

Boston EMA Ryan White Planning Council



Someone You Know & Love Anti-Stigma Campaign

FY25 Final Report

July 2026

Funded by Ending the HIV Epidemic, Boston Public Health Commission

Consumer Committee
Planning Council Support
1010 Massachusetts Avenue
Boston, MA 02118

www.someoneyouknowandlove.com

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Introduction

The Planning Council's Consumer Committee is the home of the Anti-Stigma Campaign: Someone You Know and Love, which prioritizes Consumer-led initiatives regarding community engagement, education, and HIV stigma reduction. The centerpiece of the campaign is a short documentary film that highlights several people living with HIV (PLWH), 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 healthy lives and de-stigmatizing HIV is a powerful way to improve health outcomes.

The Boston EMA Ryan White HIV/AIDS Services Planning Council Support team (PCS) received Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) funding in FY24 to help the Consumer Committee advance the goals of the Someone You Know and Love Anti-Stigma Campaign through the implementation and evaluation of several activities. This is our third year of funding under this grant, and our FY25 award was a total of \$80,000.

Campaign Activities

To remain aligned with the goals of Ending the HIV Epidemic through prioritizing community engagement and education led by PLWH, all decisions about activities conducted via this campaign are made among a group of consumers and other Planning Council members who participate in the Consumer Committee meetings. As a result, this campaign aligns with HRSA's community engagement goals to be intentional, committed, sustainable, flexible, tailored, and transformational, and the work done by this campaign is critical to the success of the grant.

This campaign is also in direct alignment with the priorities of the Boston Public Health Commission to empower community leaders and to develop diverse campaigns and promotional materials to normalize prevention, care, and treatment while reducing HIV stigma. Those initiatives and their related goals, outcomes, and impressions are as follows:

Initiative 1: Marketing and Merchandise

The Consumer Committee reviewed merchandise options and provided feedback which PCS used to guide this year's orders. The team redesigned the SYKL stress ball in red and added the URL to the SYKL website as well as the Instagram username. This new design replaced the original white design, to give community members a new item to collect and allow easy access to the website and social media pages to learn more. The committee also redesigned the campaign's stickers, producing new designs for the Summit reading "Ending the HIV Epidemic," "Connecting Community, Care, and Change," and "I know and love someone living with HIV." Additional materials, including lanyards, branded notebooks, and pens featuring the campaign logo and slogan, were procured to improve the outreach and Summit experience. Printed materials and merchandise were distributed to Council members and community members at various events throughout the year to boost campaign recognition and engagement.

Initiative 2: Social Media

This year, PCS posted and engaged new followers on the campaign’s Instagram account, @someoneyouknowandlove. Topics of social media posts ranged from campaign highlights to national public health observances like World AIDS Day and National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, as well as recaps of community outreach events like Strides for Action and Boston Pride for the People. The Instagram account also did a few collaborative posts with other community organizations and larger accounts, such as @HealthyBoston. These collaborations helped increase engagement and views. Since the end of FY24, the SYKL Instagram has created 44 unique posts.

The SYKL website and Instagram account were essential tools in the monitoring of campaign reach and impressions.

