Project Abstract

Project Title: TransAccess: A Program to Enhance Engagement & Retention in HIV Care for Transgender Women of Color in San Francisco, California

Applicant Name: San Francisco Department of Health Services

Address: 1380 Howard Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA, 94103

Project Director: Bill Blum / Contact Phones: Voice: (415) 255-3516 / Fax: (415) 431-7547

Contact E-Mail: williamsblum@sfdph.org / Agency Website: www.sfdph.org

The San Francisco Department of Public Health’s Community Oriented Primary Care Program - a network of 12 community-oriented health clinics that includes the Tom Waddell Health Center and its nationally recognized transgender medical clinic - seeks FY 2012 Ryan White Special Projects of National Significance (SPNS) funding to develop and implement a multi-faceted demonstration program called TransAccess designed to Enhance Engagement and Retention in Quality HIV Care for Transgender Women of Color living in the City and County of San Francisco, California. The proposed program will forge a unique public / private partnership model in which the medical services of a public community health clinic with an established specialty in transgender medical care - the Tom Waddell Health Center - are transported and integrated into a respected and highly trusted community-based transgender support program - the TRANS:THRIVE program at Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center - with the explicit goal of enhancing utilization of and retention in HIV medical care by underserved transgender women of color. The program will create a unique neighborhood-based transgender medical home specifically designed to address the complex needs of this critically impacted population. Through TransAccess, a medical team from the Tom Waddell Health Center will be out-based at Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center one day each week to provide HIV and other medical services to transgender women of color in a setting that is safe, welcoming, and respectful of transgender populations and their needs, and that is located directly within the San Francisco neighborhood that has highest concentration of transgender residents - The Tenderloin. This medical care model will be enhanced by a range of outreach, linkage, and supportive services designed to significantly increase the number of transgender women of color in San Francisco who are aware of their HIV status and involved in regular medical care on a long term basis, including enhanced linkages to behavioral health, housing, and employment services. The project will include significant staffing by transgender women, including the positions of Project Director, Transgender Case Manager, and Transgender Outreach Workers / Navigators. TransAccess will also provide opportunities for HIV-affected transgender women of color to play an expanded leadership role through participation in a Transgender Leadership Team, a new proposed transgender Speakers Bureau, and client-developed social media components. Requested SPNS funding will enable our network to develop a model intervention in which HIV-affected transgender women of color who are resistant to accessing care in traditional medical settings are given the opportunity to receive comprehensive medical services within a neighborhood-based, transgender-specific social services setting which has forged strong bonds of trust with the transgender community. The new medical clinic will emphasize the availability of high-quality, supervised hormonal therapy within the clinic as a strong incentive for HIV-infected and affected transgender women to enter care. The intervention is expected to significantly increase both the number and percentage of HIV-positive and high-risk HIV negative transgender women of color in San Francisco who are receiving HIV care and are remaining adherent to HIV treatment.