The People’s Mobilization on the National HIV/AIDS Strategy

Atlanta Counter Conference

Center for Civil and Human Rights
100 Ivan Allen Jr Blvd NW
December 7-8, 2015
10:00a.m. - 4:00p.m.

Partner and Supporting Organizations:


Conference space generously donated by the LGBT Institute at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights
About the Atlanta Counter Conference:

Earlier this summer, the highly anticipated launch of the *National HIV/AIDS Strategy Updated to 2020 (NHAS)* was met with criticism and dismay by many in its failure to have meaningful involvement by key communities vulnerable and impacted by the epidemic. While the new NHAS demonstrates continued support of federal agencies to ambitiously address many issues impacting communities, critical remaining gaps have been noted by advocates and activists.

Some major issues consist of sex workers excluded entirely from NHAS, to the need of having a transparent mechanism to meaningfully involve networks of people living with HIV (PLHIV) in the development of the strategy. Constituencies raised a number of important issues that must be critically addressed to truly achieve the bold and ambitious goals of the strategy, ranging from sexual and reproductive justice, sex worker rights, continuing issues with accurate data indicators on housing, as well as the lack of non-stigmatizing indicators for transgender and gender non-conforming people.

Notable progress has been acknowledged by communities, since the original and in the latest version of NHAS. Some progress has been made across key areas of trauma-informed care, urgency in modifying the HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for Persons w/ AIDS) formula and focus on the heavily-burdened South, the central importance of expanding PrEP and other emerging prevention technologies for priority vulnerable communities, to a stronger commitment in recognizing the power of structural interventions. However, the meaningful involvement and mobilization of key communities on-the-ground in these priorities and ensuing implementation on NHAS must be a significant strategy in successfully achieving these goals across local, state and federal levels - especially with a departing federal administration in 2016.

Mirroring the need for intersectionality and inclusivity in the fight to end HIV/AIDS, the *People’s Mobilization on the National HIV/AIDS Strategy Counter Conference* is a community-built space that aims to empower constituencies most impacted by HIV to be in control of the dialogue. The Counter Conference will happen in parallel with the National HIV Prevention Conference (NHPC), as an alternative, strategic and accessible space for those who cannot attend the larger NHPC, where leaders from CDC, NIH, HHS, and other federal agency leadership will be in attendance.

Over two days from Monday, December 7 through Tuesday, December 8, activists and advocates will host conversations at the Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta on the remaining shortcomings of NHAS and its recently released Federal Action Plan, as well as other crucial intersectional policy issues and perspectives that may be missing from NHPC discussions. Sessions will center on not only be raising issues and communities absent from NHAS, but be a vital space to plan collective advocacy work, prioritize policy issues and build power among communities ahead of changing federal leadership in 2016. Conversations in this space will be important in movement-building and creating stronger relationships in a truly inclusive movement led by the most impacted and vulnerable.

Conversations that occur in this space will culminate into identifying significant federal HIV issues, creating a policy and advocacy agenda of winnable policy battles ahead for key communities to concentrate collective energy on in 2016. This will help ensure the full involvement of communities in the future success of the strategy and in the final year under the Obama administration.
Where, When and How to Get There

The People’s Mobilization on the National HIV/AIDS Strategy Counter Conference will be held at the Center for Civil and Human Rights (CCHR), 100 Ivan Allen Jr Blvd NW, Atlanta, Georgia on Monday, December 7 and Tuesday, December 8, 2015 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

CCHR is approximately a 10-minute walk from the Peachtree Center MARTA stop or a 10-12 minute walk from both the Hyatt Regency and Marriott Marquis hotels where the National HIV Prevention Conference is being held (map on last page). The Counter Conference will be held on the ground level of CCHR and participants should enter using the first floor entrance (facing the fountains) off of Ivan Allen Jr. Blvd.

Wristbands will be required to enter the Counter Conference and will be distributed upon arriving at CCHR at the check-in table located just outside the meeting space at the ground level entrance off of Ivan Allen Jr. Blvd.

Although this event is open to the public, space is very limited! In order to cut down on costs and to make this free, we are prioritizing registration for sex worker advocates, transgender and gender non-conforming people, youth, communities of color and people living with HIV.

To register, visit this link: http://events.aidschicago.org/site/Calendar?id=101682&view=Detail

If not at capacity, onsite registration will also be permitted at the check-in table located just outside the meeting room. Counter Conference attendees are welcome to tour the exhibits at CCHR, but will be required to enter on the main floor to purchase an admissions ticket.

A gender neutral restroom is located on the third floor but participants may use whichever bathrooms they feel most comfortable with on the ground level. No food can be brought into CCHR, so attendees are encouraged to dine off-site. Two thirty-minute breaks between sessions will be provided during the day and water bottles are strongly encouraged. For any questions during the meeting, please contact Ryan Roemeran at ryan.roemeran@lgbtinstitute.org.

