

**Virginia Department of Health, Division of Disease Prevention  
Ryan White Treatment Modernization Act Part B and HIV Prevention Services  
Public Hearing Minutes  
Norfolk, Virginia  
October 21, 2008**

The public hearing began at 11:15 am and adjourned at 12:30 pm. There were 22 attendees and 3 representatives from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), David Ciucci, Contract Monitor HCS, Heather Bronson, Contract Monitor, HCS and Ryland Roane, .

David Ciucci opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and introducing VDH staff. Mr. Ciucci gave an overview of VDH's HIV programs. Materials regarding HIV Prevention and HIV Care Services were distributed to all attendees. Mr. Ciucci then opened the floor for public comment on HIV issues and made every effort to have consumers describe to VDH Staff as to what HIV services (including core services) that they need to live optimally in regard to quality of life and health.

The majority of the comments related to support groups and transportation to get to those groups.

- ▲ Funds are being cut for support groups and transportation is being cut for the ones that are still functioning.
- ▲ Support groups are important...maybe we should fund raise for support groups.
- ▲ A consumer stated that his church gave him \$2,000 two years ago and he hasn't been able to get a group of people together to figure out how to spend it.
- ▲ A consumer who is also an advocate stated that: consumers are uneducated about what is available to them. "The more I am involved the more I realize how much folks don't know".
- ▲ Another consumer followed up by saying that agencies need to be required to keep client informed of services and changes in services.

One of the providers in the room asked participants of the public hearing how they would function if they lost their community case manager or Ryan White funding would go away? Responses were as follows:

- ▶ "HOPWA is a big help for me, I would be homeless without it."
- ▶ "I rely on the community case manager for housing assistance and food assistance, as well as support groups."

One consumer spoke about on her own initiative, just opening the phone book and finding emergency funds and food by calling churches. She stated that she calls every church and asks them what they offer, then writes down the services for future reference. Another consumer asked her to compile that information and share it with others as a “resources guide”. She agreed.

Another consumer stated that folks needed to mobilize and get their voices heard before all of the money dried up. She talked about VORA and a recent training she received from them. She encouraged participants to talk to their representatives and political leaders regularly and not just on VORA’s Lobby Day.