

Red Ribbon Rally Wrap-Up

(by Peter Jacobsen, Executive Director, Vermont CARES)

Each year, Vermont CARES provides a range of services to approximately 160 people living with HIV and AIDS. This number can be difficult to demonstrate, and difficult to explain to the public: who are we serving, what impact does that work have around the state, how many families are affected, what does the service program result in? This past September, instead of organizing our annual AIDS Walk, we decided to rally our supporters to show in a big way what 160 Vermonters looks like. The result was this:



We had supporters from around the state, including many people with HIV and AIDS, forming a 100 foot red ribbon in a field on UVM's campus. We just matched the number of people our services program works with, so this picture shows the number of people who work with CARES for medication copayments, housing, food, transportation, advocacy, or other services. You're a critical part of the picture, and thanks to everyone who showed up!

The Rally raised money that will help us keep providing critical services, as well as prevention programs such as testing. These vital community events are important for sharing our message about HIV and AIDS, and for bringing attention to the work we're doing together at Vermont CARES.

H1N1: Be informed, be prepared

H1N1 is a new strain of flu virus that the general population has not built up immunity to. It is spread just like seasonal flu, and appears to be no more severe, although people with HIV/AIDS, especially those with low CD4 counts, can experience more severe complications. **Symptoms** may include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, and possible diarrhea or vomiting.



Prevention: -Get flu shots for both seasonal and H1N1 flu

-Wash your hands often, and avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands

-Try to avoid close contact with people who have the flu

If you are think you have H1N1, stay home. Get plenty of rest and fluids, and take fever-reducers if necessary. **Call the CCC** and speak to a nurse about your symptoms. Treatment is most effective if started less than 48 hours from the start of the illness. **Please do not come to the clinic without first calling if you are feeling sick.** Unfortunately, most flu must run its course, and the fewer people exposed, the better. As a group, we are following the strong precautions and we urge the same for you. Any staff member with flu will stay home to avoid infecting others.

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If you would like to contribute to Positive Connections, become a member of the Newsletter Team, or have any comments or feedback, contact Melissa Farr at Melissa@ctcares.org



**Be prepared
before you travel!**

Did you know?

Vermont CARES serves over 6,000 people annually through education, testing or care. We are the largest and longest-serving AIDS Service Organization.



Did you know?

There are an estimated 480 Vermonters living with HIV/AIDS, and an estimated additional 120 who are HIV-positive and do not know it. If you know someone at risk, you can refer them to get tested at any of our offices.

U.S. HIV travel ban update

The repeal for the U.S. travel ban for people with HIV continues, and the outcome of public comment may be unknown for several months (although reports are that more than 20,000 comments were submitted, mostly in opposition to this ban). For those of us traveling with HIV to other countries, a few notes on prepared travel (from the CDC):

- Know your health status – are you well enough to travel?
- Know the HIV/AIDS travel limitations of your destination. Some countries require testing, but usually only for permanent residency requests or work visas.
- Ensure you have enough medication for the length of your trip, or for extending the trip due to circumstances beyond your control, and that they are in appropriately marked contain-

ers. Are you taking any medications that are controlled substances in any of the countries you plan to visit?

- Register with the Department of State so your country knows you're abroad. They can notify family in case of medical or other emergencies.
- Find medical facilities abroad that your provider could recommend.
- Ask your health care professional if there are vaccinations you should consider before travel.

While Vermont CARES is opposed to the U.S. ban against HIV-positive travelers, other countries have similar bans, too. Planning for travel considerations will make for happier and healthier trips. Visit the CDC's website for additional travel advisories and advice.

Local connections: Montpelier

(by Kara Casey)

Things are moving right along in the Montpelier office space. The office is open every Wednesday and Thursday, as well as the first and last Friday of the month. Testing is available by walk-in every Thursday from 1 to 4 p.m., or by appointment. Talk to your case manager about meeting in the office or call the Burlington office to make a testing appointment in Montpelier.

Local connections: Burlington

(by Peter Jacobsen)

The Burlington office has been undergoing some changes to make it a more comfortable place to visit. After a robust spring cleaning, some new-to-us donated furniture, and a general streamlining, we hope you'll find the space easier to visit and accessible. A new donated coffee maker in the lobby provides a little jump to the day, and a warm cup will help us all warm hands over the winter. We want the office to be a space you can use, so if you have recommendations, please let us know next time you visit. Don't hesitate to pick up personal care items (donated shampoo, etc.) while you're here!

Local connections: Rutland

(by MaryKathryn Charbonneau)

News from Rutland: What beautiful fall foliage we've had in this area. There is snow on the mountain tops and frost on all the pumpkins. The folks in the Rutland area are doing fairly well and are busy getting ready for a long, cold winter.

