

Boston EMA Ryan White Planning Council



**ENDING THE HIV EPIDEMIC
SOMEONE YOU KNOW AND LOVE:
ANTI-STIGMA CAMPAIGN
2023-2024 Final Report
July 2024**

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Table of Contents

Introduction..... 3

Campaign Activities..... 3

 Initiative 1: Internship 3

 Initiative 2: Marketing and Merchandise 4

 Initiative 3: Website Updates and Re-Design, Social Media 4

 Initiative 4: MBTA Advertisements..... 6

 Initiative 5: University Outreach Events 7

 Boston University 7

 Suffolk University 8

EHE Future Planning 10

Introduction

The Planning Council's Consumer Committee is the home of the Anti-Stigma Campaign (ASC) and the Someone you Know and Love (SYKL) film, where Consumer-led initiatives regarding community engagement, education, and HIV stigma reduction take place. The Anti-Stigma Campaign draws from personal experiences of PLWH and highlights their individual journeys and the stages in their lives where they needed support and understanding. The centerpiece of the campaign is a short documentary film that highlights several folks living with HIV, how they have dealt with personal stigma in their own lives and with their family and friends, and how they continue to move through their lives with dignity. The prevailing message is that people with HIV can and do live completely healthy lives with HIV, and that de-stigmatizing HIV is a powerful way to improve health outcomes.

The Boston EMA Ryan White HIV/AIDS Services Planning Council, specifically through the Consumer Committee, received funding in April 2023 to advance the goals of the Someone You Know and Love Anti Stigma Campaign through the implementation and evaluation of several activities. The EHE award was a total of \$54,000. To understand the impact of the updated ASC activities and any potential short and long-term outcomes, the Planning Council Support (PCS) team conducted a process evaluation. PCS facilitated the collaborative development of a logic model and implementation of an evaluation plan, including the collection of process outcomes to determine the reach and effectiveness of the SYKL campaign. PCS will continue to provide documentation of the process and any resulting evaluation plan to EHE, the Consumer Committee, and the entire Planning Council body as part of their outcomes for this funding as needed.

Campaign Activities

Campaign activities were organized using initiative categories, which outlined the overarching theme. Those initiatives, as well as their related goals, outcomes, and impressions, are as follows:

Initiative 1: Internship

The Consumer Committee identified the need for an ASC intern to assist with completion of campaign activities. Hana Wallen, a junior at Suffolk University, was hired for the position by a team of PCS staff and PC leadership. The paid internship took place from September 2023-February 2024. Primary internship responsibilities were to support the campaign through updating the website and social media, assisting in the creation of updated branding and merchandising, assisting in the coordination and implementation of anti-stigma campaign events and conducting outreach for all campaign activities. Hana also assisted in the tracking of campaign data, helping to better evaluate each initiative and their overall impressions.

The financial impact of this initiative was moderate, with payment for the internship accounting for 11% of the total EHE funding. Hiring an intern to assist on campaign projects had numerous benefits, as well as challenges that illuminated areas for adjustments and improvement.

Initiative 2: Marketing and Merchandise

The PCS team and ASC intern developed and procured updated merchandise and marketing materials following the direction of the RWPC Consumer Committee to promote the campaign. Promotional materials included printed materials, enamel pins, and stickers, which could appeal to large audiences and especially students, where the majority of the materials would be handed out. These products were provided to Council members, event participants, and those who attended tabling events to increase campaign recognition and engagement.

PCS ordered 200 of each item in October of 2023. At the end of April, approximately 252 total pieces of merchandise had been distributed, which is about 63%. PCS distributed the remaining merchandise during Pride and recruitment events throughout the summer. Marketing and merchandise accounted for approximately 3.8% of the total budget.

Figure 1: Anti-Stigma Campaign Merchandise Distribution, 10/2023 – 4/2024

Product	Order date	Total received	Total distributed
Enamel pins	Oct-23	200	107
Stickers	Oct-23	200	145
			Total: 252

Initiative 3: Website Updates and Re-Design, Social Media

The Consumer Committee acknowledged the need for well-established, reliable, user-friendly, and accessible media platforms to advance the ASC. The SYKL website was transferred to Squarespace from its original platform at the start of the Planning Council year. The website was previously hosted via Wild Apple. The transition to the Squarespace platform aimed to ensure easier housing of ASC documents, improved user-experiences, and a more organized transition process for Planning Council Support staff. It was also the hope of the Consumer Committee for the SYKL website to better serve as a resource for PLWH in the community who may be looking for information and community spaces. The new SYKL website includes numerous updates, including a permanent space for the SYKL film, an Anti-Stigma Resource Library, community highlights, and more.

