

# New Jersey HIV Planning Group General Assembly Meeting Agenda

**Thursday, October 16th, 2025**

Hybrid via In person and ZOOM Video Conference  
Mary Roebling Building (20 West State Street in Trenton, NJ)

11:30 am – 4:00 pm

**Chelsea Betlow**  
Government Co-Chair

**Jaivon Lewis**  
Government Vice-Chair

**Johanne Rateau**  
Community Co-Chair

**Saquan Stevenson**  
Community Co-Chair

**\*Please note all times are approximate**

## NJHPG Members Only

11:30 am	Welcome & Moment of Silence Approve Agenda & July Meeting Minutes	Saquan Stevenson
11:40 am	<i>By-Law Revisions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.15 – Leave of Absence Policy</li> <li>3.2.2 - Government Vice-Chair Roles &amp; Responsibilities</li> </ul> <i>Executive Community Co-Chair Vote</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Laurie Litt &amp; Samarie Rivera</li> </ul>	Ric Miles
11:50 am	NJHPG Member Updates & Evaluation Review	HCPST
12:05 pm	NJHPG Needs Assessment Presentation	Barbara Teh
12:20 pm	NJHPG Tabling Training	HCPST

## Open Portion

12:45 pm	<i>Lunch &amp; Networking; Greeters: Saquan Stevenson &amp; Kevin E. Taylor</i>	
1:00 pm	Welcome & Moment of Silence	Johanne Rateau
1:15 pm	NJHPG Quarterly Review & Welcome New Co-Chairs	HCPST
1:35 pm	Quality Improvement Collaborative (QIC)	Melanie Mercado-Miller
Break (10 min)		
2:20 pm	DHSTS Updates	DHSTS
2:30 pm	Partner Updates-5 <i>minutes</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newark Eligible Metropolitan Area (NEMA)</li> <li>Middlesex, Somerset, Hunterdon Transitional Grant Area (TGA)</li> <li>Hudson TGA</li> <li>Bergen Passaic TGA</li> <li>Philadelphia Office of HIV Planning</li> </ul>	
2:55 pm	Award Ceremony	Executive Co-Chairs
3:15 pm	Member & Community Announcements	Saquan Stevenson
3:35 pm	NJHPG Announcements	Dottie Rains-Dowdell
3:55 pm	Evaluation	HCPST
4:00 pm	Adjournment	Johanne Rateau

**Next meeting: Thursday, January 15, 2026 (Northern Region)**



July 2025 Meeting Minutes



General Assembly Voting



General Assembly Meeting Evaluation

New Jersey HIV Planning Group  
**General Assembly Meeting Minutes**  
Thursday, July 17th, 2024

Hybrid via In person and ZOOM Video Conference  
Hilton Waterfront | 1 Penn Street, Camden, NJ

ATTENDANCE			
NJHPG Member			
Abraham Corsino	P	Justin LiGreci	A
Anjettica Boatwright	P	Karen Walker	P
Allison Delcalzo-Berens	P	Kelly Williams	P
Angela Petrone	LOA	Kevin E. Taylor	P
Amy Pereira	P	Laurie Litt	P
Chelsea Betlow	A	Luis Otano	P
Claudia Ortiz	P	Lynnette Abdulwaliyy	P
Crystal Mitchell	P	Meg Bilby	P
George Lowe	LOA	Monique Springer	P
Jaivon Lewis	P	Rafael Kaipa	P
James Valentin	P	Ric Miles	P
Jamir Tuten	P	Robert Lord-Schell	P
Jocelyn Perry	P	Samarie Rivera	P
Joe Monica	P	Saquan Stevenson	P
Johanne Rateau	P	Shalik Thompson	P
John Nelson	P	Stephanie Berroa-Allen	P
Jose Avila	P	Syd Rosen	P
Jose Lugo	P	Tameka Allen	P
Justin Almodovar	P		

