP Insurance Assistance Program	Number of Clients Enrolled	Percentage Change from July
Employer Based Health Insurance Premium Payment (EB-HIPP) Program	497	- 2.74%
Office of AIDS Health Insurance Premium Payment (OA-HIPP) Program	5,351	- 2.26%
Medicare Part D Premium Payment (MDPP) Program	397	- 28.47%
Total	6,245	- 4.52%

Source: ADAP Enrollment System

STRATEGY K

Increase and Improve HIV Prevention and Support Services for People Who Use Drugs:

➤ Incarceration: A Public Health Crisis

The [National Institute for Health Care Management \(NIHCM\)](#) Foundation published an [infographic](#) delving into the role incarceration plays in exacerbating inequality. The infographic highlights that drug and alcohol intoxication related deaths among state and federal prisoners quadrupled between 2008 – 2018. The infographic references a study that suggests that each year spent in prison corresponds with a two-year reduction in life expectancy.

➤ Research: Use of MOUD Among Adults with Past-Year Opioids Use Disorders in the US, 2021

The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) [published research](#) analyzing data from the 2021 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) to find that approximately 1 in 5 adults with past-year opioid use disorder (OUD) received medication for OUD (MOUD). Certain groups, such as Black adults, women,

unemployed and nonmetropolitan residents, were substantially less likely to receive MOUD.

➤ Training: Enhancing Harm Reduction Services in Health Departments - Harm Reduction Vending Machines

Harm reduction vending machines (HRVMs) provide an easily accessible method for people who use drugs (PWUD) to obtain a range of risk reduction supplies and resources. A webinar developed by The National Council for Mental Wellbeing will include people in the field telling their stories of harm reduction programs that have successfully implemented HRVMs.

Training Date & Time: Sep 19, 2023, 10:30 AM

[Register for the Training Webinar](#)

[Harm Reduction Vending Machines Brief](#)

For [questions regarding this issue of *The OA Voice*](#), please send an e-mail to angelique.skinner@cdph.ca.gov.