

## Public Awareness & Community Engagement (PACE) Committee Meeting Summary

May 21, 2025

<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, May 21, 2025	<b>Type:</b>	Virtual, Zoom
<b>Start Time:</b>	10:15 a.m.	<b>End Time:</b>	11:35 a.m.
<b>Leaders</b>	Angel H. Ruiz & Reggie Knox (Incoming Co-Chairs), Africka Hinds (Supporting Chair, CHPC Chair), Jenny Bobadilla-Pincos (CT Department of Public Health Resource Liaison)		
<b>Participants :</b>	12	<b>Next Meeting:</b>	June 18, 2025

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Africka Hinds welcomed the group and emphasized the committee's continued role in leading inclusive and meaningful membership outreach. She celebrated the consistent energy that PACE has maintained through its transitions and affirmed her support for the new co-chairs as they shape the committee's direction.

In Reggie Knox's absence, Angel Ruiz stepped into the lead facilitator role. He opened with a warm icebreaker, inviting participants to share their names and something they're looking forward to this spring or summer. From kayaking and beach visits to concerts and family time, the tone was light and inviting. Mr. Ruiz thanked the group for their presence and expressed excitement about the creative ideas PACE is exploring. He then reminded the group of its ground rules, which were meant to ensure that meetings remained productive and respectful.

• Allowing one person to speak at a time	• One person speaks at a time
• Share the floor – treat all with respect	• Ask questions if any terms or acronyms are unclear
• Use <b>ELMO (Everybody, Let's Move On)</b> if you feel a topic has been thoroughly discussed	• Raise a hand (physically or digitally) to signal you would like to speak

### ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

**PACE Committee Charge:** Mr. Ruiz provided a brief refresher on the PACE Committee's charge – to lead recruitment, outreach, and public awareness efforts as part of CHPC's broader work. He emphasized the importance of maintaining the four pillars of the Integrated Plan (Diagnose, Treat, Prevent, and Respond) at the forefront of every campaign and material the committee develops.

Committee Charge & PACE's Role in the Integrated Plan	
<p>The <b>Public Awareness and Community Engagement (PACE)</b> Committee is responsible for recruiting, retaining, mentoring, and orienting members of the Connecticut HIV Prevention Coalition (CHPC). The committee also coordinates marketing initiatives, public awareness campaigns, and health communication strategies. Its primary focus is on developing strategies that support populations living with or at the highest risk of HIV in Connecticut.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Goal 1:</b> Reduce New HIV Infections by 2026 – <i>(awareness campaigns and initiatives)</i></li> <li>• <b>Goal 2:</b> Achieve and increased viral load suppression rate among PWH who are in care by 2026 and increased viral load suppression rate among people with diagnosed HIV – <i>(awareness campaigns and initiatives)</i></li> <li>• <b>Goal 3:</b> Reduce HIV-related disparities and health inequities – <i>(broaden membership)</i></li> <li>• <b>Goal 4:</b> Achieve integrated, coordinated efforts that address the HIV epidemic across community partners – <i>(flexible, timely, and responsive awareness campaigns + broadening membership)</i></li> </ul>

### MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION

**Newsletter Progress: Draft Review**

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David Reyes shared a draft of the Summer 2025 newsletter on screen using Flipsnack, walking through the interactive format. He highlighted several featured articles – including Jenny Bobadilla-Pincos’s piece on language and stigma, an STI/HIV prevention spotlight by Dr. Michael Virata, and an explainer on advocacy vs. lobbying.

Key discussion points included:

- Appreciation for the **clean, accessible layout**.
- Concerns from several members that the newsletter felt **too sterile** or “provider-focused,” lacking a sense of community connection.
- Suggestions to **reorder content** to start with Reggie’s story (once finalized), include **more imagery**, and adopt a more **youth- and client-friendly tone and aesthetic**.
- Strong support for including a **personal recipe photo, or an activity** connected to featured individuals, to help humanize the stories.

Reggie Knox’s personal story is still in progress. Ken Plourd is working with him to finalize an interview that could become both a featured profile and a more visual front-page anchor. Jenny Bobadilla-Pincos and Jordan Wynn offered to help with the redesign if needed to meet the new goals for visual appeal and emotional resonance.

The group agreed on a soft deadline to finalize all components and target a **mid-June release**.

**Outreach Card: Reactions and Distribution Strategy (See Appendix A)**

David Reyes presented the updated 4x6 “Your Voice Matters” postcard, which now includes QR codes that direct readers to CHPC resources, meeting info, and general statewide prevention and care resources.

Highlights from the feedback:

- Members noted the importance of the card feeling **inviting and colorful**, especially for young people and those unfamiliar with CHPC.
- Jenny Bobadilla-Pincos offered a design tweak: improve **contrast and legibility** in lighter text areas by adjusting the background gradients.

Distribution ideas:

- Members suggested expanding distribution to **clinics, recovery centers, fairs, and farmers’ markets**, especially in **underrepresented regions** like Tolland County.
- Jordan Wynn suggested reaching out to other fraternities and sororities (SG Rose, Zetas, Sigmas) beyond the Alphas, noting they often have events and are involved in community work.
- Bodegas, churches, barbershops, and salons were also suggested in the chat.
- **Distribution logistics:** The card needs to go through the DPH review committee and the executive committee for approval before wider distribution.

