

01 DECEMBER 2023



WORLD
AIDS

AWARENESS DAY

World AIDS Day 35: Remember and Commit
PAYING TRIBUTE TO THOSE WE HAVE LOST TO HIV/AIDS

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Feature Employee of the Month

DAMIEN SYKES



I am thrilled to shine a well-deserved spotlight on one of our outstanding team members: Damien Sykes, who has dedicated over 4 years of exceptional service to EBAC. Damien's unwavering commitment to our most vulnerable patient population has truly set him apart.

Damien's care and treatment of our patients go beyond mere professionalism; he embodies genuine compassion and heartfelt concern. He has demonstrated an exceptional ability to connect with individuals in need, providing not just case management support but a comforting human touch.

I am proud to share that both HRSA and CDC have recognized Damien's exceptional care through feature journal articles. His contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic shelter-in-place were particularly noteworthy, showcasing a remarkable human connection during a challenging time. The testimonials from patients speak volumes about the impact Damien has had on their lives.

What truly sets Damien apart is his humility and dedication to the well-being of our patients. He doesn't seek recognition; his focus remains solely on ensuring our patients receive the care they deserve. Damien's approach transcends titles or degrees; it emphasizes the significance of compassion and genuine care in making a difference.

During hospital bedside visits with our patients, Damien has been a comforting presence for patients facing life-threatening issues in the ICU. His dedication extends beyond the call of duty, and patients often inquire about him upon recovery, emphasizing the profound impact he leaves.

In a recent CDC visit, it was recommended that we hire two or three more individuals like Damien. While the idea of cloning him crossed our minds, it is Damien's authenticity and unwavering dedication that make him irreplaceable.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to Damien for his exemplary service and the positive impact he has had on our organization and, most importantly, on the lives of those we serve. Damien Sykes truly embodies the spirit of compassionate care, and we are fortunate to have him as a valued member of the EBAC team.

Please join me in congratulating Damien on this well-deserved spotlight.

Director's Corner

Tony Sillemmon Psy.D, MBA, MSW
Director, Community Health



Fostering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in our Clinic: A Commitment to Patient-Centric Care

In today's healthcare landscape, fostering an environment of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is not only a moral imperative but also a cornerstone for providing quality patient care. At East Bay Advanced Care (EBAC), we recognize the importance of embracing diversity and ensuring equity and inclusion for both our staff and, most importantly, our patients.

Our commitment to DEI begins with our dedicated staff, who serve as the heartbeat of our clinic. By embracing the unique perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences of each team member, we create a rich tapestry that enhances our ability to understand and respond to the diverse needs of our patient community. From medical professionals to administrative staff, we believe that a diverse team leads to more innovative solutions and a deeper understanding of the challenges our patients face.

Responsive care is at the core of our mission. We understand that patients, particularly those from diverse backgrounds, may have unique healthcare needs that require thoughtful attention. Our staff is trained to be responsive to these needs, ensuring that every patient receives personalized and culturally sensitive care. By actively listening and engaging with our patients, we strengthen the bond of trust that is fundamental to effective healthcare delivery.

Respect is the foundation upon which our patient-staff interactions are built. We recognize the importance of respecting the cultural, social, and linguistic diversity of our patient population. Through ongoing education and training, our staff is equipped to navigate conversations and provide care with sensitivity and respect. This commitment extends to addressing health disparities and ensuring that all patients, regardless of their background, receive the same high standard of care.

For our patients of color, we are particularly attuned to the unique challenges they may face in the healthcare system. By fostering a workplace culture that values diversity, equity, and inclusion, we create an environment where every patient feels seen, heard, and cared for. Our commitment to DEI extends beyond rhetoric; it is woven into the fabric of our clinic's daily operations.

As we move forward, EBAC remains dedicated to continuous improvement in our DEI initiatives.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of Infectious Diseases
National Center for HIV/AIDS Viral Hepatitis STD and TB
Prevention
Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention
Program Development and Implementation Branch
PS21-2102: Comprehensive High-Impact HIV Prevention Projects
for Community
Based Organizations held Sutter Bay Hospital -EBAC
Site Visit Dates: November 3 -4, 2023

Purpose of Site Visit and Agenda Review

- Assess the following overall PS21-2102 prevention program:
 - Recipient's administrative and program practices
 - Recipient's implementation of PS21-2102 strategies and activities for Year 3
 - Recipient's PS21-2102 Year 2 performance and plans for Year 3
 - Recipient's PS21-2102 collaborative and coordination efforts with partners for program activities
 - Recipient's program sustainability plan for HIV prevention services
 - Recipient's strengths, challenges, and any needed technical assistance

Overall, the meeting went well and EBAC will continue to be funded. A final site visit report and evaluation will be sent by December 31, 2023

The California Planning Group (CPG) is the statewide HIV planning body that enables key stakeholders, communities, and providers to engage in active and ongoing dialogue with the Office of AIDS (OA) to reach the goals of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy and the statewide Integrated Plan. The main functions of this group are to work collaboratively with OA to develop a comprehensive HIV/AIDS surveillance, prevention, care, and treatment plan; to monitor the implementation of this plan, and to provide timely advice on emergent issues identified by OA and/or other key stakeholder parties. CPG is committed to working openly in a group to make decisions and is guided by the principles of equity, fairness, and respectful engagement

This California Department Public Health-Office of AIDS (OA) California Planning Group (CPG) held their annual Fall meeting "HIV, STD, Hepatitis C & Harm Reduction Adapting to a Changing Landscape - Advocacy in Community Engagement, Organization, and Mobilization" in Sacramento November 13-15, 2023.

