

What Comes Next on Unmet Need: Five Steps for Title I and Title II Project Officers

- 1. Talk with your grantees about their estimates of unmet need and their plans for assessing and addressing unmet need**, and urge grantees whose estimates do not reflect sound methods to begin improving their estimates, requesting TA if needed.

The unmet need estimate from the FY 2006 applications of each of your grantees was reviewed by Mosaica's Unmet Need TA Center. In June of 2006, you and your grantees received an assessment and comments from the Unmet Need TA Center consultants. It provides suggestions for the grantee regarding the estimate, and plans for assessing and addressing unmet need. This report can help you in tracking your grantees' progress in estimating, assessing, and addressing unmet need. The Unmet Need Center probably will not be reviewing most FY 2007 applications, but can provide advice to Project Officers that can help you review future estimates.

Be sure your grantees understand the unmet need requirements in the Program Guidance. Requirements may change, but for FY 2007, both Title I and Title II grantees were expected to provide estimates of unmet need and a narrative description of their methodology, data sources, and limitations. They were also asked to describe actions or plans for assessing unmet need, and for using unmet need data for decision making about how to address unmet need. Once the grantee has a sound method for the estimate, it should do an update at least every two years. The data used for the FY 2007 estimate should be no older than 2004.

- 2. Encourage training for planning bodies in their roles of assessing and addressing unmet need.**

Mosaica provides on-site TA to planning bodies in how to assess unmet need and use the data in decision making around priority setting, resource allocations, development of directives, and refinement of the system of care. As a result of that TA, the Unmet Need TA Center has materials grantees and planning body staff can use to inform and train planning bodies about unmet need. Included is a sample PowerPoint presentation on planning body roles, and a summary of the responsibilities of planning bodies with regard to unmet need. Also available are charts summarizing actions other planning bodies have taken to assess and address unmet need.

- 3. Let grantees know that HRSA/HAB expects them to make unmet need a part of their needs assessments** – to learn who is not in care, their service gaps, and barriers to care.

Once grantees have an estimate of unmet need, they and their planning bodies need to:

- Look at the demographics of people out of care – *who* they are and *where* they live
- Compare them to the overall population of people living with HIV and AIDS to see if some populations or subgroups are especially likely to be out of care
- Assess their service needs and gaps
- Determine their barriers to care

This means that the needs assessment should include finding and talking to people out of care, not just people who are already a part of the CARE Act system. Encourage a *PLWH/A* survey, not a *consumer* survey. Help your grantees and planning bodies revise their needs assessment efforts – and encourage cross-title collaboration.

- 4. Help grantees and planning bodies use their unmet need estimates and assessments in decision making** – especially around priority setting, resource allocations, and improving the system of care.

Explain the need to use this information in setting priorities and allocating funds for core services. Encourage grantees and planning bodies to consider findings in planning use of Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) funds to help people from communities of color enter and remain in care. Help them think about using unmet need information in describing and developing a refined system of care that enhances access to care and better links prevention and care for all people living with HIV and AIDS, regardless of who they are or where they live.

- 5. Monitor to ensure that your grantees are meeting these expectations.**

During regular calls and site visits, ask about progress on estimating, assessing, and addressing unmet need. If you see that a grantee or planning body is having problems, encourage staff to check the Unmet Need TA Center website or the HRSA/HAB TARGET Center for self-help materials. If they need more intensive or on-site TA, they can submit a technical assistance request as they would for other technical assistance.

Contact the Mosaica Unmet Need TA Center of the TAC by telephone at 1-877-UNMNEED (1-877-866-6333) or by e-mail at unmetneedta@mosaica.org. For helpful materials, go to www.mosaica.org/unmetneedta.asp or <http://careacttarget.org>.