

Project Press

DIRECTOR'S NOTE - HAPPY NEW YEAR

Happy 2016! As we move forward, it's also important to reflect on what we've accomplished. Have you thought about what you're proud of or grateful for in 2015? One of the defining successes of our year was that 85% of patients who get their medical care at The Project of Primary Health Care were virally suppressed. This clearly demonstrates the power of our patients/clients to take charge of their health because being undetectable is a badge of pride and ongoing commitment.



The number of folks with undetectable viral loads also highlights the role of support and education that our staff provides to take away as many barriers as possible to medication and other life needs. In order to support our work in removing barriers, we were able to increase our amount of grant funding from the Iowa Department of Public Health this past year. The funding provided for additional services including extra housing, rental and utility assistance for short-term needs as well as increased mental health services offered on-site by hiring a behavioral health consultant for our program, Anneke.

Thank you for partnering with us last year and we look forward to working with you in 2016. Have a healthy and happy year!

Best wishes,

Greg Gross, HIV Program Director



Happy New Year! - The Project of PHC staff



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SAVE THE DATE

May 17th, 2016

Primary Leader's in Health Awards reception dinner will be held on May 17th, 2016 at Forte in downtown Des Moines.

More info to come.



FREE HIV/STI TESTING AVAILABLE IN AMES

Primary Health Care's Story County clinic has started offering HIV testing and screening for other STI such as Syphilis, Chlamydia, and Gonorrhea, for people living in Ames and surrounding areas.

It is being offered through a grant program designed to engage people considered to be in the high risk populations, to get tested.

It is available Monday - Thursdays from 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM. It is free of charge.

Walk-ins are welcome or call to schedule an appointment at 515-232-0628.

Primary Health Care is located at 3510 Lincoln Way in Ames.

To learn more about CLEAR, visit www.projecthim.org/clear



CLEAR TIPS - NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS

by Brandon Foley, CLEAR Counselor

Happy New Year! Have you made a resolution? If you're still working on last year's resolution, you're not alone! According to Forbes.com, over 40% of Americans make New Year Resolutions, yet only 8% manage to achieve their goals. Here are some tips to help you achieve your goal in 2016.

Make sure your goal is important to you. It's going to be hard to stick to a goal if the result isn't valuable to you. I've found just questioning the importance of a goal can motivate me to commit to it.

Is your goal realistic? If your goal is too difficult to achieve, scaling it down to a more attainable level may help lead you to success.

Keep it Simple. It's important that a goal can be stated briefly and clearly, this helps you to know when you've accomplished it.

Be Accountable. Have a friend to help check in on your New Year's Resolution. It can help to be reminded of your goal throughout the year.

If you'd like help sticking to your New Year's Resolution, consider CLEAR the Project's free self-growth workshop for people living with HIV. You can check in with your CLEAR counselor each week to keep track of your progress throughout the year. For more information contact Brandon, 515-248-1584 and schedule an intake session.



Wellness for Me starts Thursday, February 4th from 5 pm - 6pm at The Project.

“WELLNESS FOR ME” IS BACK!

Wellness for Me is an interactive, social group designed to help promote wellness in people living with HIV. We will support one another as we learn ways to improve our overall health and create social connections with others living with HIV.

Wellness for Me will be facilitated by Anneke Gustafson, LMSW and JaCarie Owens, MS, along with other guest presenters. Topics will encompass a holistic (whole person) approach to managing our health.

Topics will include nutrition, yoga and meditation for dealing with stress and how to beat insomnia. A meal will be provided each week and transportation assistance is available.

Wellness for Me will be held every Thursday starting February 4th from 5 pm - 6 pm, at The Project of Primary Health Care 1200 University Ave.

Contact Anneke at 515-248-1825 to reserve your spot.

10 TIPS TO START BEING MINDFUL NOW

1. Take a couple of minutes to notice your breathing. Sense the flow of the breath, the rise and fall of your belly.
2. Notice what you are doing as you are doing it and tune into your senses. When you are eating, notice the color, texture and taste of the food.
3. When you are walking, tune into how your weight shifts and the sensations in the bottom of your feet. Focus less on where you are headed.
4. Don't feel that you need to fill up all your time with doing. Take some time to simply be.
5. When your mind wanders to thinking, gently bring it back to your breath.
6. Recognize that thoughts are simply thoughts; you don't need to believe them or react to them.
7. Practice listening without making judgments.
8. Notice where you tend to zone out (e.g., driving, emailing or texting, web surfing, feeding the dog, doing dishes, brushing teeth, etc.). Practice bringing more awareness to that activity.
9. Spend time in nature.
10. Notice how the mind likes to constantly judge. Don't take it seriously. It's not who you are.

(Source: heretohelp.bc.ca)

SCHEDULING & KEEPING APPOINTMENTS

As our program continues to grow, scheduling appointments with our clinician has become more challenging.

We are often booking out several days in advance, making it difficult for folks to be seen in a timely fashion.

We are asking our patients to please keep track of their appointments and please call as soon as you know you will not be able to attend, even if this is just an hour before the scheduled time.

When a patient doesn't show for an appointment, we miss the opportunity to put someone in that scheduled time who needs to be seen.

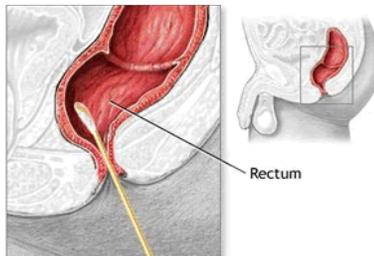
Remember, someday you may be the one who needs that appointment!