NJHPG Committee Member			
Gabrielle Ferrigno, Jess Diaz, Ray Welsh, Steve Dunagan			
Non-Voting Members			
Alex T, Alexa Pena, Alexandria Holroyd, Alicia Gambino, Aliya Roman, Amneris Rodriguez, Armando, Ayo, Barbara Teh, Barrie W, Camyrah R, Carla-Ann Alexander, Carol Vincent, Chad Balodis, Charla Cousar, Christian Mendez-Baez, Christina Carty, Cindy Hou, Clarise Bradshaw, Cori Wilson, Cynthia Mimmo, Danica Kuncio, Dawn Gruss, Ena, Eric Sherr, Heidi Haiken, Jacques Joseph, Jahnae Morgan, Jerome Pipes, Joe Sirak, Jonathan Ruberte, June Dowell-Burton, Karyn Berk, Kathleen Donahue, Khadijah Ried, Kim Thomas, Kristen Ehlers, Lara Dykstra, Leonard Norris Sr, Luis Ortiz-Juarez, Mark Condoluci, Martha Chavis, Mary Nolan, Melanie Mercado-Miller, Minoo Christian, Mumah Tawe, Na'Eema Robinson, Nahid Suleiman, Nikeshia Deal, Renee Cirillo, Ruby Batista, Ruth Abrams, Shawdae Carter, Sheree B, Sherri Giorgio, Shwetha Kamath, Stacy Smith, Susan Burrows-Clark, Tiffany D, Tonia Pressley, Tri Nguyen, Veronica Siringano, Wendy Henderson			
HIV Community Planning Support Team			
Dottie Dowdell	P	Taylor Lightner	P
Deyonna Pope	P		

P- Present; A- Absent; E -Excused; LoA - Leave of absence



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<b>AGENDA</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>Welcome and Moment of Silence</b>	Johanne Rateau began the NJHPG Members Only Portion of the meeting at 11:30 am, followed by a moment of silence for those recently lost within the community.
<b>Approval of the Agenda &amp; Meeting Minutes</b>	Johanne Rateau transitioned to the approval of the Agenda and Meeting Minutes. HCPST conducted a vote, and the motion passed.
<b>New Member Ratification Vote</b>	Laurie Litt introduced herself as one of the Governance Co-Chairs for NJHPG. She explained the need for the planning body to have time to complete new business such as approving Agendas, Minutes, and Bylaws. The Governance Committee has the responsibility to ensure that the Bylaws are up to date and working in accordance with having a functional planning body. The Governance Committee is also responsible for the nomination of new NJHPG Members. This half of the year there were 5 individuals up for nomination; Jose Lugo, Justin Almodovar, Joseph Monica, Syd Rosen, and Meg Bilby. All 5 nominees were voted in and ratified as new NJHPG Members.
<b>Evaluation Review</b>	<p>The HCPST provided a summary of the April meeting evaluation. The following was identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33 respondents (13 NJHPG Members, 1 Committee Members &amp; 19 Non-voting attendee)</li> <li>• 64% In person and 36% virtual attendance</li> <li>• Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 100% understood the information presented</li> <li>○ 100% felt prepared to participate in the meeting discussion</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Areas of Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Vegan &amp; Vegetarian food options</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Media Day</b>	<p>The in-person attendees transitioned to begin media day. The Support Team reviewed the 3 objectives for the day:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review Tips for Photos</li> <li>2. Create Engaging Content of NJHPG <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Taking Committee photos</li> <li>b. Record videos of personal testimonies</li> <li>c. Take photos showcasing membership</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Post using #NJHPG</li> </ol>
<b>Welcome and Moment of Silence</b>	Saquan Stevenson began the Open Portion of the meeting at 1:00 pm, followed by a moment of silence for those recently lost within the community.
<b>NJHPG Overview</b>	<p>We are a planning body that works through the NJ Integrated Plan with the goal of ending the transmission of HIV within the state of New Jersey. There are 122 Activities listed within the Integrated plan that explain what needs to happen to achieve the goal of ending the epidemic. It is up to the individual committees to inform the Department of Health how they would like these activities to be implemented. NJHPG fulfills the role of planning through the completion of SMARTIE Recommendations.</p> <p>There are 6 Priority Populations listed within the Integrated Plan;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Black, Hispanic, White MSM - 25 years old - 44 years old</li> <li>2) Males Who Inject Drugs</li> <li>3) Black &amp; Hispanic Heterosexual Females - 25 years old - 44 years old</li> </ol>



