



# Louisiana Commission on HIV & Hepatitis C Education, Prevention, and Treatment

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

New Orleans Regional AIDS Planning Council  
Hybrid: 2601 Tulane Ave, Suite #400, New Orleans, LA

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/93373040483>

9:00 AM

## MEETING MINUTES

- I. Call to Order: Dr. Tavell Kindall, Chair  
A. Meeting called to order at: 9:10 AM
- II. Roll Call: Aisha McKenzie, Sr. Strategic Advisor SHHP, LDH  
A. 11 Commissioners present. Roll attached.  
B. Quorum not met.
- III. Old Business: Dr. Tavell Kindall, Chair  
A. January 14, 2025 Minutes Approval  
1. Public Comment  
a. N/A  
2. Vote  
a. No vote; quorum not met.  
B. March 11, 2025 Minutes Approval  
1. Public Comment  
a. N/A  
2. Vote  
a. No vote; quorum not met.  
C. May 13, 2025 Minutes Approval  
1. Public Comment  
a. N/A  
2. Vote  
a. No vote; quorum not met.  
D. Membership Application for Faith-based representative  
1. Public Comment  
a. N/A  
2. Vote  
a. No vote; quorum not met.
- IV. New Business Dr. Tavell Kindall, Chair  
A. 2025 Legislative Session Re-Cap  
1. Staff reviewed outcomes for each bill for which the Commission wrote educational letters.  
2. Staff to send out updated watch list with final outcomes.  
B. LDH OPH HCV Provider Training Overview Lawrencina Gougisha, MPH, MSN, RN, Statewide Nurse Educator SHHP, LDH  
1. Lawrencina Gougisha, MPH, MSN, RN, Statewide Nurse Educator for SHHP at LDH offered a presentation entitled "Hepatitis C (HCV) Treatment and Prevention in Louisiana: Project ECHO Hepatitis C Series"  
2. The goal of the Project ECHO Hepatitis C Series is to teach providers how to screen and diagnose for HCV and link to care for all reactive screenings. It is a monthly virtual learning series with continuing education credits offered at no cost, that started August 9, 2024 and the final session will be Friday, July 11, 2025 (year-end review).  
3. Clinical team resources for providers (one-on-one sessions): reach out to [Gia.landry@gmail.com](mailto:Gia.landry@gmail.com) or [lawrencina.gougisha@la.gov](mailto:lawrencina.gougisha@la.gov).  
4. SHHP Provider consultation warm line 225-846-2158. M-F 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM or [STIquestions@la.gov](mailto:STIquestions@la.gov). Offers clinical consultation needs, historical laboratory and treatment information, client resources.  
5. Next steps: WellAhead Project ECHO Series covering a variety of STI-related topics, each with a new topic and speaker/subject matter expert. While the Project ECHO HCV series has concluded for its 5 year cycle, one-on-one sessions will still be available. Pilot beginning in LDH Region 5 where APRNs will be treating HCV.  
6. Slide deck attached.  
C. Presentation: HIV Prevention among Black Women Alaysia Cook MPH, HIV Prevention Coordinator, St. Thomas CHC  
1. Alaysia Cook, MPH, HIV Prevention Coordinator at St. Thomas Community Heal Center presented "Sisters PrEPing Sisters" about St. Thomas's PrEP campaign aimed at Black women.

### Notes taken by:

Aisha McKenzie

Sr. Strategic Coordinator, SHHP, LDH, Staff to the Commission

[Aisha.McKenzie@la.gov](mailto:Aisha.McKenzie@la.gov)