Finally, the weather in Atlanta should be mild (low 60s) with a chance of rain on Monday, December 6. We look forward to seeing you there!

Social Media and Technology Access

Wi-fi will be available onsite at the Center for Civil and Human Rights. We encourage all attendees to use social media to spread awareness about the Counter Conference. NHPC will be using #NHPC2015 as their hashtag on Twitter.

The Counter Conference hashtags are: #NHPC2015Counter

Additional tags to use are: #hivpja #pwnspeaks #sexworker #trans

Follow our partners and collaborators on Twitter:
## Schedule and Session Summaries

While there is a formal program, all attendees are encouraged to utilize the space creatively to have critical dialogue, hold affinity sessions, and build strategy for advocacy efforts and collaborative work. All programming and issues have been intentionally community designed, prioritized and led by key constituencies, partners and their allies.

### Monday, December 7, 2015

**Uniting Fronts of Criminalization and Structural Violence in 2016: Ending HIV criminalization, Mass Incarceration, and the War on Drugs – what does it take?**

Monday, December 7, 2015 (10:00 am to 11:00 am)

**Presenters:**
- Tami Haught, *SERO Project*
- Robert Suttle, *SERO Project*
- Laura Thomas, *Drug Policy Alliance*
- Megan McLemore, *Human Rights Watch*

This session will highlight how to unite and promote the voices, perspectives and experiences of people living with HIV and communities disproportionately impacted by policing and criminalization. Among the issues discussed, will be HIV criminalization. Addressing HIV criminalization requires centering the experiences and leadership of the communities most impacted.

Furthermore, it is no coincidence that the same people in jail and prison are those most impacted by HIV: sex workers, people who use drugs, LGBT people, African-Americans and Latinos. Yet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office of National AIDS Policy, and other US health officials have so far failed to acknowledge the role of criminalization. *Human Rights Watch* will present the latest data on how discriminatory practices, including policing, arrest and incarceration, are fueling the HIV epidemic in the US and what we can do about it.
Break (11:30 am to 12:00 pm)

Reproductive Justice and Sexual Health Barriers Facing Youth and Women living with HIV
Monday, December 7, 2015 (12:00 to 1:30 pm)

Presenters:
Arneta Rogers, Positive Women’s Network-USA
Sabrina Rewald, SisterLove, Inc.
Daniel Driffin, Youth HIV Policy Advisor with Georgia Equality

Moderated by:
Mel Medalle, SisterLove, Inc.

As social, economic, cultural, and political barriers to health including gender based violence, criminalization, discrimination and lack of access to gender responsive care continue to persist, advocates must continue to lead the charge for policies that will uphold the full scope of women and youth’s sexual and reproductive rights. This 90-minute workshop will discuss the efficacy of engaging in HIV advocacy from a Reproductive Justice framework, assess the status of the sexual and reproductive health needs of women and youth living with and affected by HIV, and facilitate a conversation on what policy and advocacy asks must be prioritized in light of the NHAS implementation plan.

Mobilizing on Southern Policy and Advocacy Challenges: Prevention Funding, Housing and Healthcare Access for PLHIV
Monday, December 7, 2015 (1:30 pm to 2:30 pm)

Presenters:
Carolyn McAllaster, Southern AIDS Strategy Initiative
Nic Carlisle, Southern AIDS Coalition
Kathie Hiers, AIDS Alabama

This session will address several of the current challenges facing people living with HIV (PLHIV) in the South. Housing is one of the greatest unmet needs for PLWH and this session will articulate how the Obama administration has proposed to update the HOPWA legislation to further the goals of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS). Furthermore, in order to reach the goals set by NHAS, the South must receive an equitable share of prevention funding and funding distributions that are consistent and proportional to the geographic distribution of the HIV epidemic. To end HIV/AIDS in the U.S., federal policy makers must direct adequate prevention resources to the South, including areas outside the large cities, where HIV diagnosis numbers and HIV-related deaths are high. Finally, more than two-thirds of Southern states have refused to accept federal money to expand their Medicaid programs through the Affordable Care Act. That has left millions of people in the South stranded in a coverage gap—not eligible to quality for traditional Medicaid, but unable to afford insurance on their own. This part of the session will focus on the impact of non-Medicaid-expansion in the South, identify recent cracks in the resistance, and discuss advocacy opportunities for PLHIV and their allies.

Break (2:30 pm to 3:00 pm)
“HIV criminalization” is the wrongful use of HIV status in a criminal prosecution, whether it is under HIV-specific statutes that exist in 34 states, or under general criminal statutes. HIV transmission is seldom a factor in these prosecutions. HIV criminalization has led to PWHA being vilified in the media, and receiving long prison sentences and/or required sex offender registration, even when transmission was extremely unlikely or impossible (i.e., a condom was used, the PLWHA had an undetectable viral load, or the behavior posed no risk of HIV transmission, such as in biting, scratching, or spitting.)

