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HIV CARE CONNECT

Reducing Disparities in HIV Care

The NPO's Welcome



We made it to Year 5! Congratulations to each site for persisting through the project and getting so much good work done despite numerous challenges. Altogether, the three sites have directly served over 250 patients and have doubtlessly touched countless others through indirect contributions to their organizations. In Year 5, the NPO is looking forward to seeing how each site gets the message out about the good work they have completed and how each site plans to sustain elements of their projects through organizational integration and staff retention. For the next year, the NPO will be here to support these efforts; we are certain that although HIV Care Connect's chapter will soon be closed, its legacy will be felt for many years to come!

Onward,
The NPO Team

FIU Grant

The U.S. is home to the largest population of Haitian immigrants in the world, yet little is known about Haitian immigrants living with HIV (HILWH) and their recent experiences throughout the HIV cascade of care. To address this gap, a research study entitled “Intervening with Haitian Immigrants in the U.S. to Improve HIV Outcomes” was recently awarded to Dr. Jessy G. Dévieux, Professor at the Florida International University (FIU) Stempel College of Public Health and Social work in Miami, FL. This study, sponsored by the National Institute on Mental Health, is the first to be funded focusing on the needs of Haitian immigrants living with HIV in many years. Over a decade ago, there was a small slew of studies, documenting disproportionate late presentation to care among those living with HIV and the problem of stigma affecting the population. The purpose of this study is to develop, using mixed methods, multi-level formative data on perceived barriers and facilitators to engagement, retention, and viral suppression among HILWH today. The study will build on FIU’s collaboration with Care Resource, Inc. in Project DA²RE, the successful adaptation of the iENGAGE intervention for the Merck HIV Care Connect initiative. FIU will again partner with Care Resource and another Federally Qualified Health Center in Miami to adapt and evaluate iENGAGE for Creole-speaking Haitian immigrants to address specific unmet needs leading to persistent HIV outcome disparities, including viral suppression.

Care Resource Turns 40!

On September 29th, Care Resource hosted its 40th anniversary celebration! For four decades, Care Resource has served some of the most marginalized folks in Miami-Dade County, starting as an HIV/AIDS service organization in the '80s to becoming a full-fledged Federally Qualified Health Center today, providing a wide-range of preventive, primary, behavioral, and social care services. A highlight of the celebration night was the unveiling of a memorial for those lost to HIV, COVID-19, and other illnesses titled *The Light Remains*. Read more [here](#). Congratulations Care Resource!

Events & Announcements

- From Greer McCollum: "My last day at UAB is December 1st, after which I will be moving out of state with my wife to be closer to family. I truly enjoyed working on HIV Care Connect and appreciate all the hard work the sites have put into making the project a success over the past four years! I can't wait to hear about all the amazing work that will come from the sites in Year 5!"

Staff Spotlight

Q1. What is your role in CARE at FHHS?

Project Director

Q2. How did you first get started working in HIV health and social care?

I began working in HIV in November 2013 as a Compliance Manager for United Way of Central Alabama. My role was to complete site visits for all RWPB-funded agencies in Alabama and assist them in reaching 100% compliance with federal, state, and contractual regulation and obligations.

Q3. What do you find most rewarding about the work you currently do?

I can play a role in helping people overcome barriers not only to their healthcare but also, and most importantly, their overall happiness and empowerment.

Q4. What is one thing about you that people might find surprising?

I became a professional pianist and guitarist at 12 years old. I most often played at weddings, and the most requested song, by far, was 'I'll Always Love You' by Whitney Houston. No, that song with those lyrics should NOT be played in that setting but I would've played the

Q5. What is one "cant' miss" thing visitors to Alabama have to experience?

College football tailgating. More specifically, tailgating at the Iron Bowl (Auburn v. Alabama) and the Magic City Classic (Alabama State v. Alabama A&M) are the two events at the top of that list. It's hard to explain how much goes into each, but they are amazing experiences.



Jamil Dawson, MBA

Chief Operating Officer
Five Horizons Health Services
Montgomery, AL

Publications of Interest

- A [KFF Health News article](#) about expanded Medicaid reimbursements for street medicine programs provided services to people experiencing homelessness.
 - Another [KFF Health News article](#) discussing the outlet's efforts to track the opioid settlement money spending.
 - An insightful [Tradeoffs podcast](#) on the loss of Medicaid coverage for millions since states started purging their rolls in April.
 - A [Health Affairs Forefront](#) post about the vital role of the Community Health Centers Fund.
 - This [KFF Health News article](#) discussed how PrEP is not reaching cisgender Black women.
 - Check out the [International AIDS Society \(IAS\) HIV Unmuted podcast series](#), where hosts chat with global HIV change-makers to discuss advancements in HIV and future directions.
 - [The Conversation published an article](#) on how HIV self-test kit often do not lead to HIV treatment in the case of positive results.
 - [JAIDS Supplement](#) on a new nationwide initiative to increase the number of underrepresented and minoritized HIV researchers and providers.
 - An informative [article from POZ](#) about the growing evidence that Cabenuva, the injectable HIV medication, also works for virally unsuppressed individuals, not just virally suppressed individuals.
 - The [Clinical Infectious Diseases article](#) cited in the *POZ* article above investigating the effectiveness of long-acting injectables for virally unsuppressed patients.
 - An interesting [article from Knowable Magazine](#) about a new method to improve health services called Rapid Randomized Clinical Trials.
 - [A systematic review from AIDS and Behavior](#) on preferred methods of HIV treatment in the US.
 - [New research in AIDS and Behavior](#) on a PrEP Empowerment Scale.
 - [A good reminder in AIDS and Behavior](#) of the importance of meeting social needs.
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STAFF SHOUTOUT

CLIENT STORIES

The UAB RISC team wants to give a shoutout to [Larry Hearld](#) for taking on the coordination of evaluation activities for the last two years of the project! Larry is an exceptional health services researcher and implementation scientist, so we feel very lucky to have him on the team. Thanks, Larry, for all of your support and guidance as we undertake cross-site evaluation activities for HIV Care Connect.

A Care Resource client had this to say about their linkage coordinator:

"Max is always there for his patients. When I need an appointment, or a change of appointment. If I need someone to talk to, or a friend, Max is there. I am so thankful for the help I have received over the years from them. God bless this organization.

🙏 Thank you."

Way to go, Max!!!

Have stories you want to share, news to proclaim, or a colleague to congratulate? Please press [HERE](#) to provide us with content to include in the next edition of the newsletter.



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