



Health Care Action Group
Summary of August 5, 2014 Conference Call

Participants:

Eileen Beard – American College of Nurse-Midwives
Caryn Bernstein – National Association of Community Health Centers
Susan DeLisle – Partnership for Prevention
Susan Gilbert – Partnership for Prevention
Donna Futterman – Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Adolescent AIDS Program
Michael Horberg
Alyson Kristensen – Partnership for Prevention
Penny Loosier – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Arik Marcell
Bob McDonald – Navy and Marine Corp Public Health Center
Lilly Pinto – Nurse Practitioners in Women’s Health
Karen Shea – Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Chris Thrasher – Morehouse Center of Excellence in Sexual Health
Jan Towers – American Association of Nurse Practitioners
Dana Van Gorder – Project Inform
Beverly Whipple

Discussion about the “top 3 questions” document

The call began by reviewing the next version of the section of the new provider guide that contains the top 3 sexual health questions all providers should ask their patients. Since the April HCAG call, this section went from being a discussion document to actual content for the guide. Alyson summarized the feedback she’d received and the changes she’d made. Overall, the group felt this section needed minimal additional work. Recommendations included:

- Revising the main introductory paragraph to include normalizing conversations about sexual health as a goal for why providers should ask these questions, and remove the mention of normalization from the section for adults.
- Revising the 3 questions for adolescents to:
 1. “Do you have any questions about sex or your body? When I say “sex,” I mean any kind of sexual activity.”
 2. “Have you ever had sex with males, females, or both? I mean vaginal, anal, or oral sex.”
[If patient answers “yes,” ask for number of lifetime partners. If patient indicates same-sex sexual activity, ask “Do you consider yourself gay, lesbian, or bisexual, or are you unsure?”]
 3. “What are you doing to prevent STIs or unplanned pregnancy?”
- Revising language in section for adolescents around ensuring time alone.
- Removing confidentiality from the script in the section for adults.
- Including substance abuse in sections for adolescents and adults.
- Considering incorporating smoking.

Discussion of “standard responses” document

The HCAG then reviewed a discussion document of the next section in the provider guide. This section is intended to equip providers with ready-to-use responses to common questions patients might ask about their sexual health. The questions are taken directly from pages 12 and 13 in *Take Charge of Your Sexual Health: What you need to know about preventive services*, a guide developed by the HCAG for consumers. While developing this document, Alyson realized that some of the questions pose a significant challenge to creating a standard response because the answer depends on the patient, the test, or some other unknown factor. The HCAG discussed the three “Screening and Testing” questions (“What tests are you giving me?”, “How are they done?”, and “When and how will I get my results?”), the challenges each pose, and possible approaches to answer the questions. Alyson and Michael Horberg are going to step back and reconsider how to approach this section. One possibility is to provide guidance on how the provider can respond or what the provider needs to know in order to respond (e.g., have an office policy in place), rather than trying to craft the actual language.

Discussion to prepare for the HCAG session at the NCSH annual meeting

Alyson asked for the group’s thoughts on what should be discussed during the HCAG session at next month’s annual meeting. She plans to spend time further discussing the new provider guide but also wants to know if there are other discussion items she should include in the agenda.

Communications Action Group (CAG) update

Susan Gilbert gave a brief update on the CAG’s recent activities. The *Take Charge* sexual health guide (and its accompanying website) was officially launched on May 6 with a nationwide press release and call-to-action. The press release was posted by at least 148 media outlets on their news sites. Since then, the CAG has been conducting targeted media outreach via Ogilvy Public Relations and has secured placements in a number of high-profile outlets, such as Cosmo, Womenshealthmagazine.org, Self, Shape, Kinsey Confidential, HuffPost Live, and WebMD. This proactive media outreach has greatly increased traffic to the guide’s website, with more than one-third of that traffic coming from the Womenshealthmagazine.com article. This work has also resulted in establishing content partnerships with Your Tango and GirlZone, and we’ve also formed an agreement with MTV’s It’s Your Sex Life campaign to promote the guide and sexual health messages. The work of the CAG thus far has focused on implementing Action Step 5 (Make sexual health part of your health care routine, page 2 in *Take Charge*) and during tomorrow’s CAG call, the group will brainstorm future initiatives, which may include implementing another Action Step, and prioritize goals moving forward.

NCSH update

Alyson reminded the group that Alana Ward recently left Partnership and Alyson has assumed her role as Co-Director of the NCSH. Susan Gilbert remains the other Co-Director. Alyson also reminded HCAG members to register for the annual meeting if they hadn’t already done so. The NCSH annual meeting will be in Washington, DC on Monday, September 22 from 8:30 am – 5:00 pm. The original registration email was sent on July 21 and reminder emails have been sent to those who have not yet registered. The meeting will include a panel discussion on improving provider-patient communication about sexual health that features several NCSH members, training on how to speak with the media, and time in the afternoons for the two Action Groups to meet.