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State to Consider Reporting Names of HIV Patients

BY JOHN VARGO,
Consumer Organizer
People With AIDS
Coalition

AND ROBERT A. LARABEE,
Co-Chair
People With AIDS
Coalition

The Commissioner of the Department of Health, Jan Carney, MD, and the State's Epidemiologist Peter Galbraith have proposed a policy of requiring HIV medical providers to report names of their HIV + patients to the state. This is reportedly in response to pressure from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and could have a huge impact on people living with HIV in Vermont.

Currently, the Department of Health (DOH) only keeps track of the name and other identifying information of individuals diagnosed in Vermont with AIDS. What the new policy means is that all persons who test positive

for HIV, whether they have developed to the clinical definition of AIDS or not, will have their names reported to the DOH as well.

There is another option. The state of Vermont can use what is called "Unique Identifiers". This system is a numerically ordered system used without any name. The only identifying factor to someone testing positive with HIV would be a number. There is no reason that the State of Vermont should jump to names reporting before implementing unique identifiers. Once names are reported, there is no going back.

This new policy could have an impact on whether or not people get tested for HIV. Some in the community are concerned that people at risk for HIV may not get tested because they think they will be "name identified" if they test positive. Despite assurances that this information will be kept secure some are worried whenever the names

of HIV positive people are collected by the state, for whatever reason. This is particularly true in a relatively small state like Vermont where preserving one's anonymity can be more of a concern than in an urban area.

The Department of Health's rationale for this policy is that they will be able to target prevention and services money that comes into the state. With better demographic information there is also the possibility of having increased funding for services and prevention efforts.

Either way it can be a double-edged sword. It is critical that the Department of Health hear from HIV+ Vermonters as they move to implement this policy whether you are for or against it. We are the resident "experts" on how this reporting requirement might affect peoples 'willingness to be tested and initiate treatment'. ▼

the healthsource

HEALTH

- ALANA Health Care Organization**
POB 357 • 179 S. Winooski St.
Burlington VT 05401 •
864-2631/864-2632
- The Comprehensive Women's Program (CWP)**
POB 5248 • Burlington 05402
802-863-2437 or 800-649-2437
- Dawnland Center (Native American)**
POB 1358 Barre St. • Montpelier VT
05601 • 229-0601
- Lesbian Cancer Support group**
660-8386
- Men's Health Project**
POB 5248 • Burlington 05402
802-863-2437 or 800-649-2437
- North Star Holistic Health Care**
RR2 Box 3255 • Morrisville VT
05661 • 888-2858
- Tribal Remedies (ALANA Community Organization)**
8 Williston • Brattleboro VT 05301 •
254-2972
- Twin State Women's Network**
POB 3 • Cavendish VT 05142-0003
• 226-7807 • Margoc@mail.tds.net •
http://www.dartmouth.edu/~hivnet/orgswsn1.html
- VT Dept. of Health, Office of Minority Health**
108 Cherry St. • POB 70 •
Burlington VT 05402 • 863-7273
- Vermont Women's Health Center**
336 North Ave • Burlington VT
05401 • 863-1386
- Alcoholics Anonymous**
Burlington, 658-4221 • POB 5653,
Burlington VT 05402
• Sundays, 5pm, Christ Church
Presbyterian, Redstone Camp., UVM.
• Thursdays, 7pm, St. Paul's
Cathedral, Cherry Street, 658-4221.
Concord, NH 603-357-4300
• Wednesdays, 7:30pm, First
Congregational Church, North Main
and Washington St.
• Saturdays at 7pm (call for location).
Hanover, NH

- * Thursdays at 6:30pm, Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center. Women only. Keene, NH (603) 357-4300
- * Saturdays, 7-8:30pm
Call for location. Manchester, NH
- * Sundays, 7:30pm, UU Church, 669 Union St. Nashua, NH
- * Mondays, 7:30pm, Nashua Unitarian Church.

