

INSIDE:

- Updates
- Health Access for All
- Strategic Plan

This newsletter is organized to align with the six Social Determinants of Health found in the *Ending the Epidemics Integrated Statewide Strategic Plan*, addressing the syndemic of HIV, HCV, and STIs in California. More about the *Strategic Plan* is available on the [Office of AIDS \(OA\) website](#).

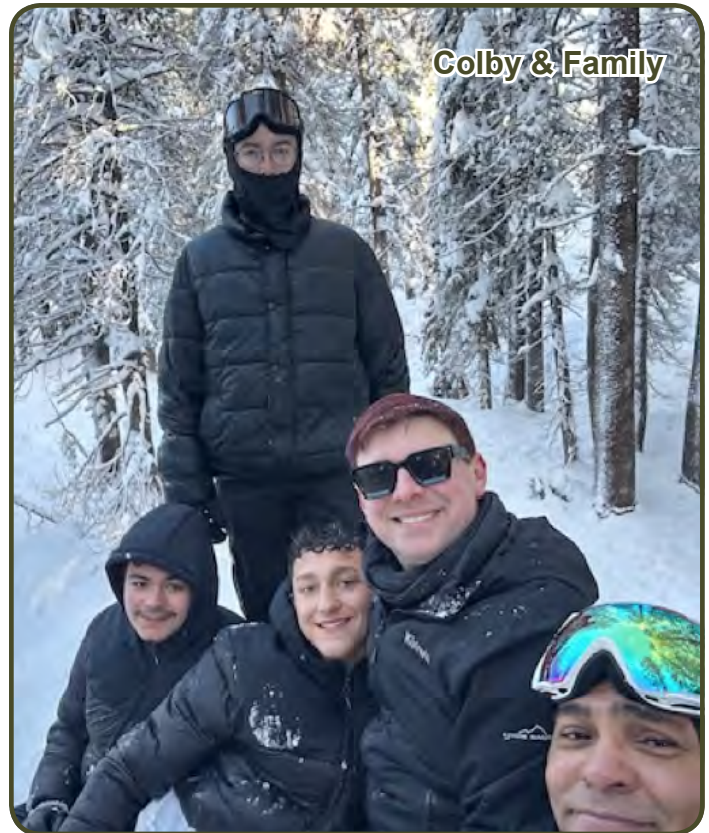
STAFF HIGHLIGHT

We are excited to introduce you to **Colby Middleton**, our new HIV Policy Analyst in the Special Programs Section within the HIV Care Branch. He will be working in the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP), Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program, and the Medi-Cal Waiver Program (MCWP), supporting the branch in developing provider communication, engaging stakeholders, completing program data analysis and reporting, writing policy documents, and completing special projects.

Colby comes to us from the State Controller's Office (SCO) where he spent over four years serving as a Staff Services Analyst handling a large workload in the complex Property Tax Postponement program. He stands out in his ability to understand, explain, and apply complicated compliance requirements, his outstanding customer service skills, and his passion for both program policy work and HIV programs. Prior to SCO, Colby worked as an Associate Banker for JPMorgan Chase and has a B.A. in Political Science from Chico State. Colby brings a rich background to OA, and we are so excited that he has joined our team.

Colby enjoys spending time with his husband, Anthony, and their kids: Zach, Franco, and Chris. When time allows, they often enjoy simple entertainment, such as going to the movies or to concerts. They recently took a family trip to

Colby & Family



Tahoe for a much-needed getaway, filled with snowy fun and snowboarding lessons for the boys.

HIV AWARENESS

March 10th is National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NWGHAAD). This day raises awareness about the impact HIV has on women and girls. Initially observed in 2005, NWGHAAD is meant to educate and highlight

prevention, treatment, and care strategies specific to women and girls and support those at risk or living with HIV. NWGHAADs goal is to increase HIV prevention and testing for women and girls, Improve HIV-related health outcomes, reduce disparities, and ensure equity in HIV care and treatment. The theme for 2025 is “Prevention and Testing at Every Age. Care and Treatment at Every Stage”.

In California, one in six new HIV diagnoses are among women, with 78% of cases attributed to sexual contact. Despite this, PrEP remains underutilized in 2023, with women making up just 6% of PrEP users, even though they represented at least 13% of new HIV diagnoses in 2022. To provide awareness and education around this issue, the California Planning Group Women’s committee has developed two Women and PrEP infographics, one [for the community](#) and another [for healthcare providers](#).

Help spread the word and support HIV prevention for women and girls!