Additionally, there were significant updates made to the SYKL social media pages. The majority of social media campaigning took place on Instagram, with increased frequency of posts and follower engagement. Topics of social media posts ranged from educational to current campaign events, with examples including, “History of ACT-UP NYC,” “National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day,” and “The Someone You Know and Love MBTA Campaign!” The SYKL website and Instagram were also essential tools in the monitoring and evaluation of campaign impressions.

Figure 2: Total SYKL Website Views, 9/2023 – 2/2024

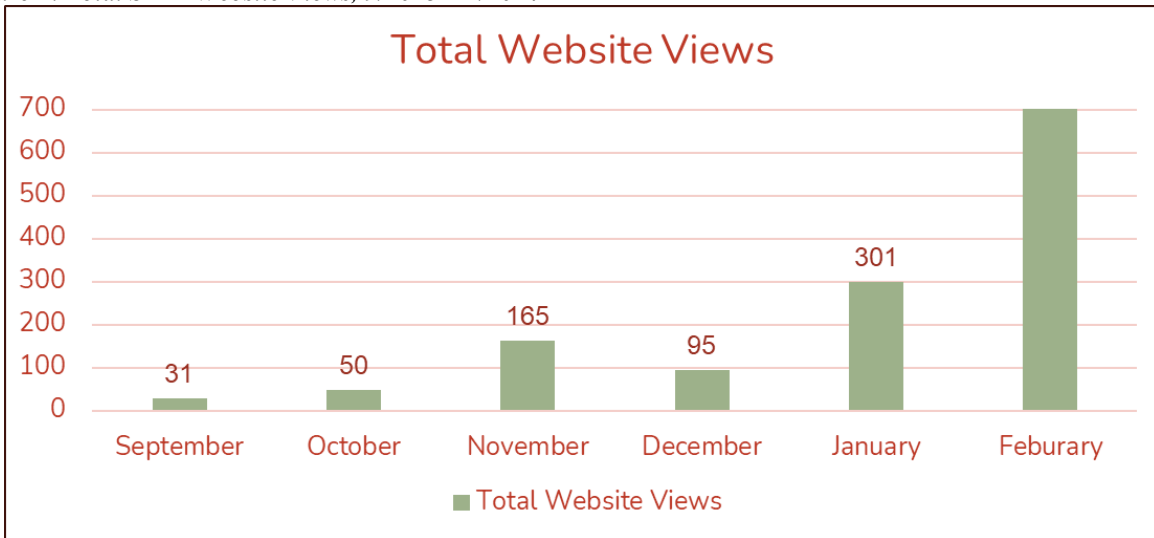
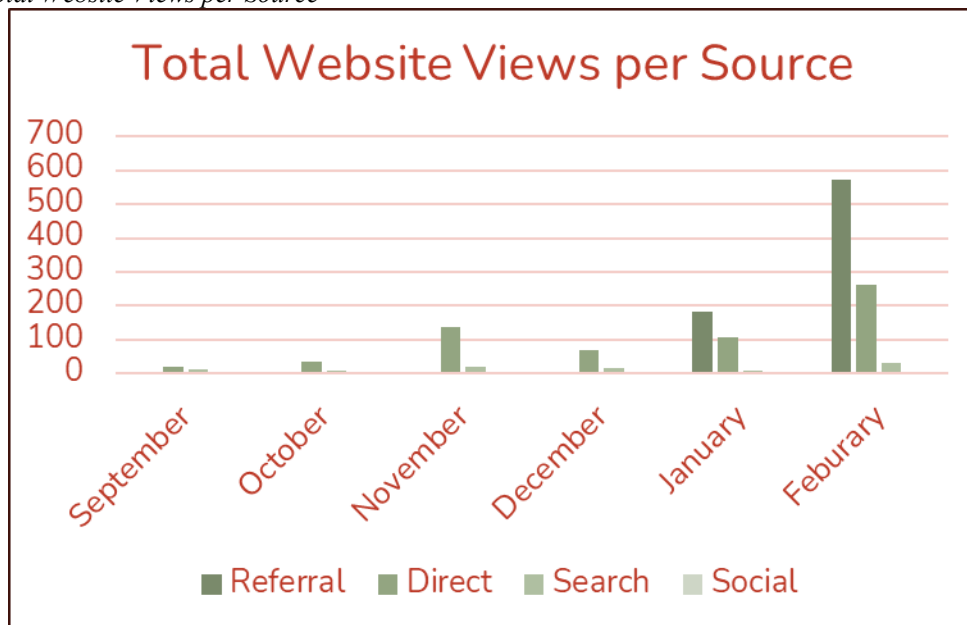


Figure 2 shows the total website views from September 2023 to February 2024. The chart shows a significant increase in total website views between January to February 2024. Relevant campaign activities during this time period included the Boston University panel event in November, the Suffolk University panel event in February, as well as the MBTA advertisement period that occurred between January and February. More details are provided on these relevant activities later in this report.