Presenters from the SERO Project will give insight on the landscape of HIV criminalization in 2016 and discuss meaningful opportunities for advocates, activists and communities to end HIV criminalization everywhere.

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

Transgender & Gender Non-conforming Affinity Session
Tuesday, December 8, 2015 (10:00 am to 11:00 am)

Moderated by:
Anand Kalra, Transgender Law Center

Transgender and gender non-conforming people living with HIV experience many of the same challenges as cisgender people. There are also key issues specific to the trans experience. This session provides space for transgender and gender non-conforming people to discuss barriers, challenges, successes, and solutions to the HIV epidemic and its impact on our lives and communities.

Successful Strategies to Address Quality of Life for TPLHIV Based on Needs Assessment Research
Tuesday, December 8, 2015 (11:00 am to 12:00 pm)

Presenters:
Anand Kalra, Transgender Law Center
Arianna Lint, Translatin@ Coalition and Positively Trans (T+)
Dee Dee Chamblee, Positively Trans (T+)
Asa King, Transgender Law Center

Programs that simply target individual behavior cannot begin to address the impact of HIV on the transgender community. Positively Trans, a project of Transgender Law Center, uses a combination of leadership development, community mobilization, and policy and legal advocacy to amplify the voices and strengthen the capacity of trans people living with or at risk for HIV. In the first year of the project, we conducted a nationwide needs assessment among trans people living with HIV (TPLHIV), using both qualitative and quantitative methods. This session will disseminate key findings from the needs assessment and highlight successful local strategies that address quality of life co-factors from activists in Atlanta and Florida.
The Atlanta Principles Redux: Informing HIV Prevention Advocacy Efforts into 2016

Tuesday, December 8, 2015 (12:00 pm to 1:00 pm)

Presenters:
Terri L. Wilder, ACT UP/NY
Jeremiah Johnson, Treatment Action Group
Tim Frasca, ACT UP/NY

In 2014, members of ACT UP New York and Treatment Action Group developed The Atlanta Principles (http://actupny.com/actions/files/The_Atlanta_Principles.pdf): a document listing several key policy recommendations for rapidly improving HIV prevention services in the United States. The Principles highlight a number of priorities, including increased visibility of transgender women and sex workers in CDC collected data, enhancing PEP and PrEP information and services, and rewriting CDC guidelines to ensure that prevention messaging is sex positive and accessible to LGBT communities. The document became the central focus of advocacy led by ACT UP and TAG at the 2014 STD Prevention Conference in Atlanta and has guided much of the work completed by those organizations in the past year and a half.

Join members of ACT UP and TAG to discuss the Principles: how they were created, what recommendations they offered, where we have made progress on the priorities highlighted in the original document, and how they might help guide HIV prevention advocacy moving forward.

Red Umbrellas and Red Ribbons – Movement Solidarity and Supporting Sex Worker Rights

Tuesday, December 8, 2015 (1:00 pm to 2:30 pm)

Panelists:
Deon Haywood, Women with a Vision
Magalie Lerman, SWOP-USA
Ilza Padua, Project Safe
Anna Forbes, Consultant

With the omission of the sex worker community from both in the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and the implementation plans, this important and timely panel discussion feature sex worker advocacy leaders sharing their ideas about how HIV-focused organizations and activists can and should support sex worker rights.

Representatives of sex workers rights organizations will provide their perspectives on how the HIV community can support sex workers in practical ways and join with them in working together politically to eliminate “condoms as evidence” policies, police harassment and other discriminatory practices that violate sex workers rights. An active discussion between the panelists and participants will provide the basis, we hope, for ongoing discussion, collaboration and solidarity work around sex workers rights in 2016.

Break (2:30 pm to 3:00 pm)

Session to be announced! On immigration, transgender people of color and HIV

Tuesday, December 8, 2015 (3:00 pm to 4:00 pm)
**Presenters:**
Arianna Lint, *Translatin@ Coalition and Positively Trans (T+)*
Bamby Salcedo, *Translatin@ Coalition*
Marco Castro-Bojorquez, *Lambda Legal*
Map to Counter Conference at Center for Civil and Human Rights from Hyatt Regency Atlanta (NHPC site)
Acknowledgements:

Thank you to all the individuals, partners, organizations and networks listed in contributing energy, leadership, strategy and their insight on vital issues facing vulnerable communities impacted by HIV in the U.S.

Thank you to Ryan Roemerman, the LGBT Institute at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights for the very generous donation of space and logistical support that made this important mobilization and Counter Conference possible.

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Organized by the HIV Prevention Justice Alliance (HIV PJA) and partner organizations.