Figure 1: Total SYKL Website Views, 3/2025 – 2/2026

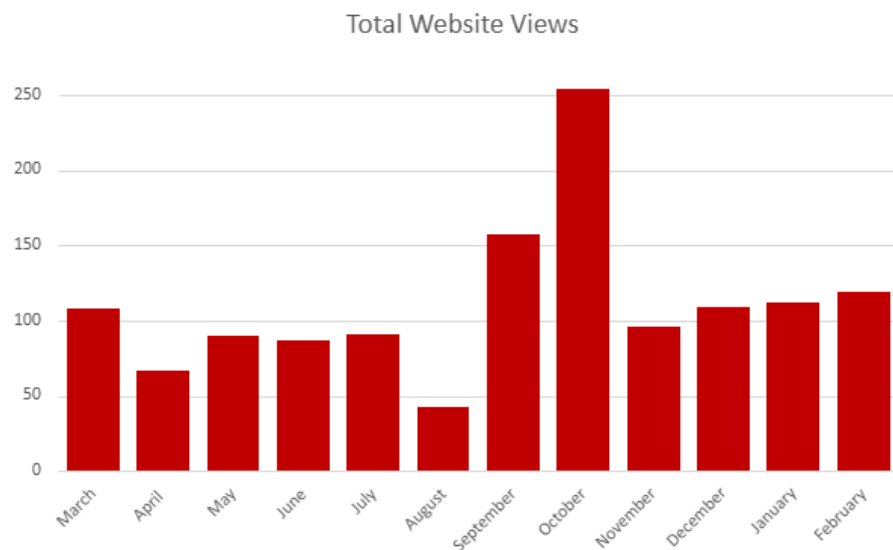
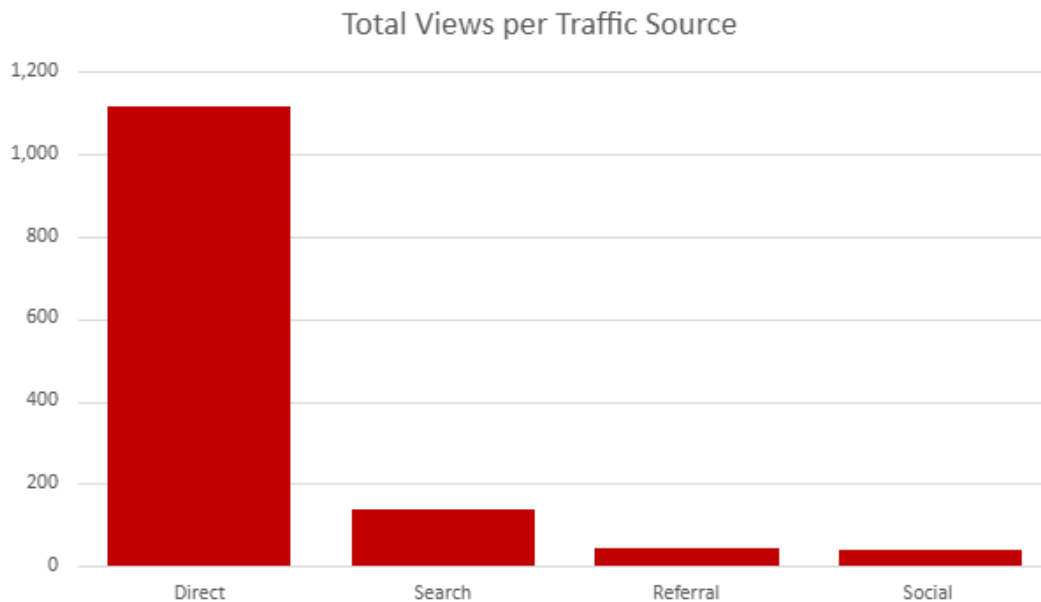


Figure 1 shows the monthly website views from March 2025 to February 2026. The chart shows variation in website traffic throughout the year, with the highest number of views occurring in October. On average, there were 111 website views per month and 1,334 total website views over the fiscal year. Website traffic tended to increase around important Planning Council events and activities, with notable spikes in September and October, which coincided with New Member Orientation and the first Consumer meeting of the year.

Figure 2: Total Website Views per Source



Total website views are organized by source, including direct, search, referral, and social traffic. Figure 2 illustrates that the vast majority of website views came from direct traffic (1,115 views), indicating that most visitors accessed the website by typing in the URL directly or clicking a link shared through emails, meeting materials, or other outreach efforts. Search generated 135 views, suggesting that some users found the website through search engines. Referral traffic accounted for 45 views and social traffic accounted for 39 views, representing visitors who accessed the website through links on other websites, QR codes, or social media platforms. Overall, these findings suggest that direct outreach and established communication channels continue to be the primary drivers of website traffic.