We have moved to a set time for the monthly social events. Please note that in Rutland, monthly socials will be held the same day and week of the month (every third Wednesday of every month). I will send a flyer with the time and location of where to meet for that month so that clients will know ahead of time. December may be the only exception, because I will have to schedule the location of the holiday gather-

ing. However, I will have it on the calendar and send a flyer to everyone. This will help facilitate better planning for folks who want to attend, as well as help the Burlington office with scheduling.

The Rutland Comprehensive Clinic is in the process of recruiting a nurse practitioner for the HIV clinic. This has been an adjustment for most folks, and everyone has been very patient during this transition time. I will be working on getting the holiday wish-list for clients and kids in the next month. Please call me if you have a specific need or request.

Happy Thanksgiving holiday season to everyone!

Local connections: St. Johnsbury

(by Penni Cleverley)

Fall has officially arrived. As the leaves swirl in the wind outside the office window, it is a reminder that soon the wind will be carrying snowflakes rather than leaves. This is also a reminder that it is time to apply for fuel assistance, if you have not already done so. You can go online and Google "Vermont fuel assistance program."

Some suggested tips on conserving fuel:

1. Set thermostat to one temperature and leave it there. Putting on an additional sweater or cuddling under a blanket while watching TV is much cheaper than adjusting the thermostat.
2. Put a towel or small blanket (rolled up) against the length of the inside of your door.
3. Put plastic on windows. The weather kits that include the shrink plastic work great and they don't look bad after installation. Watch for sales at local hardware stores for these.

Additional fuel conservation suggestions can be found online.

Thanksgiving baskets are reserved for households with at least two individuals. If you are interested in receiving one, con-

tact me ASAP, because I will be coordinating this through NEKCA again this year. I do not submit names but need the number in each household. Lastly, the farmers' market will be closing at the end of Oct., so remember to use leftover coupons, as they expire at the end of the market season.

Here is a list of the St. Johnsbury area event dates for the remainder of the year:

- Client social: Oct. 22 at 11:30. Call the St. Johnsbury office for location and more information.
- Client social: Nov. 19 at 10 a.m. Call the St. Johnsbury office for location and more information.
- Thanksgiving community lunch for all individuals regardless of household size or income. Location and time will be announced closer to date.
- Client social: Dec. 2 from 11 to 1. Location will be at the office; more information will come closer to date.
- World AIDS Day planning in progress.

World AIDS Day is Tues., Dec. 1
Wear a Red Ribbon/Light a Candle

Vermont CARES will encourage people to wear a Red Ribbon in observance of World AIDS Day. Through tabling and displays at shops and other retail locations CARES staffers and volunteers will offer Red Ribbons and information about HIV/AIDS to the public. We will accept donations, but the emphasis will be persuading people to wear the ribbon to raise awareness. Tuesday evening we will light memorial candles in downtown Burlington, followed by refreshments. **Please call if you'd like to volunteer or be a part of the candle-lighting.**



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FIND US ONLINE AT
 WWW.VTCARES.ORG,
 ALSO NOW ON FACEBOOK AND
 ON TWITTER!

Services survey arriving soon!

You will be receiving a newly designed client survey within the next couple weeks. Please take the time to thoughtfully fill it out and return it to me ASAP!

We greatly appreciate you taking the time to respond, as your feedback helps us to better understand your overall HIV care and therefore helps to guide our programming. Also, there will be two randomly selected prizes of \$40 worth of food gift certificates for tickets returned with completed surveys.

Thank you!

Vermont CARES can send this newsletter electronically as well! We can save money and get Positive Connections to you more quickly if you want it emailed; just send a message to melissa@vtcares.org and ask her to put you on our newsletter email list.

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				Montpelier testing -4 p.m.	2 Montpelier so- cial: Positive Pie 12 p.m.	3
4	5 Burlington test- ing 4-7 p.m.	6	7 St. J testing and nee- dle exchange 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.	8 Montpelier testing 1-4 p.m.	9	10
11	12 Burlington test- ing 4-7 p.m.	13	14 St. J testing and nee- dle exchange 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.	15 Montpelier testing 1-4 p.m.	16	17
18	19 Burlington test- ing 4-7 p.m.	20	21 -St. J testing and needle exchange 11 a.m.-1 p.m. -Rutland Social	22 -Montpelier testing 1-4 -St. J Social: Subway 11:30 a.m.	23	24
25	26 Burlington test- ing 4-7 p.m.	27	28 St. J testing and nee- dle exchange 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.	29 Montpelier testing 1-4 p.m.	30	31