The Alliance for Positive Change Uplifts New Yorkers

The organization helps its clients get medical care and live healthy lives.

August 12, 2022 By Jilleen Barrett

Alliance for Positive Change was founded in 1990 at the height of the AIDS crisis. Previously known as the AIDS Service Center New York City, the organization provides connection to medical care for New Yorkers in numerous ways.

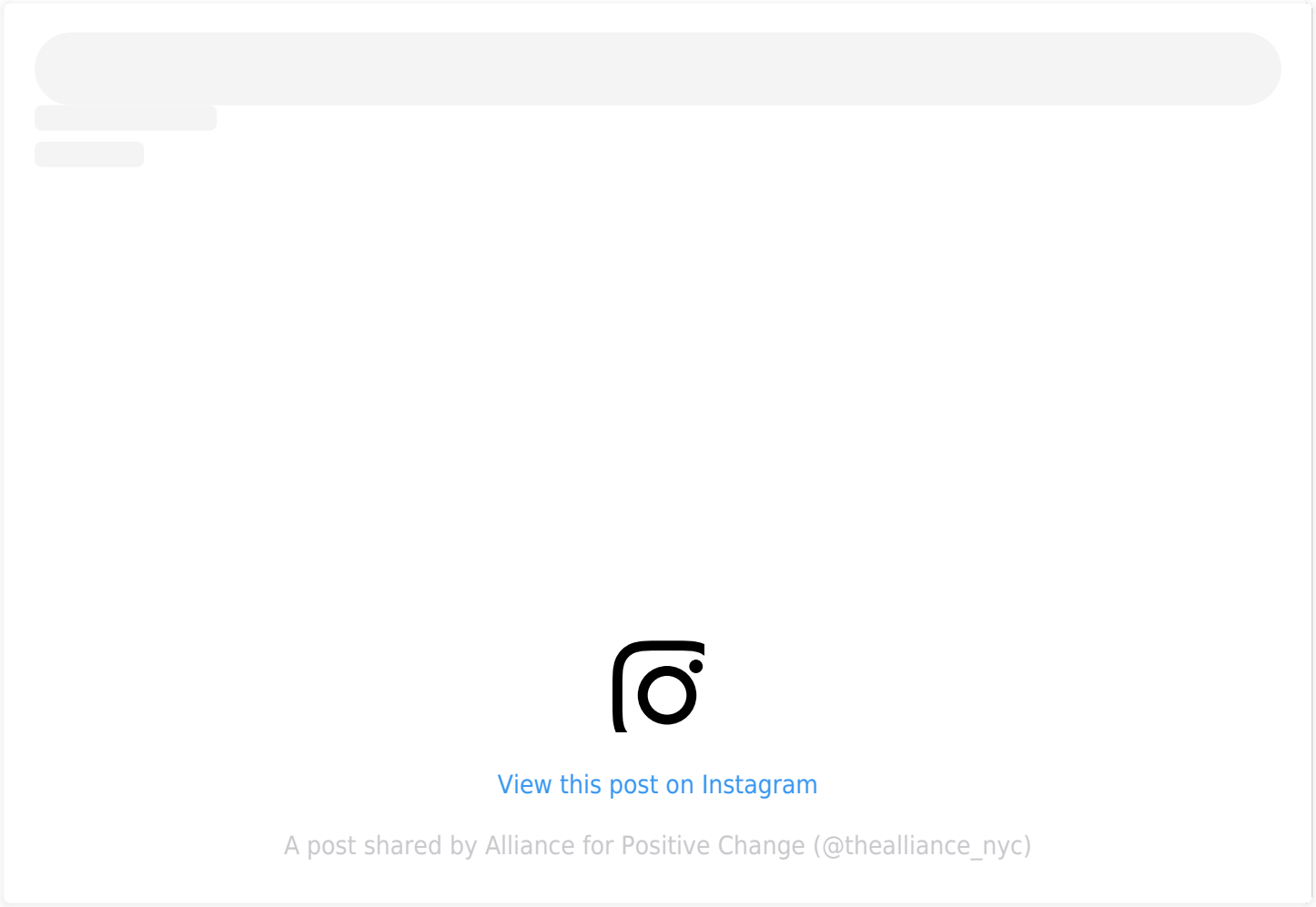
Eugene Eppes, the community linkage specialist, helps formerly incarcerated people living with HIV get connected with medical care and reenter their communities after leaving state prison.

According to Eppes, the organization helps Black and Latino New Yorkers, people who use drugs or are in recovery and members of the LGBTQ and HIV-positive communities. Alliance for Positive Change also offers services to low-income people who have chronic illnesses, including quality care, housing, harm reduction services, coaching, peer training and job placement. Additionally, the organization offers pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and can refer patients to New York Presbyterian and Mount Sinai hospitals.

We’re at Brooklyn Pride with the Save NY Safety Net coalition telling folks that @GovKathyHochul needs to stop cuts that would hurt LGBTQIA+ healthcare! #Pride2022 #SaveOurSafetyNet pic.twitter.com/e9IM9BhXNq

— Housing Works (@housingworks) June 11, 2022

One of the ways the Alliance for Positive Change attempts to engage people in their own health care is by encouraging them to get tested for HIV, hepatitis C and COVID-19. The nonprofit has several testing sites across the city—in Midtown, Harlem, the Lower East Side and Washington Heights—as well as a mobile testing center.



“[This work] is meaningful to me because I once was a person who was criminally involved, and I served an extensive amount of time in prison,” Eppes says. “I came out to discover that it was me alone trying to piece my life back together, so I have sat where my clients have sat and took the journey that they are taking.

“When I was released from prison, I started receiving medical care through Housing Works,” Eppes says. “It’s a community-based organization in New York City that helps find housing for people living with HIV and AIDS. And then, my case manager told me about the Alliance for Positive Change.”

The organization offers housing to many clients, and Eppes was eligible. It was a difficult time for

him because he had not yet come to terms with his HIV status.

“I was on parole and looking for housing anyway, so I decided to visit,” Eppes recalls. “I didn’t want to go in because they had signs outside representing HIV testing, so I had to disclose my status. I hadn’t disclosed my status to anyone in my community. I hadn’t even dealt with the process of disclosing to my family and friends at that point. With the stigma associated with HIV, I was nervous to go. That was one of many masks that I was wearing. I asked my case manager to go in and fill out the housing application for me because I didn’t want to attach myself to that place, but he told me that I had to go in and do it for myself. When I went in, I met with an intern who did my intake and started telling me about the peer recovery education program. He thought I would be a good candidate for the program.”

Eppes went on to graduate from the peer program and now is able to help others who are in the situation he used to be in. He also wants to help them understand and accept their HIV status.

“The stigma associated with HIV is an issue,” he said. “I don’t disclose my status to everyone because a lot of people don’t wish me well. But for the type of community that I serve, I feel that is important for me to disclose to serve clients who are hesitant.”

“The title of our organization is the Alliance for Positive Change, and I really believe in that name,” Eppes says. “We joined an alliance with the people in our community, that positive change is what you make it.”

Wondering whether you may be eligible for services from the Alliance for Positive Change? learn more about their care management services.

Want to show your support for the Alliance for Positive Change? Make a donation on the group’s website.

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