

# NOW

END THE EPIDEMICS

## UPLIFTING GEORGIA'S EFFORTS TO DISSEMINATE HIS HEALTH ACROSS THE STATE



### TARGET POPULATION

Staff and providers who were funded fully or in-part by the Office of HIV/AIDS (OHA), including health educators, communicable disease specialists, administrators, public health nurses, epidemiologists, and linkage coordinators.



### LOCATION

Georgia



### PROGRAM DESIGN

William Lyons issued the mandate for all funded providers to enroll in the His Health trainings. Brooke Mootry, HIV Prevention Manager, and other health department staffers operationalized the mandate. The first step was to update the contractual agreement for grant-in-aid funding. They revised the 2018 grant-in-aid and contract documents to require all providers whose salaries were supported (full-time or partially) by OHA to complete the His Health training series within one year. Since the revision, new staff are required to complete the training within one year from date of hire. OHA collaborated with three Georgia HIV Prevention Regional Coordinators, 18 District HIV Prevention Coordinators and contracted providers to disseminate information about the mandate at the local level.



### ESTIMATED COST

The project did not require additional staff, equipment or travel. The only cost associated was staff time but they did not conduct a cost analysis for these trainings.



### FUNDING SOURCE

Georgia did not do a formal cost evaluation for this project as there were no direct financial costs to the program or the individual staff members. Staff time was the only cost factor considered to complete the training.

## SUMMARY

**His Health** is a one-of-a-kind NASTAD online resource aimed at advancing the standard of care for Black gay and bisexual men and other men who have sex with men (GBM) and transgender patients. In 2017, William Lyons, Georgia's State AIDS Director, was inspired to use His Health to train all HIV prevention providers funded by OHA. To address the health inequities that Black GBM confront along the HIV care continuum in the state, OHA successfully developed a mandate that required all staff to enroll in the Continuing Education trainings. The mandate demonstrates OHA's commitment to make holistic, affirming, and culturally responsive care the standard for young Black GBM patients. These topics have been on the agenda for their summits on GBM health, at their all-state provider meetings, as well as multiple regional and provider specific trainings conducted by Capacity Building Assistance (CBA) providers and in-house Technical Assistance (TA). The HIV-related stigma that persists in Georgia coupled with OHA's urgency to provide specialized training to staff regarding this population, served as an impetus to implement this mandate.

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### BACKGROUND

His Health forms part of the Center for Engaging Black men who have sex with men (MSM) Across the Care Continuum (CEBACC), which is an online resource created in partnership with the Health Resources Services Administration's HIV/AIDS Bureau. The inventory aims to close the knowledge gap that exists among our healthcare community about their health and social needs of Black GBM and transgender patients. The resource offers free, accessible and accredited continuing education courses, webinars and models of care that provide participants with strategies to deliver holistic, affirming and quality care for this patient population. After learning about His Health in 2017, Georgia's State AIDS Director, William Lyons, considered this an important tool to stem the high HIV prevalence and incidence rates in the state, which disproportionately impacts Black GBM. As a result, he worked with his leadership and colleagues to mandate all HIV prevention providers funded by the Office of HIV/AIDS to enroll in the free, accredited and self-paced Continuing Education courses that cover a wide range of topics applicable to this patient population including whole health assessments, PrEP, linkage to care, behavioral and mental health, stigma, medical mistrust among others.

### CORE ACTIVITIES

By requiring staff to enroll in the His Health Continuing Education Series, the health department aimed to train all funded providers. They disseminated information about His Health through regional HIV Prevention Coordinators from OHA who were beginning to conduct site-visits and conference calls to review work plans and deliverables for the contract year. These outreach efforts allowed them to share information about the mandate through the 18 Georgia Health Districts and contracted providers.

### DATA

Approximately 66 participants have completed at least one course in the past year. Sixty four percent (42) were non-medical providers such as case managers and 32% (24) were clinicians. Further, most participants outside of the health department, practice at community health centers or at Ryan White Clinics. The health department also surveyed a sampling of 17 individuals who were required to take the His Health trainings. They noted that the results concurred with the positive feedback reported on monthly progress reports and from conversations with Regional Coordinators. More specifically, 63% described the overall quality of the training as "excellent" and 31% rated the training "very good" or "good." 88% said that they were "extremely likely" or "very likely" to change their approach to Black GBM when providing services after completing these trainings.

### FUNDING & COST

The only costs the health department incurred to implement this initiative was staff time.

### STRENGTHS

The His Health modules provided the health department with an affordable and an accessible resource to train staff across their jurisdiction around Black GBM health. Additionally, provider feedback for His Health was overwhelmingly positive. Anecdotal comments to the HIV Prevention Regional Coordinators included appreciation for the first-hand perspective of this important priority population as well as the in-depth look at social and structural challenges that they were not aware of. Notably, one of the Health Districts encouraged all their nurses, including providers from other programs, to enroll in His Health.

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### LIMITATIONS

The His Health inventory required staff to dedicate time to enrolling in the courses and complete all pre- and post- assessments, which may impact their daily activities. However, the OHA staff understood the importance of these trainings.

While NASTAD can collect and offer data on participants who complete the trainings (e.g. demographic information and feedback), Georgia's OHA is working toward developing a monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

### STAKEHOLDERS

William Lyons, Georgia State's AIDS Director  
Brooke Mootry, HIV Prevention Manager  
Regional HIV Prevention Coordinators  
Georgia Health District staff and contracted providers

### PROGRAM CONTACT

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