CLINICIAN'S CORNER - ANAP PAPS

Who hasn't heard about Farrah Fawcett's battle with anal cancer? The well-known actress was diagnosed in 2006. Her diagnosis heightened awareness of anal cancer. However, not enough has been done to expand comprehensive screening among the at-risk population. Rates of cervical cancer have dropped dramatically with the use of screening Pap smears. At the same time anal cancer has increased.

Anal cancer is more common among men who have sex with men (MSM) with HIV infection or not. Rates are as high as 70-144 per 100,000 populations. HIV infected women and heterosexual men are also at risk. Just like cervical cancer, human papilloma virus (HPV) infection is the culprit. HPV is a so-called oncogenic virus. In other words, with chronic infection, it changes the affected tissue cells into precancerous and then possibly cancerous cells over a period of years. Tumors may go undetected for years until they increase in size to cause symptoms. HPV can also cause benign anal warts. It is important to note that although receptive anal intercourse does increase the likelihood of anal HPV infection, it is not a prerequisite for anal HPV or dysplasia (precancerous).

What exactly is an anal Pap smear?



Anal Pap Smear

Image source: hivandhepatitis.com

The rationale for screening for anal cancer and precancerous cells is based on the success of cervical Pap smears in reducing cervical cancer incidence and mortality. Whereas cervical Pap smears are obtained using a vaginal speculum, anal Pap smears are different. Instead of using a speculum, a Dacron swab is carefully inserted into the anal canal and rectum to sample anorectal cells. The procedure is painless but sometimes minimal discomfort or pressure sensation. It is recommended that screening will be performed on a regular basis, perhaps every one to three years. If any abnormalities are detected, a colorectal specialist will perform further testing.

Who should be tested?

Certainly men who have sex with men, HIV infected or not. In addition, women who have had abnormal cervical Pap smears should be tested periodically. And anyone with a history of anal condyloma should be screened with an anal Pap smear. As with any cancer or precancer screening strategy, the goal is early detection and treatment to prevent progression to invasive cancer.

Anal Pap smears will be offered to all at-risk patients beginning in 2016. If you have questions, please discuss with me at your next office visit.

David L. Yurdin, PA-C, AAHIVMS

LET'S BE SOCIAL & STAY CONNECTED

by Callen Úbeda, Marketing + Communication Specialist

When you sign up for our email list, you'll get be first to know about upcoming events, special programs, and agency updates. You'll also receive this newsletter direct to your email inbox - days before everybody else. There are 2 simple ways to sign up:

- Fill out the **Stay Connected** form on our new and improved website: **phetheproject.org**. It's compatible with your desktop, tablet, or mobile device.
- Or you can also let your Case Manager know that you would like to receive email updates and e-newsletter.

You can stay in touch with us via social media. Like us on Facebook and/or follow us on Twitter @phetheproject.



When you sign up for our email list, you'll be the first to know about upcoming events, special programs, and agency updates!

UPDATE ON MEDICAID MANAGED CARE

by Theresa Schall, Clinical Services Manager

Managed care under Iowa Health Link is still coming to the Medicaid program but implementation has been delayed until March 1st. This has caused a lot of confusion for Medicaid members, which includes those on the Iowa Wellness Plan, and there are many questions. What we do know is that Primary Health Care is working on contracting with all of the managed care organizations (MCO) enabling our patients to continue to see providers within our organization.

All MCOs have to provide the same benefits members previously received from Medicaid. What is different is that each MCO has "value added services", which are additional services received by choosing that company. These "value added services" are listed in the enrollment packet but more information can be obtained by contacting the MCO directly. There were originally four MCOs that were awarded contracts to

administer the program. However, on December 18th, the selection of WellCare of Iowa was terminated following an appeals process. Many Medicaid members were already enrolled with WellCare and will now be tentatively reassigned to another MCO.

There is still time to select or change your MCO. Members have until February 17th to select a plan and will have until May 18th to change a plan for any reason. After May 18th, changes can only be made for reasons considered to be "good cause".

Everyone should have received an enrollment packet by now but, if you have not, please contact Iowa Medicaid Member Services at 515-256-4606 (for local calls) or 1-800-338-8366 to request a packet. Iowa Medicaid Member Services can also be contacted with any question members might have.

For more information, also visit the DHS Medicaid Modernization page at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/about/initiatives/MedicaidModernization>.



EVENTS CALENDAR

FEB. 25TH - Day On The Hill

Iowa State Capitol Building

MAR. 5TH - LGBT Health & Wellness Conference

Des Moines University
Academic Center Lecture Halls
3200 Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 5031

This event is \$25 for health professionals and the general public. It is free for Des Moines University students.

Ticket info: oneiowa.org

NEW EMPLOYEES

Jacob Linduski - Jacob joined our program as a Prevention Specialist in December and will be involved in HIV and STI testing and other risk reduction services through our testing clinic at 1200 University. Jacob is a recent graduate of Iowa State University and completed internships at The Project and in the HIV/STI prevention department at Iowa Department of Public Health.



Megan George - Megan graduated from the University of Northern Iowa with a Bachelors degree in Social Work. She has worked in several areas of social work including drug and alcohol treatment, child welfare, and foster care. Megan enjoys spending time with her family and friends. Outside of the office she loves to go camping, go on road trips, read, and has an unhealthy love/obsession of British television.



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