Project Abstract

Project Title: Enhancing Engagement and Retention in Quality HIV Care for African American Transgender Women in Oakland/Alameda County: Butterfly Project

Applicant Organization Name: Public Health Institute

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Project Goals: 1) Through implementing culturally sensitive and transgender specific outreach programs in African American transgender communities in Oakland/Alameda County, the Butterfly Project will identify African American transgender women who are at high risk for HIV infection or are infected with HIV but are unaware of their HIV status; are aware of their HIV infection but have never been engaged in care; are aware but have refused referral to care; or have dropped out of care; 2) Engage the targeted African American transgender women, enroll eligible clients in the Butterfly Project, provide HIV counseling and testing, comprehensive case management and client advocacy based on the Motivational Enhancement Intervention (MEI), and retain and monitor the comprehensive HIV primary care and other necessary services in collaboration with service providers in Alameda and San Francisco County; 3) Evaluate the efficacy and impact of the Butterfly Project in collaboration with the Evaluation and Technical Assistant Center (ETAC), disseminate findings and experience to service providers and transgender community members, and sustain the Butterfly Projects in collaboration with the Community Advisory Board (CAB), transgender community members, and local, State, and national government agencies.

Procedures: This 5-year Butterfly Project will identify and enroll a total of 400 high risk transgender women and provide HIV counseling and testing, enroll a total of 160 transgender women who live with HIV (20 in year 01 and 40 each in year 02, 03, and 04, and 40 in year 05) in MEI. The Butterfly Project will utilize innovative intervention programs with multiple techniques to engage and retain African American transgender women who live with HIV. The Project will conduct culturally appropriate and target group specific community outreach, utilizing ethnographic mapping, motivational interviewing techniques, responded driven sampling methods, the Internet-based outreach, and in-reach methods to recruit high risk African American transgender women in Alameda County and provide HIV counseling and testing. The Project will adapt and tailor our current innovative intervention programs and develop and implement MEI which will provide client-centered and behavioral and cognitive counseling to increase retention, adherence to medication, and self-esteem and management skills throughout the course of HIV primary care and other necessary services. In addition, the Butterfly Project will increase the capacity of transgender communities in Alameda County through operating the Butterfly Nest, a store-front safe place for transgender women of color, where weekly support groups and health promotion workshops will be held. We will develop local measures to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the Butterfly Project, as well as collaborate with ETAC to collect data to monitor, evaluate, and report the intervention projects. In collaboration with the CAB members and local, State, and federal agencies, we will seek to sustain the Butterfly Project after HRSA’s support ends.