

>>> SEPTEMBER 2026 <<<

HIV SERVICES NEWSLETTER



BI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

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**CUYAHOGA COUNTY
BOARD OF HEALTH**

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HIV PREVENTION

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>>> REGIONAL ADVISORY GROUP

The HIV Prevention Team hosts a quarterly Prevention Committee meeting in partnership with the Ryan White Part A Planning Council. This meeting acts as the Regional Advisory Group meeting (RAG) for Ohio's six-county Region 3 (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina Counties). The Prevention Committee meets virtually every three months on the first Wednesday from 4:00-5:30 PM.

You do not need to be a member of the Planning Council to participate in the Prevention Committee meetings. Anyone is welcome to join in the discussion on local HIV prevention programs, minimizing gaps in HIV programs and services, and discussing prevention strategies. To join, please contact the Planning Council Facilitator, Lisa-Jean Sylvia Reyes, at lisa jean@upwardspiralconsulting.com.

CARE CONNECT

Care Connect is a program through OHIV, dedicated to those living with HIV who are seeking resources and other support services. It also serves as a platform for recently diagnosed individuals to access linkage to care or re-engagement services.

There is an online request form on the site for individuals to connect with a regional contact that provides additional resources and assistance with accessing care.

[Click here to view the Care Connect site.](#)

OHIV.org

CARECONNECT

- Are you an Ohio resident living with HIV?
- Newly Diagnosed?
- New to Ohio?
- Need to reconnect?



Visit **OHIV.org/find-hiv-care** to connect to HIV care & services today!

RYAN WHITE PART A

>>> STATEWIDE INTEGRATED PLAN

As of Summer 2026, Ohio has finalized and submitted its 2027–2031 Ohio Statewide Integrated HIV Care and Prevention Plan, representing an important opportunity to strengthen Ohio’s HIV service system and build upon existing prevention and care efforts across the state.

Throughout the past year, affinity groups met to evaluate progress toward previous plan goals and to develop strategies to reduce new diagnoses and improve the delivery of HIV care. Locally, these groups were led by members of the Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) team and included representatives from Ryan White staff across Parts A–D, the Ryan White Planning Council, community members, and people with HIV.

The plan aligns efforts funded by both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and supports goals such as:

- Improving access to treatment
- Promoting status-neutral prevention and care
- Increasing timely access to testing and linkage services
- Identifying areas that may benefit from enhanced outreach and prevention efforts

As Ohio moves forward with the updated plan, regional partners will play a vital role in translating statewide goals into local action.



RYAN WHITE PART A

>>> CLINICAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT UPDATES

In an effort to support timely and coordinated connection to HIV care and services in the Cleveland TGA (Transitional Grant Area), a Linkage to Care Task (LTC) Force was established at the Cuyahoga County Board of Health (CCBH). The LTC Task Force, comprised of Brian Lutz, LaJaunna White, Danielle LeGallee, Sonji Deal, Elly Falter, and Melissa Hansen, met throughout 2025-2026 to develop and draft a Linkage to Care Guide. The guide is intended to serve as a practical resource for partners looking to strengthen existing linkage processes, implement a status-neutral approach to testing and treatment, and support rapid initiation of antiretroviral therapy (ART) and access to medical care.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT STAFF HIGHLIGHT

In 2026, Zachary Levar (Population Health Deputy Director), Danielle LeGallee (HIV Prevention), Brian Lutz (EHE), and Melissa Hansen (Ryan White Part A) completed their Lean Six Sigma Green Belt certification. This training will further support quality improvement activities across multiple HIV programs at the Cuyahoga County Board of Health. If you are interested in participating in any upcoming Quality Improvement trainings, please contact Melissa Hansen at mhansen@ccbh.net.

As part of the finalization effort of the Linkage to Care Guide, the LTC Task Force would like to invite local community members, service providers, and other interested parties to provide feedback on the guide before it is published as a resource on our website. If you are interested in reviewing the draft and sharing your input, please contact Melissa Hansen at mhansen@ccbh.net or Brian Lutz at blutz@ccbh.net.