The SYKL Instagram saw a notable increase in accounts reached, accounts engaged, and total followers. At the end of FY23, the Instagram account had 161 followers, at the end of FY24 the account had 201 followers, and at the end of FY25, it had 256 followers. This represents a 25% increase in followers from FY23 to FY24, and a 27% increase from FY24 to FY25, showing that the account's growth rate has not only been sustained but has slightly accelerated year over year.

Initiative 3: The Connecting Community, Care, and Change: Ending the HIV Epidemic Summit

Building on the success of last year's Gala, PCS and the Consumer Committee organized the Connecting Community, Care, and Change: Ending the HIV Epidemic Summit. The event featured a keynote address from Dr. Bisola Ojikutu, a retrospective on the evolution of the Someone You Know and Love campaign, a screening of the SYKL film, a presentation from the Boston Public Health Commission on the HIV care continuum, a poster showcase of Part A and Ending the HIV Epidemic initiatives, a preview of the new PCSxCMTP video series, and a roundtable discussion with Ending the HIV Epidemic mini grant subrecipients. There were over 100 community members in attendance, and 30 responses to a post-event survey, an improvement over the 19 responses received after last year's Gala.

Respondents were largely current or former Planning Council members, community partners, and Ryan White Part A or EHE subrecipients. Most respondents fell into the 26-35 or 56-65 age ranges, identified as White Non-Hispanic, Black, and/or Hispanic, and were fairly evenly split between women and men, with a few respondents identifying as nonbinary or transgender men. Twenty-three percent of respondents identified as a person living with HIV. Four respondents indicated interest in applying to the Planning Council.

Feedback on session value was overwhelmingly positive, with the EHE Mini-Grant Roundtable Discussion ranked as the most valuable session, followed by the Someone You Know and Love Campaign and Film Screening, and the Keynote Address by Dr. Ojikutu. Respondents shared several reactions to these sessions, including:

- *"Darren's intro for the Someone You Know and Love video was fantastic. Genuine, heartfelt, and set an amazing tone for the session."*
- *"The round table discussion was SO inspiring and exciting. The work the mini-grant recipients are doing is the kind of thing I've dreamed that we'd do."*
- *"Hearing Dr. O's story and her commitment to the community was inspiring."*
- *"It was very interesting to hear from agencies who are not in the longstanding RW Part A portfolio, especially religious organizations. Great for them to have a platform and share their experience as new grant recipients."*

The majority of respondents rated the venue excellent or good, with no "fair" or "poor" ratings. Accessibility ratings were similarly positive, with most respondents rating accessibility as excellent or good and a few as fair. Respondents specifically praised the accessible parking, subtitling, and pacing of the event:

- *"Consistent descriptions of imagery and subtitling was so helpful, and the intermittent breaks/pauses before transitions was a support to allow people to engage in the whole event without burnout."*
- *"Thank you for setting up parking with an elevator right to the event!!!! That was huge, especially in the weather."*

The Summit also provided strong networking opportunities: the majority of respondents said the event offered meaningful chances to connect with others, with several noting they made new connections outside their usual professional circles.

- *"I made 4 NEW connections outside my work ecosystem! Incredible networking."*
- *"I sat at a table where I did not know anyone at the start of the conference. I felt quite comfortable doing so and felt like I made new friends."*

A few respondents suggested more facilitated networking activities would help attendees who are newer to the field feel welcomed, noting that first-time attendees may feel there's an assumption that everyone already knows each other.

When asked what they learned or took away from the Summit, respondents highlighted the strength and dedication of the Planning Council and PCS teams, the creativity of grassroots, community-driven HIV interventions, and the broader impact of the collective work being done to end the epidemic. Overall feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with respondents praising the organization, energy, and content of the event, while offering suggestions such as shortening the overall length and allowing more time for unstructured networking. The Summit built on the momentum of last year's Gala, bringing together an even larger group from across the Boston EMA and the HIV/AIDS care landscape to celebrate the campaign's growth and deepen collaboration around stigma reduction.