2. The program, launched in December of 2023, focuses on a status-neutral approach and community outreach with PrEP events and HIV rapid testing. It uses a Health Belief Model approach, employing alternative events to create trust.
  3. Instagram: @sistersprepsisters
  4. Presentation can be found at: [https://www.canva.com/design/DAGsc5-WFcNcOpcheVormNBLEwPIeLhA/view?utm\\_content=DAGsc5-WFc&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=uniqueLinks&utm\\_id=hd1ca4da667](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGsc5-WFcNcOpcheVormNBLEwPIeLhA/view?utm_content=DAGsc5-WFc&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=uniqueLinks&utm_id=hd1ca4da667)
- D. Discussion: HIV prevention and treatment in Louisiana's Rural Communities
1. Austin Matthews (Behavioral Health Director at Florida Parishes Human Services Authority) and Venita Grimes (Prevention and Linkage to Care Coordinator at Pinnacle in Region 8) were panel guests for this discussion.
  2. Discussion focused on the following questions:
    - a. Question: what are the biggest barriers to accessing HIV testing and prevention services?
      - i. Traveling great distances for care in HIV prevention care deserts.
      - ii. Stigma is also a huge barrier – PLWH and SUD both receive huge amounts of stigma, and there is intersection in patient population.
    - b. With transportation and traveling. How far are people having to travel?
      - i. 66 miles to Pinnacle for some clients – if they have the resources to travel or are using Medicaid to travel. Pinnacle will offer transportation as well, for people who have difficulties using Medicaid transportation, because sometimes Medicaid's Uber drivers won't show to pick patients up for scheduled travel.
      - ii. Across the state, average travel is at LEAST 50 miles. This can be exacerbated by service providers who stigmatize clients on the phone or seem unwelcome.
      - iii. Plenty of patients travel further because of stigma, to try and be farther from home or in a big city.
    - c. Is there a significant gap/lack of service providers in the rural areas?
      - i. There are definitely not enough trained HIV service providers in rural areas. PCPs just refer out rather than dealing with patients and learning themselves.
      - ii. Untrained front desk staff can do a lot of harm as well.
  3. ANNUAL REPORT: normalizing testing in primary care settings, especially in rural areas. Make this part of routine care for ALL patients, along with making sure providers know how to link to care and discuss risk profiles and PrEP / other preventative measures.
  4. Other notes: there needs to be greater linkage to behavioral health services within the Ryan White care continuum. Also, Commissioners note that behavioral health stigma and HIV stigma are problems even in New Orleans.
- V. Other Business Dr. Tavell Kindall, Chair
- A. Open Discussion / Announcements
    1. HR 322 appointment – Task Force being coordinated by LDH currently. Commission has a seat on the Task Force. First meeting will occur before September 1, 2025. Task Force will be reviewing previous related task force's works and reports. Dr. Burgess requested Susan Dupont as the Commission's representative on the Task Force because of her history as one of the original STD Nurse clinicians in the state. Ms. Dupont. No objections.
    2. Northern Louisiana Stigma Summit 8/20/25. Link: <https://nlahivstigmaSummit.com/#home>
    3. NOLA SHAAD Aware Week (8/16/25 – 8/22/25). Link: <https://www.facebook.com/people/NOLA-Southern-HIV-AIDS-Awareness-Day/61561967886097/?mibextid=LQQJ4d>
    4. Bounce to Zero's HIV Zero Stigma Day event on Monday July 21. Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/unpacking-louisiana-hiv-criminalization-law-video-screening-panel-discuss-tickets-1432169289899?msckid=0c1abee05b9867d30e5cab5b5af766a9>
  - B. General Public Comment
    1. Joe Santiago from NORAPC thanked everyone for announcements and put his own into chat.
  - C. Next Meeting Date: September 9, 2025 (IN PERSON), 9:00 AM
    1. Annual Public Hearing
    2. Capitol Building, Baton Rouge, Committee Meeting Room TBD
- VI. Adjournment Dr. Tavell Kindall, Chair
- A. Sam Burgess motioned to adjourn; George Nawas seconded.
  - B. Meeting adjourned at 10:57 AM.

**Notes taken by:**

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**Roll and votes:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Roll</b>
Marvin Anderson	Absent
Meta Smith-Davis	Present
Tavell Kindall	Present
Tamara Dioubate	Present
Mitchell Handrich	Absent
Samuel Burgess	Present
Norma Porter	Present
DeAnn Gruber	Present
Shayla Polk	Absent
Susan Dupont	Present
Randy Lavespere	Absent
Rebecca DeLaSalle	Present
Lauren Richey	Present
Paulette Pinargote-Cornejo	Absent
David Mushatt	Absent
H. Glenn Anderson, Jr.	Present
George Nawas	Present
Phillip Griffin	Absent
Myra Kleinpeter	Absent
Aimee Cloyd	Absent
Regina Barrow	Absent
Joy Walters	Absent

**No votes at this meeting, as quorum was not achieved.**

**Notes taken by:**

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