ENDING THE HIV EPIDEMIC

>>> PROGRAM UPDATES - PREVENTION



EHE Prevention has continued to prioritize distribution of safer sex supplies, safe injection supplies, and HIV self-test kits throughout the Cuyahoga County jurisdiction. Between December 2025 and May 2026, 6,231 clients were tested at 42 testing sites, and 1,150 self-test kits were distributed. Testing sites included many unique locations including emergency departments, universities, churches, community organizations, correctional facilities, behavioral health centers, street outreach, and more.

EHE's self-test kit distribution continues to be one of its most popular programs. Clients are given the privacy of testing from their own homes or other preferred locations. CCBH partners with Syringe Services Programs (SSPs), emergency departments, a bathhouse, urgent care, and other community-based agencies to distribute HIV self-test kits free of charge. Internally, HIV self-test kits are distributed by the EHE Disease Intervention Specialist (DIS) at barbershops, libraries, and other community outreach events. Self-test kits include information for next steps if the test result is positive, condoms, lube, and an assortment of status-neutral educational materials.

ENDING THE HIV EPIDEMIC

>>> PROGRAM UPDATES - CARE

The Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) Care Program began a new grant year in March 2026, and services were continued without pause. EHE Care funds the following services: Peer Navigation, Emergency Financial Assistance, Food Bank, Intensive Medical Case Management, Medical Transportation, Mobile Health Clinics, Non-medical Case Management, Other Professional Services (Legal), Rapid Start ART, and Psychosocial Support Services.

PHASE I SUMMARY: EHE CARE

This spring, CCBH published data on Phase I of EHE Care (2020-2024). The community can access this report on our CCBH website [here](#). In 2024, EHE served 2,986 clients, which is an increase of over 2,000 clients from 2020, and in addition to the usual Ryan White Part A services.

>>> HRSA SITE VISIT

CCBH held a nearly week-long site visit from HRSA, which funds EHE Care. The EHE Care Team is proud to say that the program received very high compliments from HRSA officials with few requests for corrections. Special thanks to everyone who participated in the site visit, including the University Hospitals Special Immunology Unit (SIU), and participants from both the community members and stakeholder's session!



ENDING THE HIV EPIDEMIC

>>> EHE COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

Be the Voice of Our Community: Join the EHE Community Advisory Group

We are looking for passionate individuals to join the EHE Community Advisory Group (CAG). We welcome everyone. We specifically seek people living with HIV, caregivers, advocates, and allies from diverse backgrounds. No medical or scientific background is required—your lived experience is your expertise.

The CAG bridges the gap between public health, researchers, healthcare providers, and the community. By joining, you directly influence HIV prevention, treatment strategies, and local outreach. Your unique perspective ensures that medical advancements and support programs truly meet the needs of those we serve.

NEW GRANT AWARDED

In June 2026, CCBH was awarded \$200,000 for the Relink HIV Pathways to Care Grant from the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) to re-link patients and conduct additional re-engagement strategies. The initiative aims to re-engage people with HIV (PWH) who have fallen out of care by strengthening HIV healthcare systems, HIV data systems, re-engagement in care activities, and cross-sector collaboration across partners.

The effective start date of the one-year grant was July 1, 2026, and it is renewable for a second year term. Congratulations to the team on securing this additional funding source and for the continued efforts to get those who are not in care back to medical care!

SAVE THE DATES!

Full Group Meetings at CCBH:
7/21 9am - 12pm, 12/15 9am - 12pm

EHE Prevention Subcommittee at
Cuyahoga County Public Library Maple
Heights Branch:
5/19 2pm - 4pm, 8/18 10am - 12pm,
10/20 2pm - 4pm

EHE Care Subcommittee at Cleveland
Public Library South Branch:
4/21 2pm - 4pm, 6/16 2pm - 4pm,
9/15 10:30am - 12pm, 11/17 2pm - 4pm

love
leads
here.org

Contact ejanowski@ccbh.net or
blutz@ccbh.net to register

ENDING THE HIV EPIDEMIC

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>>> TURN UP! TO LOVE LEADS HERE