Topics covered were capacity building, racism, embracing leadership for people of color, harm reduction: community engagement, reducing stigma, and mobilizing resources. Leaders from the CDC were also present to monitor and participate in the meeting.

EBAC Director, Community Health participated in the Research All Staff meeting facilitated by Leon Clark Sutter Health VP, Chief Academic Affairs Officer. This meeting took place on **Nov. 16, 2023, from 8:30 to 10 a.m.** Mr. Sillemmon was joined by Gail Lerch, senior vice president, and interim chief human resources officer, who shared an overview of Sutter's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic plan. Tony did a 'Spotlight on Research' that featured the East Bay Advanced Care (EBAC) which has a long history of conducting HIV/AIDS research and serves a diverse patient population. Tony gave an overview of EBAC's history and services. Tony also shared the successful research project **Eradicating Racism and Striving for Excellence in HIV Care (ERASE)**. Two patients shared their journey and care received at EBAC.



The Latest News from Research Team

Our research all staff meeting took place on Thursday Nov. 16 from 8:30 to 10 a.m.

We were joined by Gail Lerch, senior vice president and chief human resources officer, who shared an overview of Sutter’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strategic plan.

Our ‘Spotlight on Research’ featured East Bay Advanced Care (EBAC)--which has a long history of conducting HIV/AIDS research and serves a diverse patient population.

We heard from Tony Sillemmon, EBAC’s Director of Community Health, and two patients who each shared their personal journey and care received at EBAC.



Gina Tyra, RN

Reports from Nursing

EBAC nursing and clinic department are currently in the process of hiring a full-time RN and a per diem RN to enhance our clinic's efficiency. Interviews are underway, and we aim to complete the hiring process by the end of the year.

EBAC clinic value patients’ feedback and encourage you to share your thoughts on the clinic's performance or any suggestions through the EBAC/Feedback forms at the front desk. Your input is invaluable in helping us maintain and improve our service.

Thank you all for your dedication and commitment to providing excellent patient care.



Congratulations to Deanna

We are excited to announce our very own Deanna was invited to attend the first-ever **Power of ONE Sutter Employee Experience Event** in Sacramento on **Friday, Jan. 12**. Hosted by Sutter Health President & CEO Warner Thomas and the Executive Leadership Team, this is the first of several engaging and energizing employee events that we plan to host across Sutter Health over the next few years.

Deanna was chosen through a random selection process. At this half-day event, Sutter Health is bringing together 3,000 teammates from all corners of Sutter to inspire, inform and engage them in our culture and strategy—and celebrate their unique Power of ONE.

If you haven’t heard, the Power of ONE is all about how **one person can make a big difference in people’s lives by bringing their best to work each day**. When our people keep doing that across Sutter, they help our organization grow, change and become the best place to work and receive care. And that’s worth celebrating!

The Scoop from Prevention Team

Jesse Mora & Juriz Macorol



After only two months of testing at Que Rico nightclub, a predominately Latinx MSM hotspot, we received our first preliminary HIV-positive test result. The prevention team and EBAC staff moved quickly and smoothly to allocate resources, prioritize mental health support, and connect the client to treatment to get undetectable and, as a result, untransmutable. Our efforts may seem mundane, but to our newest non-English speaking patient, it fostered a new and unprecedented relationship with EBAC. This person's trust in us is a reminder of how important and consistent our work at EBAC is. Building community trust is part of how we do outreach and moving forward we will continue to diversify our testing spots for better outcomes.



First Fridays and University testing sites will be discontinued until Spring.
As a reminder, we gladly accept walk-ins at EBAC during regular clinic hours utilizing the Alere HIV test.

Rapid HIV testing for the month of December 2023:

- ♥ Eden Community Church: December 2
- ♥ Steamworks: December 3, 9, and 17
- ♥ Que Rico: December 8 and 15

If you can't make it to an event, call or text our Prevention team during clinic hours at (510) 501-3724. We look forward to connecting with you!



New EBAC Logo

During the month of November, we had a competition to revamp our EBAC Logo. One thing we learned when having this competition is EBAC has a lot of creative and talented digital creator employees. With all this talent it was hard picking a winner, but after a lot of consideration we would like to introduce our new East Bay Advanced Care Logo!

Congratulations to our Wellness Coordinator Kavon for an amazing job on our new clinic logo!



