

Northeast Indiana Positive Resource Connection, INC.

Serving northeast Indiana since 1985

Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Jay, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, Whitley

Report for the year ending December 31, 2016

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Northeast Indiana Positive Resource Connection, Inc. is to prevent new cases of HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis, and STDs and advance a compassionate and stigma-free community response.

STATEMENT OF CORE VALUES

We believe that individuals who are HIV positive deserve compassionate and comprehensive assistance in living full and productive lives. We believe that with proper medical care and treatment, people with HIV can achieve an undetectable viral load even with several barriers in which they may face such as poverty. We believe that public knowledge about HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis and STDs can contribute to lower rates of infection, better understanding of the diseases, and less discrimination against those who are HIV positive. Finally, we believe that participation of diverse populations in all aspects of the organization improves the quality of service for everyone involved with the Positive Resource Connection.

PROGRAM SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2016, the Positive Resource Connection addressed its strategic priorities by working to ensure those living with HIV had access to direct medical care and other supportive services for increased adherence to medical care and treatment; targeted populations heavily impacted by new HIV infection through prevention education and HIV testing; linked people diagnosed with HIV into care coordination services and medical care; and developed relationships with medical providers and other supportive service agencies for direct services to persons living with HIV. The Positive Resource Connection is contracted with the Indiana State Department of Health to provide care coordination to those living with HIV and HIV testing and counseling in to populations heavily impacted by new HIV infection in Region 3, which covers eleven northeast Indiana counties (twelve counties for HIV testing).

In 2016, the Positive Resource Connection completed Phase II of its marketing campaign targeting persons at an increased risk for HIV infection in Region 3. This campaign brought increased awareness of programs and services offered at the Positive Resource Connection as well as increased awareness of the importance of HIV testing if someone is at-risk for infection.

The Positive Resource Connection and Parkview Hospital partnered to create an on-site clinic specifically for high risk clients who are not adhering to treatment and vulnerable to dropping out of care and treatment and for clients who are newly diagnosed or have re-engaged back into care and have not been prescribed antiretroviral therapy. This clinic, which is housed at the Positive Resource Connection, not only expedites medical care and treatment from a few months to only a few weeks but breaks down transportation barriers for high risk clients not able to make traditional appointments; allows for quicker turnaround time of getting lab work so clients can start medication therapy for viral load suppression; and enables medical providers and care coordinators to monitor clients' adherence to medication protocols. In 2016, 14 clients accessed the clinic and received medical treatment for the suppression of viral load.

To ensure a more seamless approach to care and treatment to those most vulnerable of not adhering or staying in care and to persons who are not on antiretroviral therapy, the Positive Resource Connection created a comprehensive services position in 2016 to work exclusively with these individuals in facilitating access to care and early treatment, improving adherence to care and treatment, reducing medical care drop-out, and conducting HIV testing to high risk injection drug users in northeast Indiana.

In 2016, the Positive Resource Connection and Parkview Hospital's infectious disease staff expanded the clinic to include PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis). The PrEP clinic allows high risk HIV negative individuals to be prescribed an HIV medication (Truvada) which prevents them from becoming infected with HIV. In 2016, 11 people accessed the PrEP clinic of which 9 were prescribed Truvada. Due to the success of the PrEP clinic and clinic for HIV positive individuals, the clinic was expanded to twice a month instead of once a month.

With the state's approval of the Syringe Services Program (SSP) in Allen County in 2016, the Fort Wayne-Allen County Health Department decided to house the syringe program at the Positive Resource Connection's clinic. This program is designed for persons who inject drugs to receive clean needles in exchange for used ones, as well as provides substance use treatment referrals if desired, and other needed items such as band aids, sharps container, alcohol wipes, and distilled water. In November 2016, the Positive Resource Connection hired a part-time staff person to assist in the distribution of the needles and other equipment and enrolling people in the program.

To align itself with its mission, the Positive Resource Connection began providing Hepatitis C and Syphilis testing through the use of blood draws. Blood draws has also allowed the Positive Resource Connection to provide 4th generation HIV testing which detects HIV antibodies within 14 days of becoming infected instead of the 3 months. Because 4th generation HIV testing can detect HIV earlier in the infection, persons who test HIV positive are able to receive treatment which increases viral load suppression. In 2016, the Positive Resource Connection also began a pilot program in Kosciusko County to provide rapid Hepatitis C testing with results in 20 minutes. This Hepatitis C rapid tests can be performed in conjunction with HIV. A total of 67 individuals were tested for Hepatitis C and 16 individuals for Syphilis in 2016.