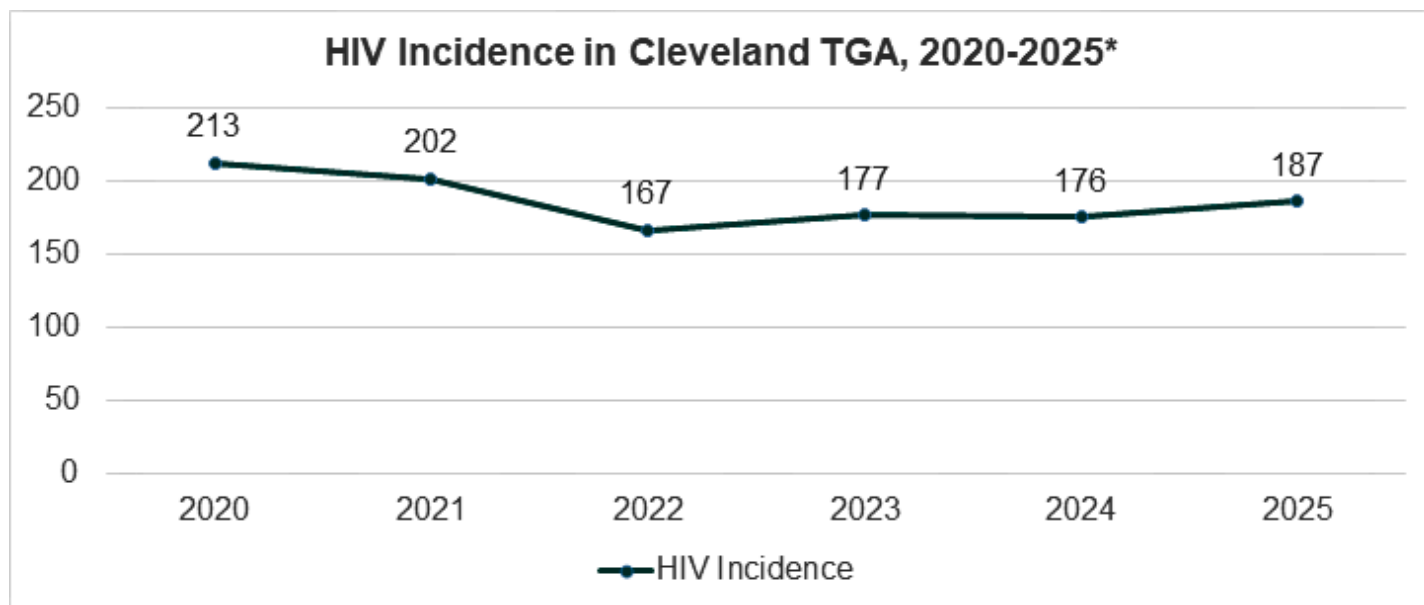
[CLICK HERE TO VIEW
THE WEBSITE!](#)

CCBH HIV Prevention & Care Services has updated the LoveLeadsHere (LLH) website from a social marketing resource to a community resource hub. The new message, Turn Up!, encourages Cuyahoga County to actively engage with HIV Prevention and Care. Turn Up for testing, Turn Up for treatment, Turn Up for each other.

Once on the website, you will notice a new Turn Up logo with the Cleveland skyline, as well as other imagery inspired by our community's history, including magenta coloring and triangular shapes, redirecting ourselves forward towards a brighter future. At the top of the site is a quick action button to redirect viewers to resources to get tested or get treated.

The plan for the community is outlined, followed by educational FAQs; local provider resources for HIV testing, treatment, PrEP, and Syphilis testing; stories from local community members; access to the LLH campaign materials; local events; and social media content. The HIV Prevention & Care Teams encourage everyone to share this resource and watch the stories that drive the important work to end the HIV epidemic.

>>> OVERVIEW



As of December 31, 2024, there were **6,213 people with HIV (PWH)** in the Cleveland TGA (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina Counties). Most of the PWH are **male (80%)** and **over 50 years old (53%)**. The largest racial/ethnic group affected by HIV in the Cleveland TGA are those who are **Black or African American (52%)**. The majority of PWH also have male-to-male sexual contact (**MSM**) as a transmission category (68%).

NEW DIAGNOSES

In 2025*, there were **187 new diagnoses** of HIV in the Cleveland TGA. This is an **increase of 6.25%** from the number of new diagnoses in 2024. The number of new diagnoses equates to an incidence rate of **8.61 new infections of HIV for every 100,000 people** in the population of the counties in the Cleveland TGA[^].



>>> OVERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights from 2025* data:

The average age of new cases was **36 years old**.

The age range of new HIV cases was **17-76 years old**.

The average age of those with a new HIV infection has been **trending older**, with one-third (31%) of the new cases aged **30-39 years old**.

Incidence was highest among **Black/African American males**, who comprised 43% (n=80) of new HIV infections in the Cleveland TGA.

White males comprised 22% (n=42) of new HIV infections.

Hispanic males comprised 10% (n=18).

MSM transmission accounted for 35% of new HIV infections (n=65).

Injection drug use (IDU) transmission was noted in 5% of new HIV infections (n=9).

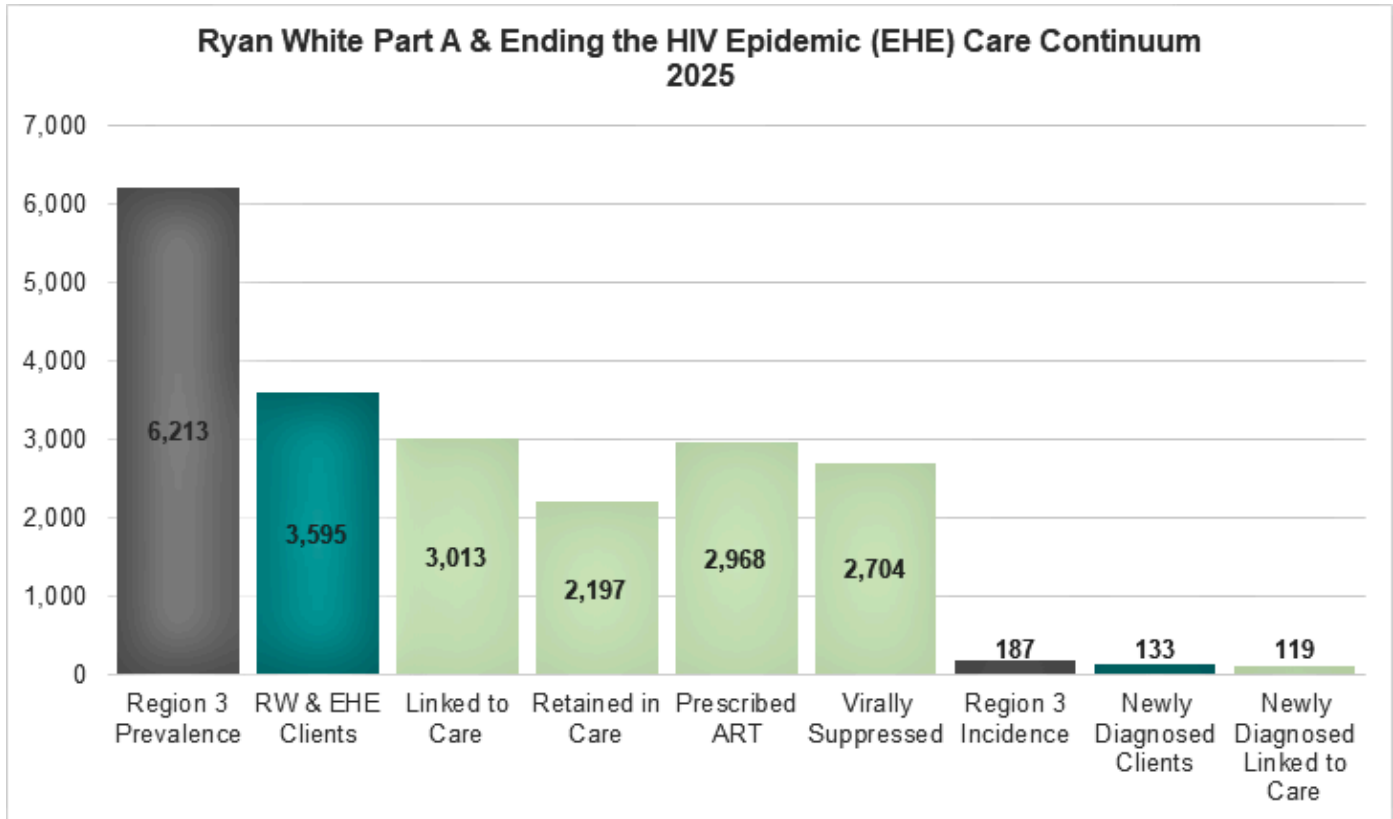
There were **no cases of perinatal HIV** (HIV transmitted from mother-to-baby) in 2025.



[^]U.S. Census Bureau. "Age and Sex" American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, 2024, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2024.S0101?q=S0101>: Accessed on June 16, 2026.

*Data provided by the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Epidemiology, Surveillance & Informatics Service Area. This data is intended for informational purposes only and should not be used to identify individuals. 2025 data as of 5/26/2026. Data is preliminary and subject to change as new information becomes available.

>>> CARE CONTINUUM



HIV Diagnosed: HIV prevalence in the Cleveland TGA as reported by the Ohio Department of Health as of December 31, 2024.

Ryan White Part A & EHE Clients: Number of diagnosed individuals who received a Ryan White Part A or EHE funded service in the measurement year.

Linked to Care (LTC): Number of Ryan White Part A or EHE eligible clients that had at least one medical visit, viral load test, or CD4 test in the measurement year.

Retained in Care (RIC): Number of Ryan White Part A or EHE eligible clients who had two or more medical visits, viral load tests, or CD4 tests in the measurement year.

Antiretroviral Use (ART): Number of Ryan White Part A or EHE eligible clients receiving medical care who have a documented ART prescription on record in the measurement year.

Viral Suppression (VLS): Number of Ryan White Part A or EHE eligible clients receiving medical care whose most recent HIV viral load within the measurement year was less than 200 copies/mL.

Newly Diagnosed Linked to Care: Number of Ryan White Part A or EHE eligible clients receiving a diagnosis of HIV in the measurement year that had at least one medical visit, viral load test, or CD4 test within ninety days of diagnosis. Please note the denominator for Newly Diagnosed - Linked is different from the denominators used to calculate other steps in the continuum.

PLANNING COUNCIL CORNER

>>> SEEKING NEW MEMBERS

The Cuyahoga Regional HIV Prevention and Care Planning Council makes key decisions about Ryan White Part A funds in our region. Over 40% of the people on this Planning Council are people living with HIV.

The Planning Council is looking for new members, especially people living with HIV in Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina Counties. If you are interested in learning more, consider attending a meeting of the Full Planning Council or one of the subcommittees.

PLANNING COUNCIL CONTACTS

Lisa-Jean Sylvia Reyes

Planning Council Facilitator
(216) 264-9858

lisajeans@upwardspiralconsulting.com

Brittanie Evans

Planning Council Support

bevans@ccbh.net

>>> GET INVOLVED!

[Subscribe here](#) to receive information about the Planning Council.

[Click here](#) for the Full Planning Council calendar schedule.

[View the recruitment video here.](#)



PLANNING COUNCIL CORNER

>>> 2026 MEETING SCHEDULE

Cuyahoga Regional HIV Prevention & Care Planning Council



2026 Schedule



JULY

Summer Break

No Meetings

AUGUST

Wednesday 8/5/26

Community Liaison Committee
noon to 1:30 pm

Strategy & Finance Committee
2:00 to 3:30 pm

Executive Committee
4:00 to 5:30 pm

Wednesday 8/19/26

Quality Improvement Committee
2:30 to 3:30 pm

Membership, Retention &
Marketing Committee
4:00 to 5:00 pm

Full Planning Council
5:30 to 7:00pm

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 9/2/26

Community Liaison Committee
noon to 1:30 pm

Strategy & Finance Committee
2:00 to 3:30 pm

Prevention Committee
4:00 to 5:30 pm

Date TBD

Executive Committee
TBD

Wednesday 9/16/26

Quality Improvement Committee
2:30 to 3:30 pm

Membership, Retention &
Marketing Committee
4:00 to 5:00 pm

Full Planning Council
5:30 to 7:00pm

OCTOBER

Wednesday 10/7/26

Community Liaison Committee
noon to 1:30 pm

Strategy & Finance Committee
2:00 to 3:30 pm

Executive Committee
4:00 to 5:30 pm

Wednesday 10/21/26

Quality Improvement Committee
2:30 to 3:30 pm

Membership, Retention &
Marketing Committee
4:00 to 5:00 pm

Full Planning Council
5:30 to 7:00pm

NOVEMBER

Wednesday 11/4/26

Community Liaison Committee
noon to 1:30 pm

Strategy & Finance Committee
2:00 to 3:30 pm

Executive Committee
4:00 to 5:30 pm

Wednesday 11/18/26

Quality Improvement Committee
2:30 to 3:30 pm

Membership, Retention &
Marketing Committee
4:00 to 5:00 pm

Full Planning Council
5:30 to 7:00pm

DECEMBER

Wednesday 12/2/26

Prevention Committee
4:00 to 5:30 pm

Planning Council and subcommittee meetings are open to the public, except the Community Liaison Committee, which is only for people living with HIV.

All meetings are online, unless otherwise stated. [Join our mailing list to receive connection info and meeting updates.](#) For more info or help logging in, contact Lisa-Jean Sylvia Reyes, Planning Council Facilitator at 216-264-9858 or via email at lisa jean@upwardspiralconsulting.com

The Planning Council and its committees meet on the first and third Wednesday of the month.
Meetings are online and open to the public.

[Click here](#) to download the 2026 schedule.

PLANNING COUNCIL CORNER

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>>> ARE YOU A PERSON LIVING WITH HIV?

The Community Liaison Committee (CLC) is a place to connect and learn with other people who are living with HIV. The CLC works to make sure that the hopes and concerns of people living with HIV are at the center of the Planning Council's decisions. To be part of the process, join us **virtually on the first Wednesday of each month from 12:00-1:30 PM.**

Because this meeting is open only to people living with HIV, you must contact the Planning Council Facilitator to receive connection info.

PLANNING COUNCIL FACILITATOR

Lisa-Jean Sylvia Reyes
Planning Council Facilitator
(216) 264-9858

lisajeane@upwardspiralconsulting.com

>>> WITH GRATITUDE

In June, long-time Planning Council member Kimberlin Dennis completed her term as Consumer Executive Co-Chair. As the first person to serve in this role, Kimberlin has worked diligently to ensure that people living with HIV have been at the center of the Planning Council's work. We are grateful for her contributions and leadership. Kimberlin will continue to serve as a member until 2027.

Following an election by the Planning Council in May, Talib Mahdi began a 3-year term as Consumer Executive Co-Chair on June 18.



>>> MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: LEANDER LOVETT



LeAnder has been a member of the Planning Council since 2020.

While serving on the Planning Council, he completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting.

Congratulations, LeAnder!

Q: Why did you join the Planning Council?

A: I joined the Planning Council to understand the vital work they are doing to learn firsthand how they directly support and advocate for people in our communities living with HIV.

Q: How has the experience on Planning Council impacted you?

A: This experience has significantly shaped my perspective by giving me deep insight into how funds are allocated, operations and outreach are managed, information coordinated, and how we collaborate with all the agencies involved with the Planning Council.

Q: What do you want other people, especially people who are living with HIV, to know about the Planning Council?

A: I want others, especially those living with HIV, to know that the Planning Council is dedicated to providing as many resources as possible. We are committed to ensuring that all available support and assistance are fully accessible to everyone in our community. The Planning Council is determined to provide as many resources as possible, within our control. We are working tirelessly to ensure support is fully accessible to everyone in our community.

FEEDBACK

>>> WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

- What did you enjoy reading about in this issue of the HIV Services Newsletter?
- What would you like to continue to see in future newsletters?
- What content do you think could be added to the newsletter?

Please email all feedback to Danielle LeGallee at dlegallee@ccbh.net.