Figure 3: Total Website Views per Source



Total website views were organized by source, which includes referral, direct, search, and social. Figure 3 shows an increase in total website views beginning in January and significant increases occurring in February. The top views in the months of January and February came from “referral,” which represents websites that link to one’s content that do not fit under other

channels. This can include any QR code visits, as well as the locations the SYKL website is linked on other sites (i.e. Instagram, Boston.gov, etc.).

Figure 4: Overall Instagram Growth, 9/2023 – 2/2024

Overall Instagram Growth September 2023-February 2024				
Month	Accounts reached	Accounts engaged	Total followers	
September	47	7	102	
October	100	39	108	6
November	71	35	149	41
December	102	34	149	0
January	116	28	149	0
February	665	106	161	12

As mentioned, the SYKL Instagram saw a notable increase in accounts reached, accounts engaged, and total followers throughout the implantation of the Initiative 3. For example, Figure 4 shows a follower growth of 59 total new followers from September 2023 to February 2024, which is an increase of 57.84%

Initiative 4: MBTA Advertisements

Per the guidance of the Consumer Committee, PCS staff worked with OutFront Media and the MBTA to procure advertising space within the city of Boston. The advertisements included digital live boards at high traffic MBTA stations (Park Street and Downtown Crossing), subway interior posters on the red and orange line trains, and a mobile network with selected geo-targets. The advertisements had a start date of January 15th, 2024, and were up for a duration of 8 weeks each. PCS and Consumer Committee members wanted to choose locations around the city most likely to reach their target populations, spread awareness, and promote the campaign. Impressions from the advertisements were tracked by PCS staff and monitored throughout the duration of the advertisement contracted.

Figure 5: MBTA Advertisement Estimated Impressions

MBTA Advertisement Estimated Impressions						
Market	Media	Units	Start Date	Duration	Location Description	Estimated Impressions
Boston, MA	Digital Liveboards	50	15-Jan	4 Weeks	High Traffic MBTA Stations: Park Street and Downtown Crossing	4,669,034
Boston, MA	Subway Interior Posters	200	15-Jan	4 Weeks	Red Line and Orange Line Trains	2,017,332
Boston, MA	Mobile Network	1	15-Jan	8 Weeks	Selected Geo-targets	625,000

Figure 5 shows the estimated impressions of the MBTA advertisements in 3 media formats, including digital liveboards, subway interior posters, and the mobile networks. Estimated impressions from these advertisements indicate strong viewership from those taking public transportation. For example, there were 50 units of digital liveboards that were located at Park

Street and Downtown Crossing Stations for a duration of 4 weeks. Estimated impressions during this time, or the number of people who are exposed to the advertising message, were 4,669,034.

Figure 6: Number of Impressions/Clicks/CTR per Mobile Network Geotargeted Area

MBTA Advertisements: Impressions/Clicks/CTR per Geotargeted Area			
Geotarget area	Impressions	Clicks	CTR
Downtown Crossing	296,485	758	0.26%
Park Street	259,143	725	0.28%

In addition to the physical advertisements in MBTA stations and on trains, we ran mobile ads that would appear on people’s phones when they were using them near the two selected geotargeted areas, Park Street Station and Downtown Crossing Station. Figure 6 shows the impressions/clicks/click through rate (CTR) per mobile network selected geotargeted area. A CTR is a ratio of how often people click on a link, ad, or search result compared to the total number of times it's seen. For the duration of the geotargeted advertising, Downtown Crossing Station had 296,485 estimated impressions and a CTR of 0.26% or 758 clicks. Similarly, Park Street Station had 259,143 estimated impressions and a CTR of 0.28% or 725 clicks. This data demonstrates the opportunity MBTA advertising can bring, given the vast number of commuters and MBTA users that not only view, but engage with the advertisements. It also allows us to think about how we can further engage with the public via advertisements and develop content that will increase CTR.

