



PROGRAM SUMMARY REPORT

Orange County, FL

PROGRAM:

Jail Linkage Program

INTRODUCTION:

The Jail Linkage Program in Orange County, FL by Orange County Health Services aims to identify individuals with HIV within the incarcerated population, provide essential care and support during incarceration, and ensure seamless linkage to medical and support services upon release. This initiative addresses the unique needs of people with HIV (PWH) in the criminal justice system, enhancing their chances for improved health outcomes and reducing transmission risk upon reentry into the community.

TARGET POPULATION:

The program serves diverse and key populations, ensuring that high-risk and underserved groups receive targeted interventions.

- Men who have sex with men (MSM)
 - Black/African American
 - Hispanic/Latinx
 - People who inject drugs
 - People living with HIV (PLWH)
 - Spanish Speakers
 - Women, youth, and aging population
 - Transgender and nonbinary individuals
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KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND COLLABORATORS:

The program was made possible through collaborations with several key stakeholders, including:

- Community- Based Organizations (CBOs)
 - Local Health Department
 - Criminal Justice System
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PROGRAM DURATION:

The initiative is designed to run for 3 to 5 years, with a focus on long-term engagement and impact within Orange County.

PROGRAM GOALS AND KEY ACTIVITIES:

The program's primary goal is to identify individuals with HIV in the criminal justice system, engage them in supportive services during incarceration, and ensure connection to medical and community care post-release.

Key activities include:

- **Early Engagement and Assessment:** The Jail Linkage Coordinator identifies and meets with individuals with HIV (PWH) during incarceration, completing eligibility assessments for Ryan White Part A and Ending the HIV Epidemics (EHE) programs.
 - **Referrals and Linkage:** Clients are referred to case management, housing, and medical services as needed. Case managers connect with clients via video visitation before release to encourage engagement in care.
 - **Health Monitoring and Support:** During incarceration, clients are monitored for medication adherence, and lab tests (viral load and CD4) are completed to manage their health. Clients receive referrals, food bank access, and transportation support upon release.
 - **HIV Testing and Rapid Linkage:** Regular HIV testing is conducted seven days a week within the jail to identify new or out-of-care individuals. For those with a reactive test result, the Jail Linkage Coordinator ensures immediate engagement and linkage to care.
 - **Collaborative Support:** The program works closely with Early Intervention Services (EIS) to identify and assist any clients who were unable to connect with the Jail Linkage Coordinator during their incarceration.
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PROGRAM CHALLENGES:

The key challenge for the Jail Linkage Program is gaining initial support from Corrections security staff, which is crucial for the program's success. Clear communication between the Jail Linkage Coordinator, EIS staff, and community case managers is essential to link clients to care post-release effectively. Additionally, there is a need for a seamless process between the HIV Tester, Jail Linkage Coordinator, and Corrections medical provider to optimize client care, including lab work and Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) administration. With the average jail stay lasting 30-45 days, maintaining continuity in care and engaging clients in long-term support can be complex.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT:

The program was developed with input from local community members through the EHE Townhall Meetings, Facebook Live events, and the Central Florida HIV Planning Council. A needs assessment conducted in 2019 identified key barriers, including service availability and the need for enhanced linkage from entry points such as hospitals and jails.

DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING:

A senior Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator oversees program outcomes through monthly calls with the Jail Linkage Coordinator and Corrections Health Services Administrators. Data from sub-recipients is collected and reported monthly, tracking outcomes such as HIV testing numbers, eligibility assessments, and successful linkages to medical and case management upon release.

KEY METRICS AND OUTCOMES:

The Jail Linkage program tracks a range of key performance indicators to measure its success:

- Number of linkage specialists available
 - Number of clients served by the Jail Linkage Coordinator
 - Number and percent of clients linked to medical care and supportive services after being released from Orange County Jail
 - Number of clients tested for HIV at the jail
 - Number of reactive HIV tests
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CONCLUSION:

The Jail Linkage Program represents a vital step in supporting the health of justice-involved individuals with HIV, ensuring they receive timely care and support. The program's efforts in linking clients to essential services both during and after incarceration contribute to broader public health goals, reducing community transmission and enhancing health outcomes for vulnerable populations.