Initiative 4: Video Project with Case Management Training Program

The Consumer Committee partnered with the Case Management Training Program (CMTP) to expand video content addressing HIV stigma and provider-client relationships. The project features short, talking head-style videos highlighting the dual perspectives of people living with HIV and the case managers who support them, organized around themes including trust, stigma, shared identity, and growth, alongside one recruitment video promoting the Planning Council. The committee selected Artists for Humanity as its production partner because of their work with youth, a key target population for the ASC campaign. Next year, the Consumer Committee will develop plans to distribute the videos through in-person screening events, social media campaigns, and other platforms, while CMTP will incorporate the videos into their upcoming training series.

Initiative 5: Anti-Stigma Campaign Toolkits

In FY23, the Consumer Committee began work on developing Anti-Stigma Campaign Toolkits to expand its ability to share knowledge and training materials on HIV stigma and its impact on people living with HIV. Throughout FY24, the members collaborated to develop an outline for a stigma reduction toolkit and began work on a brochure as the first element.



Figure 3. Pages 1 and 2 of the Anti-Stigma Toolkit Brochure

After three rounds of revision with the Consumer Committee, they developed and voted on a final brochure, which can be seen in Figure 3. The brochure includes a brief introduction to the campaign and its activities, definitions of HIV stigma from the CDC, HIV.gov, as well as

personal definitions from PLWH on the Planning Council. It includes a QR code to the campaign's website and contact information for the PCS team.

This year, the Consumer Committee translated and printed the brochure in seven languages, partnering with Eriksen Translations to keep the design consistent across all versions. The committee used the same seven languages it selected for the SYKL film translations to maintain consistency across campaign materials. These languages included: Spanish, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Vietnamese. The committee distributed the brochures at over 10 outreach events this year.

EHE Future Planning

The Consumer Committee is committed to remain aligned with the goals of Ending the HIV Epidemic. Their most recent proposal outlined detailed plans on what continued funding would be used for, prioritizing community engagement and social media and information dissemination following the direction of PLWH. This proposal provided information on goals, initiatives, and funding needs for the next fiscal year.

Equitable Evaluation of the SYKL Campaign

To assess the Campaign's reach and its impact on attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs about people living with HIV, PCS designed an impact evaluation using a mixed-methods, pre-post-and-follow-up approach. This evaluation combines ongoing analytics from the website, YouTube, and Instagram accounts with time-bound data from film screenings and panel discussions, including pre- and post-screening surveys, focus group discussions, and a six-month follow-up survey and focus group after participants follow the Instagram account. PCS proposes procuring an evaluation partner to work with the committee to build on these metrics and measure the reach and effectiveness of the SYKL campaign.

Distribution of Anti-Stigma Campaign

To support this evaluation, the Consumer Committee will focus on distributing and advertising campaign media through film screenings and panel discussions with key audiences across the EMA, building on the original film's success to reach new communities and boost campaign awareness and trust. The committee will integrate the FY25 films, created with Artists for Humanity and the Case Management Training Program, into its standard screening and panel discussion agenda to maximize impact and visibility. The committee will also use funding to procure and distribute educational materials to community partners and participants, strengthen its social media presence, maintain the campaign website, and pursue additional media advertisements and public collaborations.

Target Populations

In response to state and city level data, including Needs Assessments from Boston Public Health Commission and the Planning Council, the Consumer Committee have identified youth and young adults as our target population for our EHE-funded activities to fill gaps for young people on HIV stigma, prevention, care, and treatment. Committee members will continue to prioritize messaging towards HIV care providers across the whole HIV Care Continuum, as well as the general public, with the campaign.

Efforts like interactive film screenings and panel discussions, combined with consistent and trustworthy media presence and marketing that work to humanize and de-stigmatize HIV, are essential to creating change and improving health outcomes. The Consumer Committee intends to sustain the momentum of this campaign while prioritizing decisions made by people living with HIV.

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