Initiative 5: University Outreach Events

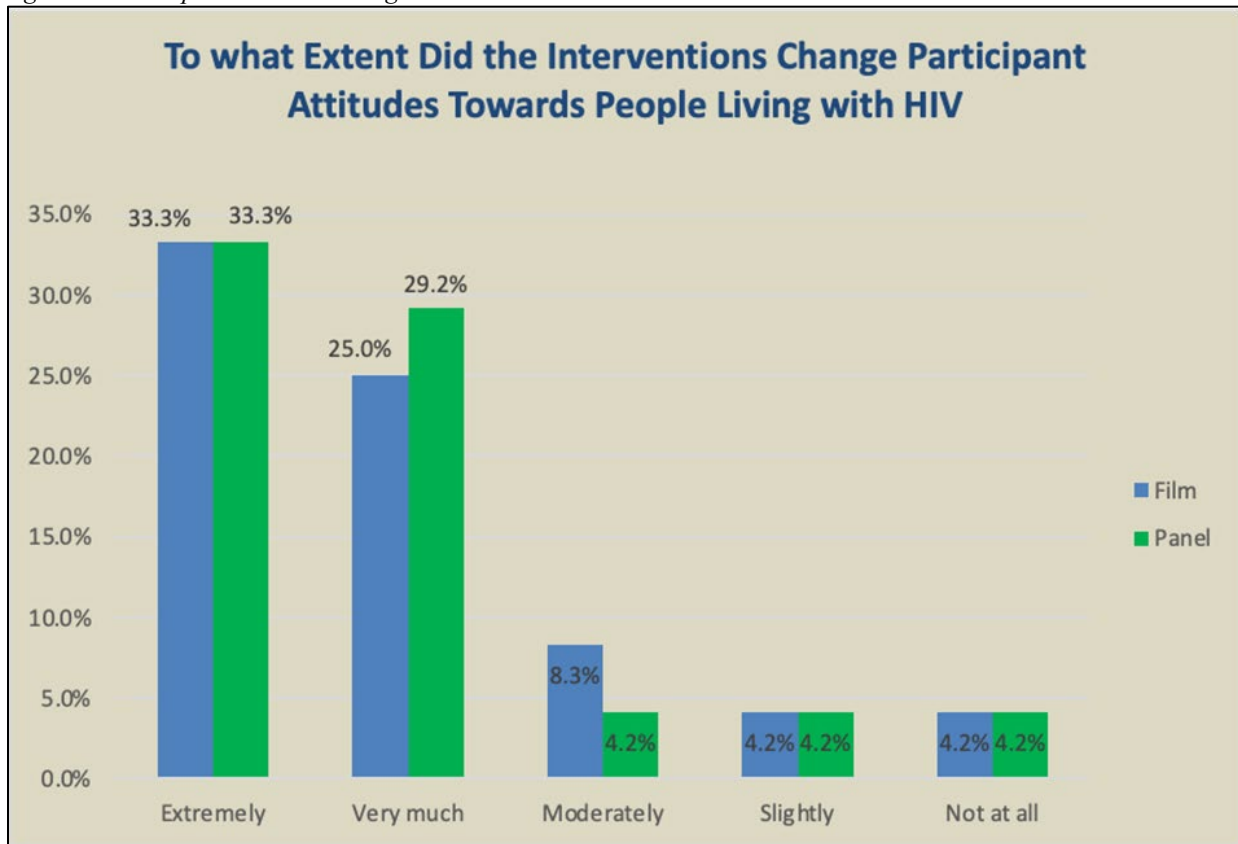
Anti-Stigma Campaign outreach events were also held at two local universities: Boston University and Suffolk University. University outreach events were held with the goal of connecting with an audience of future healthcare professionals, educating on the HIV/AIDS epidemic and HIV stigma, and sharing the stories and experiences of PLWH through a film showing and panel discussions.

Boston University

The first outreach event took place at the Boston University Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine on November 28th, 2023, from 5 - 7 PM. The event was titled, “Someone You Know and Love: An Anti-HIV Stigma Campaign Film Screening and Panel Discussion.” The event consisted of a SYKL film showing, a panel discussion with PLWH, and a question-and-answer session. Event evaluation was conducted by PCS staff, as well as a team of Boston University (BU) Master of Social Work (MSW) students. A pre and post survey utilizing convenience sampling (created by BU MSW students) was conducted with attendees to evaluate knowledge, attitudes, and takeaways before watching the panel and film discussion, and after. The majority of attendees were students from the BU School of Dental Medicine, followed by Social Work students.

Figure 7 outlines the change in attitudes towards PLWH of participants depending on the intervention, in this case, either the film or the panel discussion.

Figure 7: Participant Attitude Change Towards PLWH Post Intervention



Data gathered from pre- and post- event surveys showed significant attitude change, with a majority of respondents saying their attitudes towards PLWH were either extremely or very much changed following the film showing and panel discussion (options for attitude change include extremely, very much, moderately, slightly, and not at all). Participants also discussed their perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes towards PLWH following the event in the post-event survey through written responses:

“I’ve never been at an HIV education event. I’ve never learned about HIV either until today.”

“I already had a level of understanding and empathy for those living with HIV/AIDS but the panel enlightened me further”

“I’m so lucky to have attended this event. I have learned how to treat people from the experiences of the panelists.”

Suffolk University

The second outreach event took place at Suffolk University Law School on February 7th, 2024, from 5-7pm. The event was titled, “Anti-HIV Stigma Campaign; A Black Woman’s Perspective.” The event consisted of a SYKL film showing, a panel of PLWH, and a question-and-answer session. PCS staff conducted a pre- and post- survey to assess campaign impact. There were 70 total attendees at this event and 39 responses to the surveys, which accounted for 55.7% response rate. A majority of attendees were students (16) from Suffolk University College

of Arts and Sciences. When assessing key takeaways from the event, impressions showed that there was a 3% increase in average knowledge of HIV/AIDS from before to after the event, a 39% increase in average knowledge of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program from before to after the event, and a 24% increase in average familiarity of the stigmas faced by people living with HIV from before to after the event.

Figure 8: Attitude Change Towards PLWH Post Panel

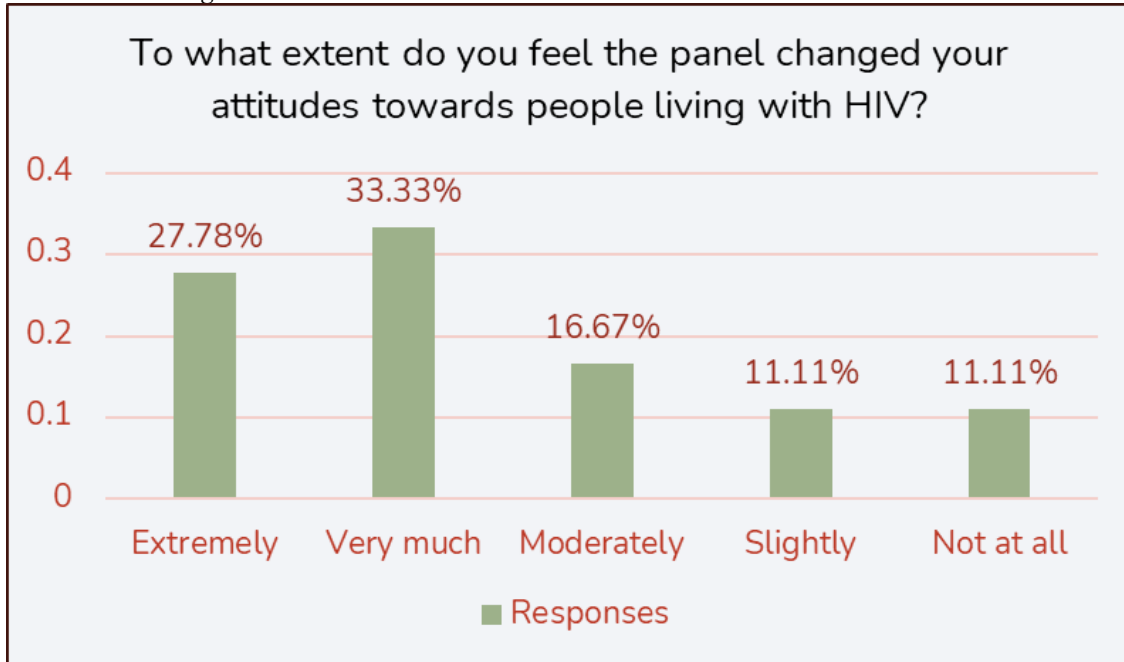
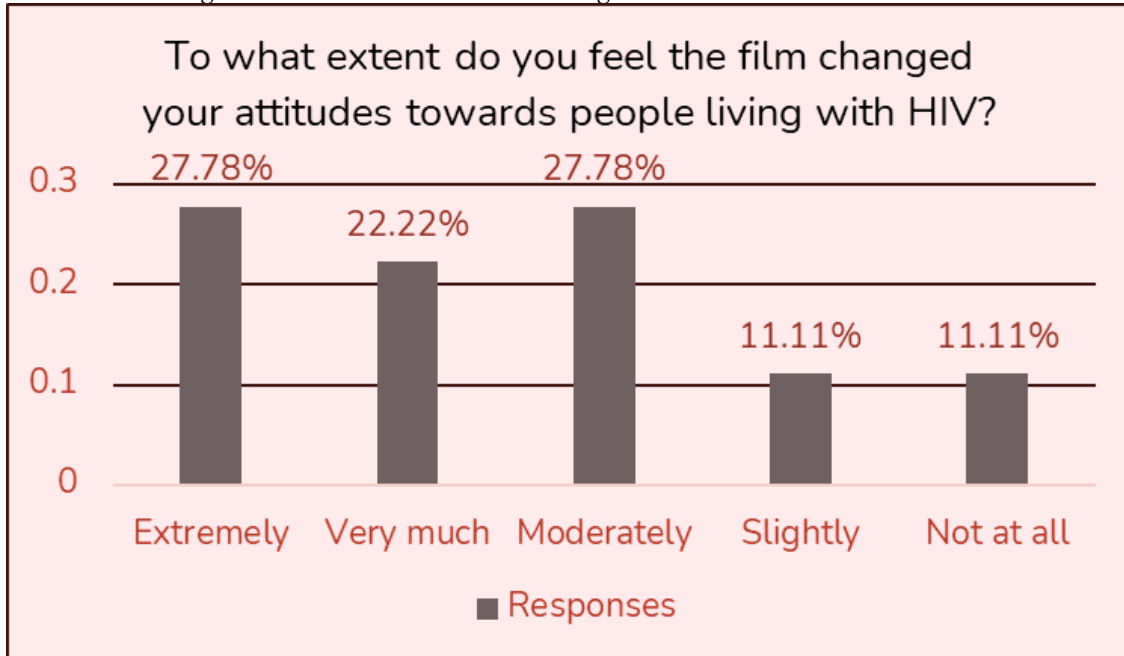


