

SNS Technical Assistance call: 2.10.2011

Facilitator: Jeff Wagers, DSHS

Introductions:

DSHS: Liza Hinojosa, Christina Morse

ATCHHSD: Cynthia Washington

Tarrant Co HD: Sharon Louise, Lamont Lovelace, Brian Barron

Resource Center, Dallas: Mikael Andrews

City of Laredo: Erica Dominguez

Purpose: To create a supportive environment in which to provide peer to peer technical assistance and communicate information specific to Social Networks Strategy.

SNS Implementation Check-in with programs:

Each program shared some challenges and successes.

TCHD: TCHD reported that their SNS coordinator had been in his position about 4 months. They are currently working on a pamphlet and powerpoint for their orientation. They had found 18 recruiters, who talked to 30 Network Associates (N/As). Three HIV + persons were found.

Lamont had found 8 houses in the area that house individuals who have formed their own families. They mostly hang out at an inner-city club. TCHD feels this is a good network to pursue. One HIV+ person has been found here.

They mentioned that their recruiters are having some problems talking to N/A's. A suggestion was to have the SNS coordinator talk to the N/A as a follow-up to the recruiter talking to them. This is acceptable. Also, continued coaching with the recruiters is important to discuss these issues. SNS coordinators can also go with recruiters when they discuss testing with their N/A's; they are available to provide the test on-the-spot. Other agencies have reported this same issue.

Resource Center Dallas: Mikael reported that they had a 2010 end-of-the-year celebratory party at RCD for all the recruiters. This party inspired one of the recruiters to talk to his N/A's again about the importance of testing; nine N/A's then came in to the office to test from that event. The party also helped generate feedback from recruiters on what works.

He reported that RCD only provides the traditional blood draw test, and not Rapid tests for N/A's; this ensures confidentiality of the HIV result of the N/A. Mikael then will follow up with the N/A to give the results individually when the result comes back.

Mikael said that they are currently doing a community assessment to see where to find the disease and to get feedback on ways to improve the SNS project. Currently there are two active recruiters, but RCD has an open-door policy on recruiters; they can return whenever they would like to refer a new N/A.

City of Laredo: Erika reported an increase in recruiters bringing in N/A's, especially first-time testers. Four new HIV +'s were found in November. Erika reported the hardest target population to test were the IDUs. She also said that it seems like word is getting out about the testing through the social networks, and it is helping to make people feel more comfortable discussing testing. It's become easier for recruiters to discuss HIV with their N/A's. It's becoming part of their language.

ATCHHSD: Cynthia reported that Ebony Smith, who provides PBC, has been added to the project part-time. Cynthia is in the process of being certified in phlebotomy and will be doing blood draws. She's been having a hard time getting MSM recruiters, and they haven't tested many N/A's of MSM's.

ATCHHSD reported doing a testing event at a property where three persons were found positive for STD's, but not HIV.

Examples of tangible reinforcements that all agencies are providing include \$10 HEB gift cards, jump drives, Nike book bags, pens and Target gift cards.

Question: What is the procedure to close our recruiter files?

Unlike CRCS or PBC, when there is a specific end date, recruiters do not necessarily have to be closed out. The door is open for them to return. It is recommended to have good documentation. One agency mentioned that the SNS coordinator meets with the supervisor before closing out a file. DSHS does not require an agency to close the files out.

Question: How to address orientation; is it better to do a powerpoint group orientation or individualized orientation? Should it be combined with interviewing?

Mikael at RCD mentioned he does not like using the powerpoint; it seems too formal. He provides orientation one-on-one and combines with interviewing and coaching if needed.

TCHD that they do an activity where they put the common questions asked by clients in the coaching session and put them on laminated cards. They will pull them randomly and have the recruiter practice answering the question. This boosts their confidence, similar to the coaching fishbowl activity in the SNS training. TCHD also reports combining the orientation with interviewing if necessary.

If a client is invested at an orientation, it is best practice to move in to interviewing and coaching at that visit. Timeliness is key.

DSHS staff advised contractors that no formal site visits are planned on this project since it is a pilot. When a consultant provides a site visit, TA might occur, but no rating will be given. TA will be provided on an as-needed basis or by request.

Erika suggested that we have a one-day in person TA summit for the contractors who implement SNS. The roundtable at the conference last year was beneficial but too short. A whole day to share best practices and problem-solve would be helpful. Jeff said he would check on it.

Conclusion: The next SNS TA call will be Tuesday, April 19, 2011, from 10-11am (not the usual Thursday time)

Other 2011 dates: June 9, August 11, October 13, December 8, 10-11am.