

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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General Questions

What is HIPC?

The HIV Integrated Planning Council (HIPC) is the decision-making body that plans for and assesses the need for HIV care and prevention services in the 9-county Philadelphia area. HIPC works with the Division of HIV Health (DHH) to ensure that people with lived experience have fair, equitable, and appropriate access to all funded services. HIPC consists of volunteers from provider organizations, people with lived experience, impacted individuals, and unaligned consumers.

What are the Roles and Responsibilities of HIPC?

HIPC's four main responsibilities include:

1. Working collaboratively with DHH (the recipient) to develop and monitor the 5-year Philadelphia HIV Integrated Prevention and Care Plan;
2. Monitoring the recipient for rapid distribution of funds (distribution is expected to occur within 90 days of receipt of final award)
3. Allocating RWHAP Part A funds and creating directives for related services through the annual allocations process and;
4. Determining the Service Priorities based on the documented needs of the community. HIPC meets as a full council and within subcommittees to create needs assessments, set priorities, invite presenters, and much, much more to help inform their decisions.

What is the Office of HIV Planning and its relationship to HIPC?

HIPC is different from the Office of HIV Planning (OHP). OHP consists of staff hired to support the HIPC and its duties. OHP is an affiliate of Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) contracted by DHH and funded by HRSA and CDC federal grants.

What is the Division of HIV Health (DHH) and its relationship to HIPC?

DHH is a subdivision within the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH). The Health Department's Division of HIV Health, formerly known as AIDS Activities Coordinating Office (AACO), has primary responsibility for managing federal, state, and local government funding to support HIV-related services within the City of Philadelphia as well as HIV care services in the eight counties surrounding Philadelphia in southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey. DHH administers all public resources available to the City for HIV prevention, care, and collection of HIV-related public health data, including coordination of various City, state, and federal resources, including Ending the HIV Epidemic-specific funding. The division achieves its objectives primarily by funding not-for-profit health care and human services organizations to provide specific HIV services. It also monitors service providers and assures the delivery of high-quality services that meet or exceed the standards of performance required by PDPH and its state and federal funders.

DHH staff are invited to HIPC meetings to hear directly from community members and report on the progress of goals and matters regarding funding and provision of services. In turn, HIPC and the subcommittees provide feedback on DHH's goals, activities, and interventions.

How does HIPC protect my privacy?

During a meeting, all participants are allowed to speak without their camera turned on. During in-person meetings, members do not have to be recorded in front of the camera if they do not wish to be seen. OHP also keeps the HIV status of each member confidential. HIPC members are required to sign an Expected Conduct form that members respect the established rules such as keeping other members' information confidential.

What is an EMA? What regions does HIPC represent?

The EMA stands for Eligible Metropolitan Area which consists of Philadelphia and the collar counties across two states. Within the Philadelphia EMA the HIPC represents 9 counties for the three regions in the EMA: the NJ county region (Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, & Salem); the PA county region: (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, & Montgomery), and Philadelphia.

How does HIPC differ from the Pennsylvania HIV Planning Group? Can I join both HIPC and other state HIV Planning Groups at the same time?

HIPC is specific to the 9-county area (Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Salem, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia); they are responsible for making funding decisions for the previously identified area. Other planning bodies such as the Pennsylvania State HIV Planning Group (HPG) and the New Jersey HPG manage their respective states' resources. Yes, you can join both HIPC and the PA HPG at the same time. There are no rules that preclude you from serving on both bodies concurrently.

Who was Ryan White? What is Ryan White Funding?

Ryan White was an American teenager who became a national symbol for AIDS after he contracted AIDS from a blood transfusion in 1984. Doctors had given Ryan 6 months to live. Due to the discrimination Ryan faced from his high school and the tireless work of his mother Jeanne White Ginder and other supporters to defend his rights. Ryan was allowed to return to high school. Ryan passed away in April 1990, a month away from his high school graduation.

In August of the same year, Congress passed the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act. The law aimed to improve the quality of life and make services more widely available for those with lived experience.

The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program provides a comprehensive system of HIV medical care and essential support services for low-income people with HIV. The RWHAP funds grants to states, cities, counties, and local community-based organizations to provide care and treatment services to people with HIV. EMAs receive Part A. There are five RWHAP parts (A, B, C, D and F).

How do I sign up for meetings? Where can I find a calendar of events/meetings?

Persons interested in signing up for meetings can do so through the calendar on the Office of HIV Planning's website. Access to the calendar can be found using [this link](#).