In 2016, the care coordination department assisted 418 individuals living with HIV and worked with them on adherence to medical treatment and care and provided assistance to eliminate any barriers that may prohibit them from staying engaged in care and treatment. In 2016, clients accessed internal and external community resources that included health insurance, housing and utility assistance, food and nutrition, medical care and treatment, legal help, education, support groups, and counseling. Care coordination services are enhanced by a Spanish-speaking care coordinator, support specialist for clients with substance use issues, a housing coordinator to prevent homelessness among HIV positive individuals, and a Burmese speaking translator who helps to eliminate language and cultural barriers to Burmese clients in accessing services. The Positive Resource Connection also owns and operates a 17-unit residential facility for persons living with HIV and offers one-bedroom and efficiency units all with full kitchen and baths. Through its care coordination program in 2016, 86% of clients achieved an undetectable viral load which is well above the national average of 35%.

The outreach services department provided prevention education, awareness, outreach, and HIV testing and counseling to populations heavily impacted by new HIV infection, as well as the general public. Specific prevention programs targeted at-risk youth, women, African American and Latino men and women, Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), especially young gay men, substance users including injection drug users, and other at-risk and underserved populations in twelve counties in northeast Indiana. To raise awareness on the impact of HIV/STD infection and reduce stigma surrounding HIV, outreach staff participated in a number of health and community events and conducted street outreach as well as outreach on social dating sites targeting MSM. In 2016, more than 6,500 individuals in northeast Indiana gained new knowledge about HIV, AIDS, STDs, and viral Hepatitis. In 2016, the Positive Resource Connection provided free HIV testing and prevention counseling utilizing the OraQuick HIV© rapid test with HIV test results given in 20 minutes. The outreach department conducted HIV testing and counseling during HIV prevention educations, at special events, during outreach, in-house, and established public testing sites in all twelve counties in which the outreach department serves. The Positive Resource Connection provided free testing to 1,376 individuals who benefited from knowing their HIV status.

In addition to care and support to those living with HIV and ongoing educational and HIV testing efforts, the Positive Resource Connection raised community awareness through public events like National Black HIV Awareness Day in February, National Day of Testing in June, National Gay Men's HIV Awareness Day in September, National Latino HIV Awareness Day in October, and World AIDS Day in December.

Volunteers worked alongside professional staff in assisting with office work, committee projects, and event planning. Volunteers played an important role in the Gregory Manifold Food Pantry by hosting pantry parties so people living with HIV could have access to more food and nutrition.

To raise funds for its programs and to increase awareness on HIV, the Positive Resource Connection sponsored the 20th annual AIDS Walk in May at Parkview Field and in October received funds raised by the 28th Annual Lesbian and Gay Dinner Dance, for which the Positive Resource Connection was the fiscal agent and financial recipient of funds raised.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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AFFILIATIONS

HIV Care Coordination, Special Populations Support Program, and the CTR program are programs of the Indiana State Department of Health. The Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS is a program through the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority. The Positive Resource Connection is a Partner Agency of the United Way of Allen County.

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Operating / Event Support

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Community Foundation of Greater Ft. Wayne
PHP Foundation
Ian & Mimi & Rolland Foundation
Gay & Lesbian Dinner Dance
Meijer
80/20 Foundation
St. Joseph Community Health Foundation

Capital / Asset / Capacity Building Support

The Health Foundation of Greater Indianapolis
Gilead Sciences

Syringe Services Program

The Health Foundation of Greater Indianapolis

Programs for Clients

Indiana State Department of Health
The Health Foundation of Greater Indianapolis
St. Joseph Community Health Foundation
United Way of Allen County
Waterfield Foundation
MAC AIDS Fund
Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority
Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS
Plymouth Congregational Church
PNC-English, Bonter, Mitchel

Outreach / Prevention / Linkage to Care

Lincoln Financial Group Foundation
Community Action Group
Parkview Community Health Improvement
Maximus Foundation
Fort Wayne Health & Education Foundation
Indiana State Department of Health
The Health Foundation of Greater Indianapolis
Wells Fargo Foundation
Kuhne Foundation
K21 Health Foundation
St. Joseph Community Health Foundation

***The Northeast Indiana Positive Resource Connection, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization.
Contributions to Positive Resource Connection are tax deductible to the full extent provided by law.***

The fiscal year 2015 audit and 990 form, prepared by Haines, Isenbarger & Skiba, Certified Public Accountants, is available in the Positive Resource Connection's office and on the web site at www.positiveresourceconnection.org.