Now That We Know...

November 13, 2012 By Paul Kawata

For several months now, a key benchmark in creating an AIDS-free generation, implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) has been stalled in political gridlock. The recently released Health Care Engagement Cascade by race/ethnicity and age at AIDS 2012 highlighted the significant barriers to accessing quality and affordable health care and reducing HIV incidence facing African Americans and Latinos, the two communities most disproportionately burdened by HIV. With President Obama's re-election eliminating any possibility for a repeal of the ACA, we must reinvigorate our efforts to ensure the significant changes that will occur to our service delivery systems, including how the private and public sectors will work together to address the health disparities illustrated in the cascade.

Community based organizations (CBOs) are making difficult decisions to retool their mission and programs to remain strategically positioned for future funding and service delivery opportunities. And while we've continued our planning for the coming sea change, I heard from many in the community that it has felt like we have had to figure out how to move forward alone. Community has always come together to overcome adversity and in this instance too, we will prevail.

Plan to attend the 2013 Summit To END AIDS in America and/or the U.S. Conference on AIDS from September 7-11 in New Orleans (http//www.2013USCA.org)

- Work with NMAC to host a Regional Summit to END AIDS in your city/county/state. Contact Kali Lindsey (klindsey@nmac.org) if you are interested. These regional summits will work with local communities to develop a strategic plan to end the epidemic in their city/county/state.
- Work with NMAC to host a Regional PLWHA Town Hall in your city/county/state. Contact Moises Agosto (magosto@nmac.org) if you are interested. These town hall meetings are to provide a forum for PLWHA to discuss the promise of treatment as prevention, ACA and how it will impact their health services.
- Sign up to be part of NMAC's new online Learning Lab and Resource Library (http://nmac.org/nmac-learning-lab-and-resource-library). This will be one of the ways that NMAC will provide training and capacity building.

- Consider participating in HIV Health Reform Group (http://www.hivhealthreform.org). Sign up to get their email updates on conference calls and webinars.
- Religiously attend Federal AIDS Policy Partnership's (http://www.federalaidspolicy.org) HIV Health Care Access Working Group (contact Andrea Weddle at aweddle@IDSOCIETY.ORG, Robert Greenwaldrgreenwa@LAW.HARVARD.EDU or Amy Killelea) and/or Ryan White Work Group (contact William McColl atwmccoll@aidsunited.org or Ann Lefert at alefert@nastad.org) calls and seminars to remain current to information and changes as they come online. Also, given changes coming down the pike with implementation of High Impact Prevention, you should be sure to attend HIV Prevention Action Coalition meetings as well (contact Kali Lindsey at klindsey@nmac.org to be added to that list.

2013 is going to be a very busy year. Please know that NMAC is in your corner. We look forward to working with you to END AIDS in America.

Yours in the struggle,

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