What is the Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan?

[The Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan](#) Is the nine-county Philadelphia area's five-year plan for HIV care and prevention services. It includes data related to HIV risk and people with HIV in the region, information on the HIV care continuum, a summary of workforce development and move toward strengthening partnerships, and an overview of service needs, gaps, and barriers. It also provides a series of goals, objectives, strategies, and activities, as well as a plan for monitoring progress.

If I have any questions about HIPC or anything, who should I ask? What are the roles of each staff member of OHP?

Members can contact the OHP staff at any time with questions. The contact information can be found on the second page of the HIPC meeting packet.

Mari Ross-Russell - Director, Finance Committee, Executive Committee

Email: mari@hivphilly.org

Tiffany Dominique — Prevention Committee

Email - tiffany@hivphilly.org

Debbie Law — Nominations Committee

Email - debbie@hivphilly.org

Sofia Moletteri— Comprehensive Planning Committee, Poz Committee, Website

Email: sofia@hivphilly.org

Kevin Trinh — Minutes & Attendance

Email: kevin@hivphilly.org

What is the Ending the HIV Epidemic plan?

[The End the HIV Epidemic \(EHE\)](#) was an initiative created in 2019 involving health and human resource agencies across the country with the goal of eradicating HIV transmission by 2030. The goal of the EHE is to reduce the number of new HIV infections in the United States by 75 percent by 2025, and then by at least 90 percent by 2030.

The Philadelphia EHE Plan consists of the following pillars: (1) Diagnose, (2) Treat, (3) Prevent, (4) Respond, and (5) Workforce Development.

What is the allocations process? How do I participate in the allocations process?

[The allocations process](#) is a series of regionalized meetings, usually scheduled in July, to decide how the funding for RWHAP Part A services will be distributed. HIPC members do not know the specific organizations receiving funding (awards are the responsibility of DHH). HIPC only determines the amount of Part A funding the service category will be allocated. And each region creates an allocations budget for the next funding year. The Finance Committee reviews the budgets and sends the budgets back to HIPC for final approval.

While all HIPC meetings are open to the public, including allocations, only HIPC members can vote. If someone wishes to participate check the calendar at hivphilly.org for the meeting schedule.

What is a consumer? What is a provider? What does it mean to be an unaligned consumer?

A consumer or person with lived experience is a person who is eligible for RWHAP Part A services provided within our EMA.

A provider is a person or organization that delivers these services.

An unaligned consumer is a person who uses RWHAP Part A services and is not employed by or sitting on the board of an organization funded by these fund

Where can I access the Epidemiologic Profile infographics? Where can I access the Consumer Survey information?

The Epidemiologic Profile can be accessed using this [link](#).

The Consumer Survey Information can be found using this [link](#).

How do I sign up for the newsletter?

Our monthly newsletter can be found using this [link](#)

Where can I access the material shown in the meetings? How soon are the meeting materials/minutes available on the OHP website?

The meeting minutes and other meeting materials are generally uploaded to the website once the documents have been approved by the HIPC or subcommittee members at their next meeting.

The meeting minutes can be found using this [link](#). Meeting minutes and other materials related to the subcommittees can be found in the sidebar of the webpage.

Questions About My Membership

What are the benefits of a HIPC membership?

There are many reasons to join HIPC! Here are just a few:

1. To have a better understanding of the RWHAP legislation, its relationship to the service planning process and funding.
2. HIPC members decide the EMA Part A funding for eligible service categories.
3. Professional development and networking with people from different backgrounds.
4. Be a voice and represent your community and or service area

How long are the terms of membership? Once I reach my term limit, could I renew my membership?

One term of membership is defined as 2 years. An HIPC member can serve for 4 terms or 8 consecutive years before they reach their term limit. A member who reached their term limit would need to wait one year before they would be eligible to apply for HIPC again.

Can I represent more than one organization or region?

Yes, a member could represent more than one region. As such, you will be required to disclose all conflicts of interests as they arise in discussions and voting processes.

I am a new member. When can I expect my formal letter of appointment?

Recommendations are submitted to the Chief Elected Official and or their Designee for the final appointments. Because of this we currently do not have a specific timeline on when members can expect a letter of appointment. We send the letters as soon as we receive them. And in rare cases will send a letter of recommendation if required as part of a federal grant application.

What is the attendance policy? If I cannot attend a meeting, what is the process for avoiding an unexcused absence?