Figure 9: Attitude Change Towards PLWH Post Film Viewing



Figures 8 and 9 show attitude changes towards PLWH after both the film viewing and panel discussion. Approximately 61.11% of attendees reported attitudes towards PLWH being “extremely” or “very much” changed following the panel discussion. Similarly, approximately 50% of attendees reported attitudes towards PLWH being either “extremely” or “very much” changed following the film viewing. Participants also discussed their perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes towards PLWH following the event in the post-event survey through written responses:

“It allowed me to be more informed with how to provide a more safe and inclusive space for those living with HIV.”

“The film displayed a diverse group of people which helped in reaching those of different backgrounds, showing that yes, someone you know and love is living with HIV, these are real people with stories just like us.”

“Hearing stories firsthand is always more impactful than just rough data. While the data is helpful is supporting these stories, it’s the stories that support in combating the stigma against those living with HIV/AIDS.”

Impressions from the ASC outreach events demonstrated a strong need to engage with local students, healthcare professionals, and community members regarding the topics of HIV prevention, care, and stigma. Efforts like these, that work to humanize and destigmatize HIV, are essential to creating change and improving health outcomes.

EHE Future Planning

On May 24th, 2024, PCS submitted the BPHC EHE Funding FY 24 Scope of Service, which was written in collaboration with Consumer Committee leadership and informed by Consumer Committee member feedback during the 2023-2024 Planning Council year. The purpose of the Scope of Service is to outline detailed plans for future funding, providing information on initiatives, goals, timelines, and funding needs for the next fiscal year.

The Scope of Service outlined the Consumer Committee’s anticipated focus of activities for FY24. The next phase of this campaign is to expand activities, reach targeted vulnerable populations, and align the Campaign with National HIV campaigns and the goals of the Ending the HIV Epidemic by way of partnerships and co-delivery of the ASC content with informational kits, venues, events, culturally specific community brokers, and media outlets. The objective of this next phase is for anyone who encounters the ASC to be able to take the necessary steps to increase self-awareness, as well as self-advocacy and protection, to stop new infections and spread of the virus. The Campaign will align and promote the national HIV themes by way of information, messaging, and personal actions via community partnerships.

For more information on the ongoing campaign activities, meeting schedule and logistics, or to learn how to get involved, please visit our website: www.someoneyouknowandlove.com or email PCS at pcs@bphc.org.