

News Release

November 7, 2007

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HHS Awards \$10.3 Million for Expanded HIV Testing and Prevention Services in Title X Family Planning Projects

The Office of Population Affairs (OPA), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), today announced 77 supplemental grant awards in 34 states or territories for the integration of HIV/AIDS testing and prevention services in Title X family planning service grantee projects.

These competitively awarded grant supplements are funded through Title X and the Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI). Resources provided by the MAI funds will support projects in communities where racial and ethnic minorities are underserved or disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS.

“I’m pleased that we are funding these new HIV prevention projects,” said Dr. Susan Orr, acting deputy assistant secretary for Population Affairs. “This news means that more clients will get HIV testing and referrals for treatment and care, should they need it.”

The Title X program is designed to provide access to contraceptive services, supplies and information to all who want and need them. By law, priority is given to persons from low- income families. The purpose of the supplemental grants is to expand HIV/AIDS prevention activities in Title X service projects by expanding the availability of onsite HIV testing, counseling and related HIV-referral services with a focus on implementing the September 2006 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) revised recommendations for HIV testing. The projects also aim to reduce barriers to implementing CDC’s recommendations to make voluntary HIV screening a routine part of medical care for all patients ages 13 to 64.

Although all 88 service grantees funded under Title X are required to provide HIV prevention education services on-site, not all are able to provide on-site HIV testing and related counseling and referral services on-site, or only offer it on a limited basis due to budgetary constraints.

The CDC has estimated that approximately 40,000 persons in the United States become infected with HIV each year, and that approximately one-quarter of all HIV-infected individuals are not aware of their HIV infection. Increasing the proportion of people aware of their HIV status is an essential component of comprehensive HIV treatment and prevention efforts in the U.S. Early diagnosis allows for the opportunity for life-extending therapy, prevention of mother-to-infant transmission during childbearing, and protection of partners from infection.

Title X clinics are located throughout the 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Territories and the Pacific Basin jurisdictions. Family planning programs, with years of experience addressing family planning and related preventive health needs, are well-placed to help prevent HIV/AIDS, help those who are HIV negative stay negative, and prevent infection from being transmitted to partners as well as from mother-to-child.

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Additional information about the Office of Population Affairs and its programs can be found at: <http://opa.osophs.dhhs.gov/>

Revised Recommendations for HIV Testing of Adults, Adolescents, and Pregnant Women in Health Care Settings were published in the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR September 21, 2006)