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	<p>4) Transgender Women  5) Youths  6) Others; Sex workers, Immigrants, Older Adults, Disabled &amp; Justice Involved Individuals</p> <p>At NJHPG we have Quarterly General Assembly's Meetings and Monthly Committee Meetings;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Committee- Closed Meetings, NJHPG Co-Chairs Only</li> <li>• Governance Committee- Closed Meetings, NJHPG Members Only</li> <li>• Open Committees- Follow Assigned Workplans</li> <li>• Integrated Plan- Assign Activities &amp; Develop Recommendations</li> <li>• Priority Setting- Develop Recommendations</li> <li>• Community Engagement- Develop Recommendations</li> <li>• Data &amp; Research- Create Resources, Fulfill Data Requests, Develop Recommendations</li> </ul> <p>At our meetings we have three types of attendees;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guests/Non-Voting Attendee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Participation Only, CANNOT VOTE</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Committee Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Participation and Voting within their Prospective Committee</li> <li>◦ Must attend 3 meetings within 6-months</li> </ul> </li> <li>• NJHPG Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Participation, Voting within their Committee of Choice &amp; at General Assembly Meetings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>NJHPG Quarterly Review</b>	<p>The Support Team shared an educational presentation that included the work NJHPG has been able to accomplish last quarter;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NJHPG Emergency Meeting on 6/4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Discussed Federal HIV Prevention Funding Concerns</li> <li>◦ Over 200 attendees</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Advocacy Page and QRCs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Developed in collaboration with QIC Team</li> </ul> </li> <li>• DOH Report-Outs in Committee</li> </ul>
<b>NJHPG Quarterly Look Ahead</b>	<p>The Support Team shared an educational presentation that included the work NJHPG will accomplish next quarter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Co-Chair Nominations for 2026</li> <li>• Development of Vending Kit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Governance is currently exploring how to successfully implement NJHPG Vending Kits and Tabling Training</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Epidemiological Profile</b>	<p>The Surveillance Team at the DOH presented Trends and Distribution of HIV Diagnosis, Prevalence, Deaths and Outcomes of Care in New Jersey. The key takeaways are listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New diagnosis reduced by 25.5% in 2022 compared to 2013</li> <li>- Majority (48%) of persons living with HIV in 2023 were Hispanic/Latino.</li> <li>- In 2023, MSM accounted for 51% of persons diagnosed. MSM contact has been the predominant risk category for the newly diagnosed in the last 5 years.</li> <li>- In 2023, 82.3% of newly diagnosed were male.</li> <li>- The age group 25-34 has the highest number of new diagnoses every single year for the past 5 years.</li> <li>- In 2023, heterosexual contact was the predominant mode of transmission in Black and Hispanic females. IDU was the predominant mode of transmission in White females.</li> <li>- The number of persons living with HIV has increased about 1% from 2022 to 2023.</li> <li>- In 2023, there were no perinatal transmissions recorded.</li> <li>- 41.1% of persons living with HIV are Black or African American.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are over twice as many males living with HIV compared to females. There were also 238 transgender women living with HIV in 2023. There were under 10 transgender men.</li> <li>- 45.6% of all persons living with HIV were over the age of 55 in 2023.</li> <li>- Deaths attributed to HIV have decreased by 56% compared to 2013.</li> <li>- In 2023, men were predominantly affected by deaths attributable to HIV, with almost triple the numbers of women.</li> <li>- In 2023, persons aged 45-54 years are the highest percentage of persons who are diagnosed in the late stages of HIV.</li> <li>- Asians had the highest percentage of late-stage diagnosis</li> <li>- In 2023 the proportion of cases linked to care in 30 days increased about 10% from 2019.</li> <li>- In 2023, of all persons living with HIV in New Jersey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 92.1% were linked to care</li> <li>o 58.8% have evidence of care</li> <li>o 53% have achieved viral suppression</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Molecular and Time Space Clusters in New Jersey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o New Jersey has not had a molecular cluster in a year</li> <li>o Time space clusters are immediately addressed with most individuals already in care</li> <li>o Time space and Molecular cluster analysis is analyzed every month</li> <li>o New Jersey wants to increase genotype testing to be able to analyze molecular clusters</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>HCSDI Quality Improvement Collaborative</b>	<p>Melanie Mercado-Miller shared the following presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HCSDI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o HPG – HIV Planning Group</li> <li>o TACD – Training and Capacity Development</li> <li>o QIC – Quality Improvement Collaborative</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Life Steps Intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Evidence-based adherence support intervention that assists health care workers to improve treatment adherence with patients through 26 steps.</li> <li>o Purpose – to determine the feasibility and acceptability of integrating an evidence-based adherence support strategy into CHW services. Pilot program included 17 state-funded CHWs and lasted 12-months from January to December 2024.