Research Conference

On November 16th our very own director of community health Tony Sillemmon shared his personal journey and years of experience here at EBAC. Tony joined Gail Lerch, senior vice president and interim chief of human resources officer, who shared an overview of Sutter's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic plan.

The 'Spotlight on Research' featured the East Bay AIDS Center (EBAC) which has a long history of conducting HIV/AIDS research and serves a diverse patient population.



Tony Sillemmon & Tosan Boyo President of East Bay Market
Welcome Mr Boyo to our Sutter Family!

Jeff Burack, MD and Michele Tang, MD

Letter from Our Medical Directors

Dear EBAC Community,

Each year, on the 1st day of December, the world commemorates World AIDS Day. 2023 marks the 35th year of World AIDS Day, which was founded in 1988. It was created as a day of solidarity to mark our continued support of and advocacy for those affected by HIV/AIDS. It is a time to unite, share our stories, remember those who were lost, celebrate our successes, and continue the fight towards eradicating HIV/AIDS. In the years since the start of the HIV epidemic, there have been marvelous advances in HIV prevention, care, and treatment, and yet there is still so much work to be done. We still have critical work to do in banishing stigma, fighting the deep-rooted social and health disparities which can lead to preventable cases of illness and death, and educating everyone about this disease.

Each year, UNAIDS chooses a theme for World AIDS Day. This year's theme is "Let Communities Lead". Our communities are at the front lines of the fight against HIV/AIDS, and we at EBAC are proud to have dedicated over 30 years to treating those living with, or at-risk-for HIV. We are so grateful to all of you for allowing us to be part of your community.

The Latest Social Service Team News

After Hours Support



EBAC's services now go beyond our normal 9-5 hours. Outside of offering groups after hours, we also have a prevention service phone that is operated by our outreach worker: Kavon Jones.

Kavon brings extensive expertise and experience in the field of HIV prevention and education, with a strong focus on prevention. With a commitment to serving the community, Kavon is transitioning to an afterhours work schedule, where he will not only facilitate testing events but also provide critical prevention services. His work will center on public outreach and education, particularly in the context of PrEP and PEP services.

Over the course of a decade, Kavon has accumulated a wealth of knowledge and practical experience in HIV prevention. His dedication extends beyond traditional settings, as he actively engages in outreach at nightclubs, bathhouses, and various venues to disseminate crucial information. Kavon's passion lies in spreading awareness and ensuring that individuals, particularly people of color, to access to the information and services they need.

Kavon is a valuable asset to our team, contributing significant expertise in HIV prevention and playing a vital role in our mission to serve the community

For inquiries, intake processes, or further information on PrEP and PEP services, please do not hesitate to contact Kavon at 510-333-8122. He is readily available to assist and provide insights into these critical services Monday through Saturday from 5 pm - 10 pm.

International Day of Persons w/Disabilities

Disabilities come in many forms, including mental health & Physical disabilities takes place on December 3rd every year and is an event dedicated to disability inclusion. The event aims to allow the disabled community to spread their voice and showcase the many diverse identities within the community.

Donation Bins



EBAC now has pantry donation bins at Sutter Health's Summit, Herrick, and Ashby campuses. If you have any non-perishable foods or toiletries and are visiting any of these Sutter Health campuses, please drop them off! All bins are in the front entry lobby!

Our EBAC team wants to thank Sutter Health for helping us advocate for our clients in need!

Resources

Open Enrollment (Last Chance)

Renew your insurance today!

It's not too late to make your appointment with Finau to complete your 2024 Enrollment

Leslie Watson, MSW

EBAC Pantry

Our EBAC social work team is organizing a food pantry donation drive to help support our patients that face food insecurity. Please donate any non-perishable donations to our EBAC office or our other three Sutter campuses. Please give all items to Leslie.



Ryan Orihood, ACSW

Downtown Youth Clinic (DYC)

Self-Care During the Holiday Time

The holidays can be a difficult time—especially for queer, trans, and gender non-conforming young people. For many of us, the holidays can be lonely or force us to be around non-affirming relatives. Making a self-care plan ahead of the holidays can lessen stress, anxiety, and worry.

When making a self-care plan for the holidays, consider these questions:

- ♥ **Comfort** *What are things I like to do that comfort me or make me happy? What things can I do to help me rest and recharge?*
- ♥ **Supports** *Who in my life can I call or text when I need to talk? Do I have any allies in my family who can help with non-affirming relatives?*
- ♥ **Positive thinking** *When I'm feeling down, what can I tell myself so that I feel better?*
- ♥ **Community** *What events are happening near me when I want to be around like-minded people? What resources are available that I can lean on for support?*

The Downtown Youth Clinic is here to support you. You are not alone this holiday season, and you are not the only one who feels lonely. If you would like to make an appointment to speak with a mental health provider, please call Ryan at (510) 655-4000 ext. 5092.

If you are in crisis, please text The Trevor Project Hotline at 678-678, or call 1-866-488-7386

GET HELP 24/7:

