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Cascade AIDS Project



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALL TO ACTION FOR IMPROVING THE SEXUAL HEALTH OF MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN

PORTLAND, OR – On January 13, 2011 at 7pm, PIVOT (209 SW 4th) will host the unveiling of a CALL TO ACTION: *Improving the sexual health of gay, bisexual, transgender, genderqueer, and other men who have sex with men.* This unveiling is a special community presentation of 10 priority recommendations and a **CALL TO ACTION** by members of the Sexual Health 4 Men Coalition (SH4MC) with time for questions and answers. The **CALL TO ACTION**, available at www.man2manpdx.us, includes recommendations such as universal access to affordable and culturally competent services for LGBTQ communities. Health Care Providers, Insurers, legislators and men who are concerned about their sexual health are encouraged to attend.

In Oregon and across the nation sexual health disparities such as disproportionate rates of HIV,³ gonorrhea,⁴ and syphilis⁵ persist in communities of color and among men who have sex with men. HIV and STD rates correlate to broader inequalities in these same communities such as poverty, homelessness, incarceration, unemployment, violence, racism, and homophobia. Government and Community providers must recognize these linkages when creating laws, programs policies and procedures that affect access to care and services for this population.

Lillian Shirley, Multnomah County Health Department Director said, " Access to comprehensive sexuality education and quality health care is key to reducing STD rates. All people and organizations that work to address these issues improve the quality of the work when it is comprehensive, holistic and are coordinated with civil rights, social justice, and broader health movements."

The CALL TO ACTION provides practical ideas one (individual or organization) can take to promote the sexual health and well-being of men. These ideas include having a consumer voice on organizational or advisory boards, supporting local elected officials in efforts to ensure compliance with Senate Bills 2509 and 2599, and offering same sex or domestic partnership benefits.

This CALL TO ACTION was developed and vetted by ten local health and wellness organizations and with men from the community as convened by SH4MC. Individuals representing themselves and organizations involved in the CALL TO ACTION will be available for interviews, both print and video.

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About The SM4HC

The Sexual Health 4 Men Coalition (SH4MC) is a network of people who promote the sexual health of gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men in the Portland Metro Area. We do this by: a) applying effective public health practices; b) increasing STD awareness and prevention; c) strengthening

partnerships in public and private health communities to address prevention and treatment) promoting culturally competent messaging and interventions; and e) focusing on those at greatest risk.

For information or to get involved, email man2manpdx@co.multnomah.or.us

About Cascade AIDS Project

Founded in 1983 and incorporated in 1985, Cascade AIDS Project (CAP) is the oldest and largest AIDS Service Organization in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Our mission is to prevent HIV infections, support and empower people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, and eliminate HIV/AIDS related stigma.

With a staff of 50, and a volunteer corps that includes over 700 individuals providing 20,000 hours of service each year, CAP manages a diverse array of programs and an annual budget of \$4.6 million. Fifteen percent of CAP's staff are individuals living with HIV, 25% identify from communities of color, and 30% are bilingual. Our programs serve the broad and diverse set of communities impacted by HIV from community-specific programs focused on teens, Latinos, the gay community, individuals and families living with HIV, to the thousands of individuals throughout the state who seek education through our AIDS/STD hotline each year.

A committed 18-member volunteer Board of Directors provides strategic guidance and oversight to ensure CAP accomplishes its mission and continues to operate with integrity and transparency. www.cascadeaids.org.

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