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The 13 Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Education about adherence</li> <li>o Plan for transportation to medical visits</li> <li>o Plan for keeping appointment dates and obtaining medication</li> <li>o Formulate a daily medication schedule</li> <li>o Plan for storing medications</li> <li>o Plan for obtaining medications when away from home</li> <li>o Identify social supports</li> <li>o Identify motivation for adherence and create reminders</li> <li>o Plan for coping with medication side-effects</li> <li>o Plan for communicating with the treatment team</li> <li>o Prepare for taking medication when using substances</li> <li>o Prepare to cope with slips in adherence</li> <li>o Review all plans</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Participating CHW &amp; Agency Expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Attend 3-day Life Steps Intervention Training</li> <li>o Engage 15 eligible clients in the intervention</li> <li>o Participate in 6 monthly community of practice sessions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Document intervention using a standardized template</li> <li>○ Report on Life Steps intervention outcomes monthly</li> <li>○ Participate in 1 QIC site visit</li> <li>• Barriers: English-only materials, no incentives, redundancy with intake, more immediate needs, no training for supervisors, restrictive eligibility criteria</li> <li>• Based on feedback received they will be repeating the intervention entirely in Spanish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Canopy Learn – empowering healthcare staff to improve patient care while learning medical Spanish on self-paced learn-by-speaking approach</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Upcoming Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Statewide PrEP Assessment</li> <li>○ Modified 5 Ms for those Aging with HIV</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>DOH DHSTS Updates</b>	<p>Charla Cousar shared the following updates on behalf of the DOH DHSTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHSTS has received the CDC funding. PMO are working with grantees on those grants.</li> <li>• They recently released an RFA for Ryan White Part B. Applicants were selected and PMOs are working with those grantees to get those applications through Sage, the grant administration system.</li> <li>• They’ve recently held meetings with HIV testing grantees to discuss the transition from Robert Wood Johnson to Fell.</li> <li>• For the CHW program, there is currently a Fireworx cohort ongoing, and the final listening sessions is scheduled for August 20<sup>th</sup> from 12-1:30pm.</li> <li>• DHSTS and QIC have connected to focus on a statewide PrEP Assessment. This is still in the early stages.</li> <li>• For HOPWA, the State has developed its draft Federal Fiscal Year 2025-2029 Consolidation Plan and the 2025 Annual Action Plan, which is a document that details how NJ plans to address housing and community development needs using federal funds.</li> </ul>
<b>Partner Updates</b>	<p><u>Newark Eligible Metropolitan Area (NEMA):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are awaiting their full award for Part A and EHE, so subrecipients were informed to continue service delivery.</li> <li>• They are working on their priority setting and resource allocation report.</li> <li>• They have received the 2024 data from the state and are working on their epi profile.</li> <li>• They are also planning to do a request for proposal for EHE and Part A this year. They do not have the dates yet.</li> </ul> <p><u>Middlesex-Somerset-Hunterdon TGA:</u></p> <p>Middlesex-Somerset-Hunterdon TGA provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are working on a tool for the planning council to track their activities and tasks that are relevant to the current integrated care plan as well as an EHE Activity tracker.</li> <li>• They are also adding a local data collection tool related to counseling, testing, and PrEP to help understand methods of getting people into care as quickly as possible, including elements to help us track the extent to which people are diagnosed and receive care.</li> <li>• They created an online service plan in CareWARE to ensure that medical case managers are accountable and providing service planning rather than just triaging ongoing cases.</li> <li>• They are continuing their Communication is Key quality improvement project to emphasize the need to work collaboratively with the consumer needs at the center of the work.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They are also rolling out their assessment of the administrative mechanism for the fiscal year.</li><li>• The planning council is having their annual orientation on August 14<sup>th</sup>.</li></ul> <p><u>Hudson TGA</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They are waiting for their final award.</li><li>• They are also working on their assessment of the administrative mechanism which will be sent out to their subrecipients shortly.</li><li>• They will be meeting with the New York Department of Health to discuss the HOPWA consolidation because Hudson will be absorbed into their catchment area.</li></ul> <p><u>Bergen Passaic Patterson TGA</u></p> <p>Bergen Passaic Patterson TGA, Ric Miles provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They are also waiting for our final award.</li><li>• Their PSRA priority setting allocation was supposed to be in August but was moved to September to get more participation.</li><li>• They’ve also tried nontraditional hour meetings to try to get more participation from consumers. They tried virtual and in-person. The in-person had a better turnout.</li></ul> <p><u>Philadelphia Office of HIV Planning:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They are currently working on their epi profile to help inform the integrated plan as well as the beginning stages of the needs assessment.</li><li>• They finished a membership recruitment and have identified 10 of 15 applicants that have already been sent to the Mayor’s office. This also ended up being a challenge because Philadelphia was in the midst of a work stoppage.</li><li>• They just finished priority setting which took about 4-5 months to complete.</li><li>• They’ve been hosting virtual meet and greets to allow people to get to know them on a personal level.</li><li>• They recently has a presentation around surveillance from the Division of HIV Health and that included the medical monitoring project.</li><li>• Another challenge is navigating the political landscape and also recruiting individuals that are reflective of the epidemic.</li></ul>
<b>Quarterly Spotlight</b>	<p>Jaivon Lewis transitioned into the award ceremony. Today we will be presenting the Quarterly Spotlight Award. This award celebrates the contributions of any member or guest who has made a positive impact on the planning body within the past quarter. Co-Chairs had the opportunity to nominate an NJHPG Member, Committee Member, or Guest who has had exemplary participation within their committee. They provided a case for their one nomination at the Executive Committee meeting including behaviorally specific examples and reasoning as to why they believe this individual is deserving. The Executive Committee Membership evaluated and reviewed all nominations to select an award recipient based on their measurable impact, commitment to ending the epidemic, and alignment with NJHPG’s mission, vision, and values. The selection process included a confidential scoring rubric and a closed ballot vote. This quarter there was a tie, so Jaivon welcomed the Co-Chairs of both the Governance and Priority Setting Committee to announce the recipients.</p>



