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Folder Title:
CMHS [Community Mental Health Services] Program Overview

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Name of Project:

MENTAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDER EDUCATION IN HIV/AIDS PROGRAM

Description of Program:

This 10-year major education effort (initiated in 1986 in the National Institute of Mental Health) promotes training opportunities for the full cadre of mental health care providers who come in contact with people affected by HIV/AIDS. The goal of the program is to enhance the Nation's ability to have an impact upon the HIV/AIDS epidemic by training the traditional mental health care providers and other health care workers who often are front-line providers of mental health services, such as medical students, primary care physicians, and the clergy and other spiritual providers.

All of the individual projects address the neuropsychiatric and the psychosocial aspects of HIV/AIDS, methods for coping with HIV/AIDS, and approaches to prevent the spread of HIV infection.

All of the individual projects have voluntarily agreed to a set of common data elements to use for a small multi-site evaluation of the Program.

Issue:

Many mental health care providers lack experience in diagnosing, assessing, and addressing the mental health needs of people affected by HIV/AIDS. Others need training to feel more comfortable with providing services to people with HIV/AIDS.

Achieving this common goal, however, calls for a multifaceted approach, including clinical training, peer-based and continuing education, curriculum development, and knowledge transfer.

What Learned:

This \$3 million effort currently supports 12 education grants and 4 education contracts with a single objective in mind: to improve access to appropriate mental health services for people living with HIV/AIDS and their families or partners. Each education project targets at least five provider groups and trains at least 1,000 mental health care providers and students for each of the 3 years of the grant/contract.

As a result of these projects training efforts have been extended into rural areas; there has been an increase in training of mental health care providers serving ethnic minority populations; and physician education strategies, including continuing medical education, have been strengthened.

Funding History:

In FY 1996, due to lack of funds in the CMHS budget, the 12 grant projects received no-cost extensions to continue their projects. For FY 1997, the CMHS funding appropriation is sufficient to continue the 12 grant and 4 contract projects at least at their FY 1995 level of support. This will enable all of the projects to provide education to at least 1000 providers and meet the goals of the Program.