Transgender persons account for 1.53% of people living with HIV/AIDS in Los Angeles County despite being 0.43% of the population. With a positivity rate of 14.3%, this community is the most disproportionately impacted by the epidemic. Outreach to this hard-to-reach population is of highest priority.

PROJECT

The event, “Beyond the Basics: A Comprehensive Approach to Advancing Transgender HIV Prevention and Care,” brought together the transgender community and allies to strategize new ways to advance HIV prevention and care services for transgender persons seeking HIV services. The goals were:

1) to identify and clarify key issues that impact the quality of HIV-related prevention and care services consumed by transgender persons; and
2) to develop action steps to improve quality of services.

A committee of health department representatives, community members and allies planned the forum with input from the Los Angeles County Transgender Service Provider Network (TSPN) and Transgender Taskforce. All event planning recommendations from the TSPN and Taskforce were implemented.

LESSONS LEARNED

Health departments must seek input from transgender persons and community allies to plan effective programs and maintain credibility. Equal value must also be placed on personal and professional experience. Inviting equal participation from and fully collaborating with members of the transgender community are imperative in finding effective solutions and implementing recommendations to reduce the risk of HIV infection among transgender persons. Finding outlets to present and distribute recommendations is vital to their widespread exposure, acceptance and adoption.