

# Ending the Epidemic Task Force Recommendation Form

#117



**COMPLETE**

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**Q1: OPTIONAL: This recommendation was submitted by (please provide your first and last name, affiliation, and email address)**

First Name	Lisa
Last Name	Reid
Affiliation	Hudson River HealthCare, Inc.
Email Address	1 Webster Ave., Suite 202

**Q2: Title of your recommendation**

Utilizing Peer Linkage Specialist to Link and Retain Persons Diagnosed with HIV in Medical Care

**Q3: Please provide a description of your proposed recommendation**

Incorporate skilled Peer Linkage to Care Specialists to engage and retain persons diagnosed with HIV in medical care by:

Building rapport through sharing personal experiences in an educational perspective to increase the person's understanding of the need to engage and maintain health care, treatment, viral load suppression, retention in care, coping with diagnosis and HIV related issues;

Educating through the use of technology - apps, ipad/utube videos, social networking websites, and educational websites such as UPWORDS Voices and HIVStopsWithMe;

Building professional skills through the completion of an ongoing training program on topics such as: communication skills, motivational interviewing, public speaking, mental health & substance use screening, documentation, sexual risk reduction, harm reduction, domestic violence, PrEP and other topics as appropriate.

Focusing education and support on living with a "life changing illness" rather than a "chronic illness" to give hope but not diminish the seriousness of HIV infection;

Facilitating linkage to care by meeting with community medical providers and DOH and linkage persons to HIV medical care;

Participating in the HIV interdisciplinary treatment team to share information and transition persons linked to care to case management;

Participating in supervision maintaining support, guidance, education and well being.

**Q4: For which goal outlined in the Governor's plan to end the epidemic in New York State does this recommendation apply? (Select all that apply)**

Linking and retaining persons diagnosed with HIV to health care and getting them on anti-HIV therapy to maximize HIV virus suppression so they remain healthy and prevent further transmission

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**Q5: This recommendation should be considered by the following Ending the Epidemic Task Force Committee (Select all that apply)**

Care Committee: Develop recommendations to support access to care and treatment in order to maximize the rate of HIV viral suppression. The Committee will promote linkages and retention in care to achieve viral suppression and promote the highest quality of life while significantly decreasing the risks of HIV transmission. Recommendations will also ensure a person centered approach is taken and that access to culturally and linguistically appropriate prevention and health care services is available.

**Q6: Does this recommendation require a change to an existing policy or program, or the creation of a new policy or program?**

New program

**Q7: Would implementation of this recommendation be permitted under current laws or would a statutory change be required?**

Permitted under current law

**Q8: Is this recommendation something that could feasibly be implemented in the short-term (within the next year) or long-term (within the next three to six years)?**

Within the next year

**Q9: What are the perceived benefits of implementing this recommendation?**

Perceived benefits to persons diagnosed with HIV receiving peer linkage services include:

Increased knowledge  
improved problem solving skills  
behavior change  
improved health outcomes (retention and viral load suppression)  
access to community services  
generalization of "linkage" skills

**Q10: Are there any concerns with implementing this recommendation that should be considered?**

The change from chronic disease to life changing disease

**Q11: What is the estimated cost of implementing this recommendation and how was this estimate calculated?**

Implementation can be incorporated into the currently funded model of care.

**Q12: What is the estimated return on investment (ROI) for this recommendation and how was the ROI calculated?**

*Respondent skipped this question*

**Q13: Who are the key individuals/stakeholders who would benefit from this recommendation?**

Consumers  
service providers  
community members

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**Q14: Are there suggested measures to accompany this recommendation that would assist in monitoring its impact?**

Measures could include:

Completion of medical visits (retention in care) during the first 6 months of involvement with Peer Linkage Specialist;

Viral load suppression 6 months following linkage to care or;

linkage to community resources to stabilize person's life, i.e. housing, mental health, substance use treatment.

**Q15: This recommendation was submitted by one of the following**

Other (please specify)

Service Provider - Director of HIV Primary Care & Supportive Services