A member's HIPC membership status will be in jeopardy after 5 unexcused absences or 3 in absences in a row in the Planning Council year (September-August). A person can ask to be excused if they contact the Office of HIV Planning staff before the meeting. A leave of absence can be granted to members under special circumstances. The Open Nominations Policy can be found using this [link](#).

What is a conflict of interest? What does it mean to have a conflict of interest in relation to voting and other matters?

A [conflict of interest](#) are things that would affect how a member would vote. Most members have a conflict of interest such as being a member on an organization's advisory board or being employed by an organization receiving Part A funding.

Unaligned consumers do not have such a conflict of interest as long as they are not employed by or are a board member of a Part A funded organization.

When voting or discussing a topic related to a person's conflict of interest, that person is required to disclose their conflict. The member with the conflict of interest is allowed to discuss the topic as long as they make clear their conflict. If a member is a sole-source provider, they would be required to disclose their conflict of interest. and recuse themselves from voting.

What is the conflict of interest form and why do I need to complete this form?

HIPC members are required to sign the conflict of interest form annually. The form keeps the Office of HIV Planning and DHH informed about a member's conflict of interest should it change.

Subcommittee Questions

What is a subcommittee?

A subcommittee is a group of HIPC members focused on a set of goals and responsibilities that have been determined by the full planning body and are outlined in the [bylaws which can be found here](#). There are [five subcommittees](#): Finance Committee, Nominations Committee, Comprehensive Planning Committee, Prevention Committee and the Positive Committee.

How is the Positive Committee unique from the other subcommittees?

The [Positive Committee](#) is for people with lived experience and is the only committee where its members do not need to be appointed HIPC members. All information on Positive Committee members is confidential.

How many subcommittees can I join?

A member can join as many subcommittees as they are able to attend. A HIPC member is required to join and attend at least one subcommittee in addition to the monthly HIPC meeting.

How do I become a co-chair? What are the responsibilities of a co-chair?

A member can become a co-chair through an election process. To become a co-chair, the individual must be a HIPC member in good standing for at least a year. Good standing is defined by regular subcommittee representation and meeting attendance. A co-chair facilitates a meeting and helps decide the direction of future meetings. Furthermore, a co-chair sits on the Executive Committee which resolves and discusses business regarding the HIPC body.

I missed a meeting. How do I catch up or become more involved?

Each meeting will be summarized in the meeting minutes. The previous meeting's meeting minutes are sent to the committee members before each meeting for their approval. HIPC and subcommittee members have the right to amend the minutes. Once the meeting minutes are approved, they will be published on the Office of HIV planning website. The meeting minutes can be found on the [HIPC Meeting and Subcommittee Meeting Minutes](#) page at the Office of HIV Planning website.

Which staff member is responsible for each subcommittee?

Mari Ross-Russell - Director, Finance Committee, Executive Committee

Email: mari@hivphilly.org

Tiffany Dominique — Prevention Committee

Email - tiffany@hivphilly.org

Debbie Law — Nominations Committee

Email - debbie@hivphilly.org

Sofia Moletteri— Comprehensive Planning Committee, Poz Committee, Website

Email: sofia@hivphilly.org

Kevin Trinh — Minutes & Attendance

Email: kevin@hivphilly.org

Misc. / In-Person Meeting Questions

What is the mask and social distancing policy for in-person meetings?

All persons are required to wear a mask during in-person meetings. During meetings, each person will be separated by 6 feet of space for social distancing.

When will in-person meetings resume?

We do not have a concrete date for in-person or hybrid meetings yet. As of right now, the Poz Committee meets in-person quarterly, and we are currently taking steps to resume other in-person meetings. We will provide more details as they become available. For in-person Poz Committee meetings, please contact Sofia at sofia@hivphilly.org to be on that mailing list.

How will hybrid meetings be handled?

We are currently reviewing in-person meeting protocols. We hope to reveal more information soon.

My organization needs a letter of support, does HIPC offer a letter of support? How does an organization/person obtain a letter of support?

HIPC does not provide letters of support for grant applications. It however, [will provide a letter of acknowledgement](#) once the agency/organization presents its proposed plan to the full council. All requests should be made 60 days in advance of the due date of the letter.

I need some services. Where can I find more services to fit my needs?

You can call the Health Information Helpline at 215-985-2437 Monday - Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm. You can also find service information in the [Service Directory](#) of the OHP website.