

HIV Early Intervention Services

A program of

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities / Division of Addictive Diseases

Rev 8/22/2011

Support Available to HIV Early Intervention Services Workers

HIV Early Intervention Services (EIS) is a program of the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities / Division of Addictive Diseases. The program is managed, on behalf of the Division, by Imagine Hope, Inc., which supports EIS workers by providing:

- Annual training events
- The newsletter *HIV Risk Reduction*
- A *Quarterly Report* on HIV EIS activities statewide
- The website www.hiveis.com
- An email news clipping service
- And technical assistance by phone and email

What do HIV EIS counselors do?

As a new HIV Early Intervention Services (EIS) worker, you may be the only HIV professional in your facility or you may be a member of an EIS team. Based primarily in substance abuse and opioid treatment facilities throughout the state of Georgia, most EIS workers lead HIV educational groups for consumers, provide HIV training for other staff members, and offer the following free services to consumers:

- HIV prevention counseling
- HIV pre-test counseling, HIV testing, and giving HIV test results
- Referral of HIV-positive consumers for medical/social services - whether newly or previously diagnosed.

Note: To protect their privacy, co-workers, friends, and family members who want to take an HIV test are encouraged to go to a testing site where they are not known.

EIS workers are not authorized to conduct HIV tests with co-workers, friends, or family members.

Many EIS workers build support for their program within their own facility, form a collaborative relationship with Public Health, and establish ties with the community at large. Recognizing the need to mobilize the community in order to end the discrimination and secrecy that feeds this epidemic, EIS workers also routinely participate in health fairs; speak at schools, churches, and community gatherings; and collaborate with other agencies during events like National HIV Testing Day.

Before you test

Contact Public Health - - We *strongly* recommend that you call your local and/or District Public Health Office and then go visit in person to introduce yourself. Below, Judi Duffy, who oversees the collection of HIV testing data for the state explains why:

No HIV EIS agency or site should begin HIV testing without *first* establishing a relationship with your local health department for the very important function of knowing where, how, and to whom you can refer HIV positive individuals for partner services, medical case management, social services, and legally required state infectious disease reporting.

How can this be done if the health department does not know about your agency and hasn't met or at least talked at length to you, the EIS worker?

I encourage all new HIV EIS staff to **call the district HIV Coordinator and schedule a face to face meeting** to discuss these issues and to establish a relationship not only with the district office, but with the actual individuals with whom they will be interacting.

Required Training - - As you may know, prior to conducting HIV counseling or testing, each new worker is required to attend a course originally designed by CDC on HIV prevention counseling and testing. Each year, Imagine Hope, Inc. provides a limited number of deliveries of this workshop specifically for EIS workers. To insure that you are notified as soon as these classes are scheduled, please provide us with your up-to-date email address.

Orientation

New EIS workers are eligible for a one-on-one orientation. Please call Winona Holloway at 404-923-8991 to schedule your session by phone. During orientation you will “go online” together to explore the website www.hiveis.com. Winona will review the support we provide, answer your questions, and offer suggestions about how to begin - even if you are waiting to get into training or have not yet received testing supplies.

Testing Supplies

OraSure - - A limited number of OraSure oral HIV test kits are available to EIS workers at no charge. Before you submit a request, look to see if you have any OraSure test kits on hand. If you do, check the expiration date. If the kits are within 2 months of expiration, call Marie Sutton at (404) 874-4040 **immediately**. Although kits are provided at no charge to you, they are very costly. Marie may be able to identify another site that can use the kits before their expiration date. If you have expired kits, we can use them for training.

An OraSure Request form is available at www.hiveis.com in the FORMS section and may be submitted by fax. A version that you can email is available from Winona Holloway, winona@imaginehope.com.

OraSure training is included as part of the required HIV Prevention Counseling and Testing course (above).

Rapid Testing Supplies - - A limited number of Clearview Complete rapid HIV testing supplies are available to qualified EIS workers at no charge. Once a year, Imagine Hope, Inc. provides the required training. Please be sure that we have your current email address so that we may notify you of such opportunities. To view a demonstration of Clearview Complete, visit the website www.hiveis.com and go to the Rapid HIV Testing section.

HIV Test Report – aka bubble sheet

All HIV tests are reported on a 2-part HIV Testing Report form (aka bubble sheet). Your contact at the district public health office can tell you how to acquire a supply of these forms. (If you don't have a contact at your district health department, please review the section above entitled *Before You Test*, above.)

Part I of the bubble sheet is the portion used to report all tests; Part II is used only in the event of a confirmed HIV-positive test. If you have difficulty acquiring a supply of the forms, please contact Winona at winona@imaginehope.com. For instructions on how to fill out the forms, use the Tip Sheet by Judi Duffy found at www.hiveis.com in the FORMS section.

For every HIV test that you perform, a bubble sheet (aka report form) must be submitted no more than 30 days after you receive the results. We recommend that you keep your copy of all HIV Testing Report forms for 18 months before shredding. Most counselors keep report forms on positive tests indefinitely. Mail your HIV Testing Reports to:

Christie Pace, HIV Unit
2 Peachtree Street, 12th Floor
Atlanta, GA 30303

Quarterly Field Report

Every agency providing HIV EIS submits a report each quarter. For a copy of the 2-page Field Report form, look in the FORMS section of the website, www.hiveis.com or request the form via email from Winona at winona@imaginehope.com.

We welcome you and look forward to speaking with you soon!
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Yours truly,

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