March 20th is National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NNHAAD). NNHAAD is purposely observed on the first day of Spring, a symbolism of new beginnings in Native communities. Native communities are disproportionately a high-risk group due to societal stigmas surrounding homosexuality, high rates of drug and alcohol use and lack of various HIV/AIDS prevention strategies. This day is observed to promote HIV testing, prevention, and treatment in American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian communities.

March 31st is International Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV). This day is meant to celebrate the resilience and bravery of transgender and non-binary people. TDOV also acknowledges the many contributions made by transgender and non-binary people and celebrate the beauty and courage of living authentically.

TDOV is also meant to bring awareness of the discrimination, stigma, and anti-trans violence

this community faces every day, especially against Black and Brown trans women. In our current climate, it is imperative that we combat disinformation and discrimination, transgender and non-binary people are increasingly experiencing.

Educate yourself and help support our transgender and non-binary community. Visit our [OA Transgender Community Health in California webpage](#) for information about transgender health and resources.

GENERAL UPDATES

➤ Mpx

OA is committed to providing updated information related to mpx. We have partnered with the Division of Communicable Disease Control (DCDC), a program within the Center of Infectious Diseases and have disseminated a number of documents in an effort to keep our clients and stakeholders informed. Please refer to the [DCDC website](#) to stay informed.

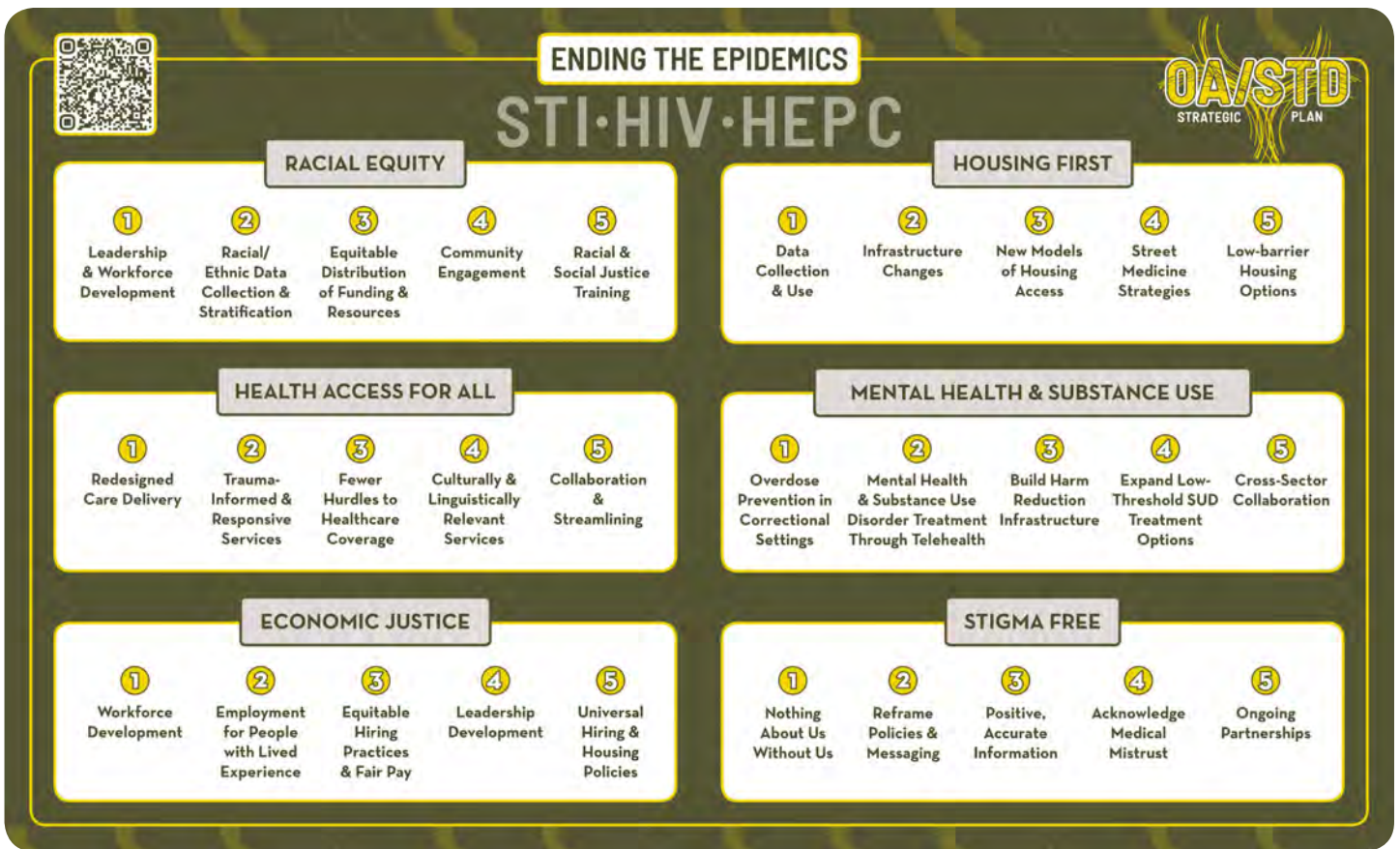
Digital assets continue to be available for LHJs and CBOs on DCDC’s [Campaign Toolkits](#) website.