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	<p>Samarie Rivera came up and announced Amy Pereira as the recipient of the Quarterly Spotlight Award. Amy was not present in person, so Samarie read her award letter to the audience.</p> <p>Ric Miles and Laurie Litt came up and announced Anjettica Boatwright as the recipient of the Quarterly Spotlight Award.</p>
<b>Funding Updates</b>	<p>Axel Torres Marrero shared some brief funding updates with the group and detailed next steps.</p>
<b>Community Announcements</b>	<p>Saquan Stevenson opened the floor for Community Announcements.</p> <p>Dr. Hou shared that there is an Emergency HIV Clinical Services Survey that is an anonymous 7-10 minute survey that will be used to inform the planning of the emergency HIV clinical response taskforce. The Support Team will share this link in the follow-up email.</p> <p>Claudia Ortiz shared that Proceed is going to have a Community Health Day on Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup> from 2pm-6pm in Elizabeth. They will have clinics, vaccinations, and service providers giving out information.</p> <p>Saquan Stevenson thanked everyone who was able to come out to Newark Pride and they look forward to seeing everyone next July.</p>
<b>Adjournment</b>	<p>HCPST shared the Meeting Evaluation and reminded attendees that the next General Assembly Meeting will be on October 16, 2025.</p> <p>Johanne Rateau asked for a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:35pm.</p>



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