**Youth Subcommittee Planning**

Angel Ruiz initiated a focused conversation on **youth engagement**, noting the critical need to reestablish a **Youth Focus Subcommittee**. Danielle Warren-Dias reflected on the past models that worked – like advisory groups that helped **review materials**, plan events, and give input on messaging.

Jordan Wynn offered to help recruit and serve as a liaison to younger community members. The group agreed on the following initial steps:

- Host a **planning call in June** to scope out the structure and support needed.
- Invite **youth-serving orgs** and **past partners** to join.
- Explore **low-barrier ways for youth to participate**, such as reviewing materials, attending quarterly meetings, or joining CHPC through internships or volunteer opportunities.

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### MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION

#### Committee Social Media Presence

Kashia Lynch's recommendation from the April PACE Committee meeting to develop **PACE-specific social media pages** was revisited.

##### Additional Discussion highlights:

- The existence of a CTDPH Instagram account was confirmed; however, it was noted that any content posted there requires DPH approval, which can be time-consuming or prevent publication. Members proposed that CHPC establish its own Instagram and social media presence to avoid the need for DPH review board approval.
- Jordan Wynn strongly advocated for using **TikTok** as a platform to reach everyone, noting that its aggressive algorithm can connect people who have searched for related topics, such as HIV.
- There was discussion about forming a subcommittee to develop social media content and strategies, including sharing posting responsibilities so it doesn't fall on one or two people. Jordan Wynn and Monique Davis volunteered to work together on this, leveraging Mr. Wynn's social media knowledge and Ms. Davis' program background.

The group supported creating a library of posts, graphics, and reusable content to support seasonal campaigns and amplify CHPC's work. **David Reyes agreed to create a shared Google folder and content tracker**, where members can upload frequently used outreach materials and campaign assets. The folder will also serve as a springboard for social media planning and resource inventory.

#### Resource Inventory & Distribution Strategy

The committee plans to **create an inventory of existing social media and outreach materials** to prevent duplicating efforts. They discussed several sources for these materials, including campaigns on the **PPCT website**, resources from the **endemic website**, and materials available digitally on the **CDC website**. The **CT Clearinghouse** was also highlighted for its wide variety of public health materials available for ordering. Specific PrEP materials were mentioned, noting that while some small pink cards were found, other literature won't be restocked, with Gilead also being a source. The strategy is to **organize information about where these resources can be accessed**, possibly in a shared digital folder. Awareness of this inventory will be spread mainly through **social media posts targeting organizations and stakeholders**.

##### Discussion Highlights:

- The goal is to **identify and organize existing resources** to avoid reinventing materials.
- Key places for existing materials include the **PPCT website**, **endingthesyndemic website**, the **CDC website**, and the **CT Clearinghouse**.
- There is a recognized need to track and share **PrEP resources**, noting some limited availability and other sources, such as Gilead.
- The plan is to manage the information about resources, potentially in a shared digital space, rather than housing physical copies centrally.
- Raising awareness will focus on **social media outreach** to potential users of the materials.

### ATTENDANCE

Africka Hinds, Angel H. Ruiz, Carl Ferris, Charles Hardy, Danielle Warren-Dias, David Reyes, Jenny Bobadilla-Pincos, Juan Hernandez, Keith Taylor, Marie Raynor, Michael Judd, Monique Davis, Nilda Fernandez, Santos Cancel, Tom Alfano, Travis Gibbs

### FEEDBACK

Summary Table from Interactive Meeting Feedback Poll (n=10)
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Questions		Yes	No	Unsure
1	CHPC Member?	20%	10%	70%
2	I felt comfortable participating in the meeting	100%	0%	*
3	I felt the meeting was well organized and ran smoothly	100%	*	*
4	I liked the best: Talking about some of the stuff learned about in the prior meeting; Everything, especially the participant engagement; The energy and passion!!!; Great conversation; The Committee Members!; people sharing; it was all great!; Feedback regarding the flyer was both constructive and well received!; Everyone was actively engaged and participating; Group cohesiveness			
5	Suggestions for improvement: Keeping discussion on track; N/A, None, Share materials in advance; None at the moment; None! Let's keep the momentum going and get more members involved!			

# YOUR VOICE MATTERS



## Join The Connecticut HIV Planning Consortium (CHPC)

The CHPC meets on the third Wednesday of most months, gathering individuals from across our state to provide an opportunity for people to:

- ▶ Influence HIV Care and Prevention in Connecticut
- ▶ Be part of a diverse, supportive community
- ▶ Make a difference for those affected by HIV



VISIT [CTHIVPLANNING.ORG](https://cthivplanning.org)  
OR SCAN THE QR CODE  
TO LEARN MORE

## RESOURCES IN CONNECTICUT

### REGIONAL SUPPORT & CARE



The **e2Linkage Map** is designed to help locate Ryan White Providers throughout Connecticut, as well as prevention and STI resources to assist in finding services. Scan QR Code to learn more.



### MEDICATION & INSURANCE SUPPORT



**Connecticut AIDS Drug Assistance Program (CADAP)** provides eligible low-income residents with essential medications for the treatment of HIV, related conditions, and other comorbidities, as well as health insurance assistance. Scan QR Code to learn more.



### TESTING & PREVENTION



Find testing locations near you at [gettested.cdc.gov](https://gettested.cdc.gov). Scan QR Code to learn more.



### STAY CONNECTED



#CHPCWednesday  
#YourVoiceMattersCT