HIV/AIDS SERVICES

- Hotlines**
Vermont (800) 882-2437
NH (800) 752-2437
NY State (800) 541-2437
MA (617) 522-4090
ME (800) 851-2437
National: (800) 342-2437
National TTY: (800) 243-7889
Teen Hotline: (800) 234-TEEN
- AIDS Community Awareness Project (ACAP)**
POB 608 • St. Johnsbury VT 05819
• 748-1149
- AIDS Community Resource Network (ACoRN)**
POB 2057 • Lebanon NH 03766 •
(603) 448-2220/(800)816-2220 •
acorn@valley.net
- AIDS Services for the Monadnock Region**
(800) 639-7903
• Coffee Clatch meets Tuesdays from 1-2:30pm at 25 Roxbury St, Keene
- AIDS Services of Southwestern VT**
108 Union Street #3 • Bennington 05201 • Alice Mazur 447-8007
• Support group for persons infected and affected by the HIV virus
1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 7pm
- Bennington Area AIDS Project**
POB 1066 • Bennington VT 05201 •
442-4481 or (800) 845-2437
- Brattleboro Area AIDS Project**
POB 1486 • 67 Main St., 4th fl. •
Brattleboro VT 05302 • 254-8263 or
254-4444 • sbell@sover.net
• Support group for PLWA, friends,
and families. Wednesdays 1-2pm
• Support/discussion group for gay/bi
men. 2nd and 4th Sundays 3-5pm

- * Support group for HIV+ Women Greenfield MA.,
* Mondays, 3:30-5:30pm.
Call (413) 773-8888.
- Comprehensive Care Clinics**
Hotline: (800) 763-2460
Brattleboro: 257-8860
Burlington: 656-4594
Rutland: 747-1831
St. Johnsbury: 748-7361
- Franklin County AIDS Network**
Donna 863-2437 or 800-649-2437
- National Assoc. for People with AIDS**
(202) 898-0414
- NH/VT HIV Information Network on WWW**
http://WWW.dartmouth.edu/~hivnet/
- Rutland County AIDS Network**
Mary Kathryn 775-5884
- Vermont CARES**
Vermont.CARES@Gte.net
POB 5248 • Burlington VT 05402 •
863-2437 or (800) 649-2437
PO Box 6033 • Rutland, VT 05601 •
775-5884
PO Box 275 • Montpelier VT 05601 •
229-4560
PO Box 503 • St. Johnsbury VT
05819 • 748-9061
• Support groups for people living with HIV/AIDS in:
- Washington County,
Melanie 229-4560
- Rutland County,
Mary Kathryn 775-5884
- Burlington,
Kara 863-2437
- St. Johnsbury,
Ric 748-9601
- Vermont Deaf AIDS Project**
POB 172 • Brattleboro VT 05302 •
(800) 257-1123/ (TTY)
(800) 253-0195/ fax 257-2013
- VT Dept. of Health AIDS Program**
108 Cherry St. • POB 70 •
Burlington 05402 • 863-7245
- Vermont People With AIDS Coalition**
POB 11 • Montpelier, VT 05601 •
229-5754 or (800) 69VTPWA •
vtpwac@sover.net •
http://www.sover.net/~vtpwac/
- Washington County AIDS Network**
Melanie at 229-4560

Designated HIV Provider, Anonymous Counseling, & Testing Sites in Vermont

- BARRE-MONTEPELIER**
Berlin Health Center
371-4342
RD #4, Box 1370
Montpelier, VT 05602
- BENNINGTON**
Bennington Family Practice Assoc.
447-1191
140 Hospital Drive
Bennington, VT 05201
- BRATTLEBORO**
Comprehensive Care Clinic
257-8860
Brattleboro Memorial Hospital
9 Belmont Avenue
Brattleboro, VT 05301
- BURLINGTON**
Community Health Center
864-6309
617 Riverside Ave., Suite 200
Burlington, VT 05401
- COLCHESTER**
Family Health
655-2055
311 Malletts Bay Avenue
P.O. Box 35
Colchester, VT 05446
- DANVILLE**
Health Center, Inc.
684-2275
Box 185, Hill Street
Danville, VT 05828
- HARDWICK**
Health Center
472-3300
High Street, P.O. Box 535
Hardwick, VT 05843
- ISLAND POND**
Health Center
723-4300
Middle Street
Island Pond, Vt. 05846
- MIDDLEBURY**
Open Door Clinic
388-0137
PO Box 95
Middlebury, VT 05753
- NEWPORT**
Northeast Kingdom Health Center
334-5008
30 Coventry Street
Newport, VT 05855
- PUTNEY**
Thomas Hoskins, M.D.
387-5581
Main St., P.O. Box 247
Putney, VT 05346
- RUTLAND**
Comprehensive Care Clinic
Rutland Regional Medical Center
747-1831
- ST. ALBANS**
Robert Zelazo, M.D.
524-9553
2 Crest Road
St. Albans, VT 05478
- ST. JOHNSBURY**
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Hospital
Hospital Drive
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
- WINDSOR**
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674-2193