➤ HIV/STI/HCV Integration

We continue to move forward with the necessary steps to integrate our HIV, STI, and HCV programs into a single new Division. We will continue to keep you apprised on our journey as new information comes in.

ENDING THE EPIDEMICS STRATEGIC PLAN

The [visual at the top of page three](#) is a high-level summary of our *Strategic Plan* that organizes



30 Strategies across six Social Determinants of Health (SDoH).

OA and STD Control Branch would like you to continue to use and share the *Strategic Plan* and the *Implementation Blueprint*. These documents address HIV as a syndemic with HCV and other STIs, through a SDoH lens.

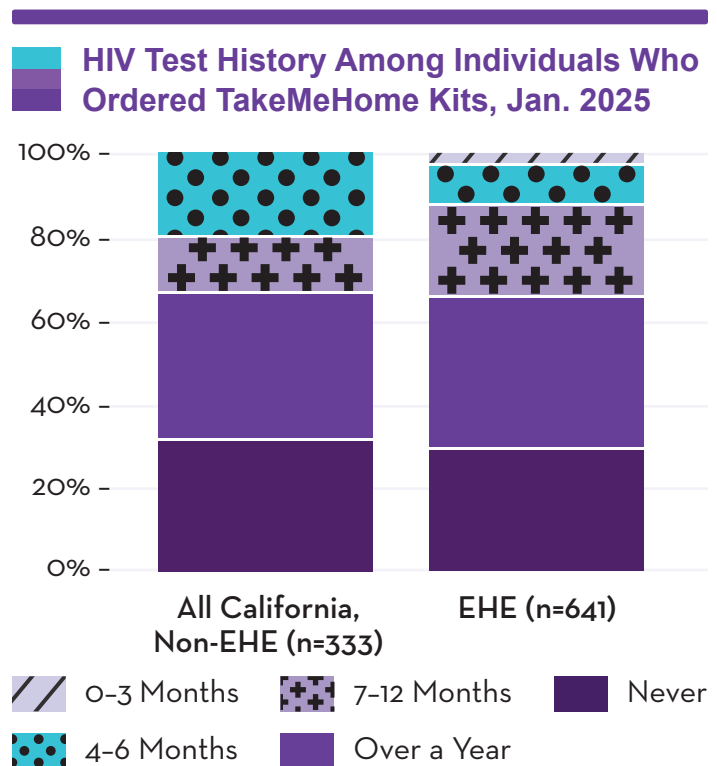
For technical assistance in implementing the *Strategic Plan*, California LHJs and CBOs can visit [Facente Consulting's webpage](#).

HEALTH ACCESS FOR ALL

➤ Strategy 1: Redesigned Care Delivery

OA continues to implement its **Building Healthy Online Communities (BHOC)** self-testing program to allow for rapid OraQuick test orders in all jurisdictions in California. The program,

TakeMeHome, is advertised on gay dating apps, where users see an ad for home testing and are offered a free HIV-home test kit.



TAKEMEHOME

In January, 333 individuals in 38 counties ordered self-test kits, with 245 (73.6%) individuals ordering 2 tests. Additionally, OA's existing TakeMeHome Program continues in the six California Consortium Phase I Ending the HIV Epidemic in America counties. Between the program's initiation in September 1, 2020, and January 31, 2025, 15,901 tests have

been distributed. This month, mail-in lab tests (including dried blood spot tests for HIV, syphilis, and Hepatitis C, as well as 3-site tests for gonorrhea and chlamydia) accounted for 292 (45.6%) of the 641 total tests distributed in EHE counties. Of those ordering rapid tests, 253 (72.5%) ordered 2 tests.

Since September 2020, 1,778 test kit recipients have completed the anonymous follow up survey from EHE counties; there have been 749 responses from the California expansion since January 2023.

➤ Strategy 1: Redesigned Care Delivery

The **ADAP Annual Reports** for both FY 2022–2023 and FY 2023–2024 are now available on the [ADAP Reports webpage](#).

The reports, produced by the **ADAP Evaluation & Monitoring (AEM) team**, provide a detailed review of the program through tables and figures using data from the ADAP Enrollment System (AES).

The AEM team has been addressing a backlog of reports caused by staffing shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic and is working to publish reports from previous fiscal years going back to FY 2019–2020, starting with the most recent years. Continue to check the webpage as more reports are added.

➤ Strategy 3: Fewer Hurdles to Healthcare Coverage

As of February 28, 2025, there are 278 PrEP-AP enrollment sites and 229 clinical provider sites that currently make up the [PrEP-AP Provider network](#).

[Data on active PrEP-AP clients](#) can be found in the three tables displayed on page five of this newsletter.

As of February 28, 2025, the [number of ADAP clients enrolled in each respective ADAP Insurance Assistance Program](#) are shown in the chart at the top of page six.

Additional Key Characteristics	EHE	All California, Non-EHE
Of those sharing their gender, were cisgender men	63.2%	64.3%
Of those sharing their race or ethnicity, identify as Hispanic or Latinx	44.2%	42.2%
Were 17-29 years old	43.8%	38.1%
Of those sharing their number of sex partners, reported 3 or more in the past year	46.8%	46.7%

Survey Highlights	EHE	All California, Non-EHE
Would recommend TakeMeHome to a friend	94.5%	94.4%
Identify as a man who has sex with other men	49.3%	52.6%
Reported having been diagnosed with an STI in the past year	8.7%	9.9%

Active PrEP-AP Clients by Age and Insurance Coverage:

Current Age	PrEP-AP Only		PrEP-AP With Medi-Cal		PrEP-AP With Medicare		PrEP-AP With Private Insurance		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
18 - 24	303	10%	---	---	---	---	11	0%	314	10%
25 - 34	1,050	33%	---	---	---	---	137	4%	1,187	37%
35 - 44	789	25%	---	---	1	0%	133	4%	923	29%
45 - 64	450	14%	---	---	9	0%	84	3%	543	17%
65+	35	1%	---	---	162	5%	6	0%	203	6%
TOTAL	2,627	83%	0	0%	172	5%	371	12%	3,170	100%

Active PrEP-AP Clients by Age and Race/Ethnicity:

Current Age	Latinx		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		White		More Than One Race Reported		Decline to Provide		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
18 - 24	169	5%	3	0%	38	1%	17	1%	1	0%	43	1%	3	0%	40	1%	314	10%
25 - 34	644	20%	3	0%	119	4%	90	3%	6	0%	239	8%	6	0%	80	3%	1,187	37%
35 - 44	528	17%	3	0%	83	3%	53	2%	3	0%	193	6%	6	0%	54	2%	923	29%
45 - 64	302	10%	---	---	44	1%	14	0%	1	0%	134	4%	1	0%	47	1%	543	17%
65+	20	1%	---	---	4	0%	5	0%	---	---	164	5%	---	---	10	0%	203	6%
TOTAL	1,663	52%	9	0%	288	9%	179	6%	11	0%	773	24%	16	1%	231	7%	3,170	100%

Active PrEP-AP Clients by Gender and Race/Ethnicity:

Gender	Latinx		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		White		More Than One Race Reported		Decline to Provide		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	60	2%	---	---	5	0%	9	0%	1	0%	8	0%	---	---	7	0%	90	3%
Male	1,500	47%	8	0%	263	8%	167	5%	10	0%	735	23%	15	0%	203	6%	2,901	92%
Trans	84	3%	---	---	15	0%	2	0%	---	---	14	0%	1	0%	5	0%	121	4%
Unknown	19	1%	1	0%	5	0%	1	0%	---	---	16	1%	---	---	16	1%	58	2%
TOTAL	1,663	52%	9	0%	288	9%	179	6%	11	0%	773	24%	16	1%	231	7%	3,170	100%

All PrEP-AP charts prepared by: ADAP Fiscal Forecasting Evaluation and Monitoring (AFFEM) Section, ADAP and Care Evaluation and Informatics Branch, Office of AIDS. Client was eligible for PrEP-AP as of run date: 02/28/2025 at 12:01:18 AM
Data source: ADAP Enrollment System. Site assignments are based on the site that submitted the most recent application.

ADAP Insurance Assistance Program	Number of Clients Enrolled	Percentage Change from January
Employer Based Health Insurance Premium Payment (EB-HIPP) Program	578	4.33%
Office of AIDS Health Insurance Premium Payment (OA-HIPP) Program	5,906	9.29%
Medicare Premium Payment Program (MPPP)	2,234	1.36%
Total	8,718	6.81%

Source: ADAP Enrollment System

For questions regarding *The OA Voice*, please send an e-mail to angelique.skinner@cdph.ca.gov.

