



# Next Steps: Continuing Conversations on Advancing Transgender Community HIV Prevention and Care

By: Heather Jue Northover, MPH, CHES  
County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Health  
Office of AIDS Programs and Policy

David Pieribone  
County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Health  
Office of AIDS Programs and Policy

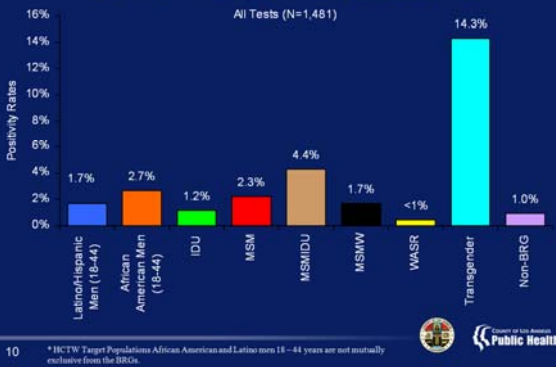
Mattee Jim  
First Nations Community HealthSource

AJ King, MPH  
California STD/HIV Prevention Training Center

## ISSUE

Transgender persons account for 1.53% of people living with HIV/AIDS in Los Angeles County despite being 0.43% of the population. With a positivity rate of 14.3%, this community is the most disproportionately impacted by the epidemic. Outreach to this hard-to-reach population is of highest priority.

### Positivity Rates among 2007 HCTW Target Populations\*



## Beyond the Basics: A Comprehensive Approach to Advancing Transgender HIV Prevention and Care



## PROJECT

The event, "Beyond the Basics: A Comprehensive Approach to Advancing Transgender HIV Prevention and Care," brought together the transgender community and allies to strategize new ways to advance HIV prevention and care services for transgender persons seeking HIV services. The goals were :

- 1) to identify and clarify key issues that impact the quality of HIV-related prevention and care services consumed by transgender persons; and
- 2) to develop action steps to improve quality of services.

A committee of health department representatives, community members and allies planned the forum with input from the Los Angeles County Transgender Service Provider Network (TSPN) and Transgender Taskforce. All event planning recommendations from the TSPN and Taskforce were implemented.

## RESULTS

### Challenges identified:

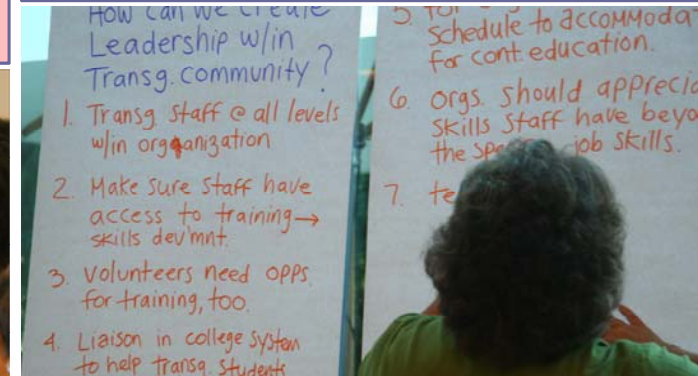
- **Complexity of client needs**
- **Lack of cultural competency** among agency staff resulting in a dearth of trans-friendly services
- **Lack of data**
- **Limited funding**
- **Few opportunities for professional advancement** among transgender persons

### Recommendations:

- **Revise data collection** methods to capture transgender identities
  - **Increase staff cultural competency**
  - **Support the professional/educational development** of transgender persons living in the community and employed at ASOs
  - **Outreach and educate partners** of transgender persons
  - **Take holistic approach** by addressing concerns beyond HIV/AIDS
- Recommendations were presented and distributed at the *Equality and Parity II: A Statewide Action for Transgender HIV Prevention and Care* Conference in Jan. 2009 and were given to the Los Angeles County Transgender Taskforce to review and incorporate into their final recommendations to the Los Angeles County HIV Prevention Planning Committee.

## SETTING

An event on transgender-focused HIV prevention and care services was hosted in Los Angeles, CA for HIV/AIDS providers and community partners.



## LESSONS LEARNED

Health departments must **seek input from transgender persons and community allies** to plan effective programs and maintain credibility. **Equal value** must also be placed on **personal and professional experience**. **Inviting equal participation from and fully collaborating with members of the transgender community** are imperative in finding effective solutions and implementing recommendations to reduce the risk of HIV infection among transgender persons. **Finding outlets to present and distribute recommendations** is vital to their widespread exposure, acceptance and adoption.