

***THRIVE***  
***Support Services***  
***Inc.***

LARRY L SCOTT-WALKER



# *About* **THRIVE**

- Founded in 2015 - virtual support network for BGMLWH
- Mission of THRIVE
- Have the largest network of BGM in the country
- Work centers self-love HIV Acceptance



# ***How has COVID-19 impacted your HIV work, your patients, and your agency?***

-Back to the basics

-Had to close our offices

-Utilize creativity to assure our members don't fall into isolation and depression

-Reminded us in many ways that we have to fend for and prioritize our own lives

-As Black folks have layered concerns

a) black folk are dying, b) the lack of clear leadership is anxiety inducing c) Many care facilities were slow to adjust and adapt to telemedicine d) experiences of re-traumatization and PTSD



# *Impact on programs*

- Participation in programs, activities and groups increased.
- Our linkage department is linking over 50 people a week back to care,
- Plan to allow appointment only access to our on-site clothing closet and food pantry.



***How has your background in HIV influenced and contributed to your response to COVID-19?***

-Informs best practices around: transparency, proactive approaches to dispel stigma, access to testing and accurate information

-Fuels our belief in our resiliency as a people. (We made it through HIV and we will survive this!!)



***How will you prepare to carry out your HIV work in the future in the “new normal” and what do you need to accomplish your work? When do you expect to return to the “new normal” and ramp up Ending the HIV Epidemic initiative?***

- We are in no rush to return to the old norms.
- As Black people not only living with HIV but also living within many margins of society it is important for us to prioritize the health and wellbeing of our members
- their belief in our ability to keep them safe is our bread and butter.
- We will follow the scientific logic of the WHO and CDC to guide our return to the most appropriate version of “normal” post COVID.

