The Survey Says ...

APSV Scores High, But Work Remains

A local quality assurance survey and state needs assessment of HIV care and prevention services find the AIDS Project of Southern Vermont scoring top grades for client satisfaction.

But that doesn’t mean our work is done.

A recent study of Vermonters living with HIV reports the state is doing a very good job at providing needed services, with APSV offices in Brattleboro and Bennington receiving the highest marks of all with more than 90 percent of respondents expressing appreciation in the areas of caring, knowledge and competence.

The results are echoed in a recent APSV survey in which nearly 40 of the agency’s 80 clients offered their opinions anonymously.

Commented one: “Throughout my difficult challenges and ups and downs, you’ve always treated me with the utmost kindness and acceptance, and you have always gone above and beyond to help.”

And another: “Could not have survived physically, mentally and economically without APSV. Sometimes worry what would happen without your help.”

And another: “I have been from state to state and have never received service even equal to here.”

Indeed, 80 percent of statewide-survey participants report Vermont’s community-based services are more plentiful and preferred to those they’ve experienced elsewhere.

The AIDS Project of Southern Vermont scored the highest client satisfaction rate in the state, with more than 90 percent of those surveyed expressing appreciation with the agency, its staff and services in the areas of caring, knowledge and competence.

Even so, challenges remain. About 85 percent of respondents complain about societal stigma. Many pinpoint rural isolation as a primary contributor, leading to perceived lower levels of knowledge and understanding and higher amounts of fear and misinformation.

Then again, the good word is getting out. The Keene Sentinel in neighboring New Hampshire recently spotlighted APSV’s syringe services program in a story featuring the headline “A successful exchange.”

“When you have a program where people can come in and talk to someone,” the paper quoted prevention manager Sue Conley, “they’re more likely to get into treatment and get their health taken care of.”

APSV is helping with not only HIV but also hepatitis C, addiction and other medical concerns. That’s why, even with high scores, the agency still requires community support to ensure our work continues.
Thank you, Julie.

The AIDS Project thanks Julie van der Horst Jansen for six years of board service. We will miss Julie and her leadership as Treasurer and Development Committee Chair.

A note from Julie:
It has been a great honor to serve on the board of the AIDS Project of Southern Vermont over the last 6 years. I have enjoyed the camaraderie of both other board members but also the staff and leadership of the organization. I’m always struck with awe at the commitment and passion of everyone involved. Even though I’m transitioning from the board, I hope to be involved as a volunteer for mailings or assisting with events. So, I have no intention of completely withdrawing from APSV!! I wish everyone the best going forward and thank you so much for the opportunity to serve such a worthwhile organization!

Welcome to New Board Members

The AIDS Project of Southern Vermont is pleased to announce two new Board members:

Charles Lappen: I moved to western Massachusetts in September 2008 and quickly became involved with the Men’s Program and APSV. Community building is important to me so that when the Men’s Program ended, I became one of the organizers for the Tri-State Gay Men Socials. I felt honored when invited to join the APSV Board as Treasurer. I am self-employed, providing administrative support and bookkeeping to small businesses. A small handful of my clients are non-profits so I have a good understanding of how a non-profit is managed. I look forward to working to help APSV become even better with helping those in the HIV community.

Shawn Bracebridge: I moved at the beginning of 2017 to Dummerston to serve as the Pastor and Teacher of the Dummerston Congregational Church (UCC) with my partner John and my 7 year old son, Cameron. I moved from the Albany, NY area and was previously serving a church in the Berkshires of Massachusetts. I am excited about the opportunity to re-engage with HIV and AIDS services, education and advocacy, having previously served on the HIV/AIDS Task Force and the Executive Board for Healthy Malden (MA). My involvement with APSV is an invited, welcome extension of my ministry on behalf of the church where all are affirmed and welcome, no matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey!

Are you excited by the work of APSV? If so, please consider joining our board. For more information, please call 802-254-8263.
Looking for Volunteers

by Diane Parton, Volunteer Coordinator

APSV volunteers get the work flowing and spirits high! We are looking to add a few more helpers to the roster.

Baking!
Cookies for the annual APSV Holiday Cookie Drop, and cupcakes for Cupcakes and Condoms Gallery Walk events.

Mailing!
Several times a year volunteers pitch in to address, stuff, stamp and seal envelopes for mailings.

Event Prep!
We appreciate help preparing materials, and manning tables at events throughout the year.

If you are interested in donating your time, join the fun, we’d love to have you!
Contact Diane at apsvadm@sover.net or give us a call at (802) 254-4444.

At the AIDS Project we count among our supporters a pool of wonderful volunteers that offer their time and camaraderie to facilitate our work. Volunteers pitch in individually or in lively group gatherings to help out when hands are most needed. There is no need for on-going commitment, most of our volunteer work is event based, so emails go out to the group as needed.

The Prevention Program Offers:

- HIV and Hepatitis C testing
- Safer sex supplies
- Syringe services
- Health and addiction treatment referrals
- CLEAR: one-on-one health promotion interventions for people at high risk of HIV infection
- Educational presentations to groups and agencies in Windham and Bennington counties

All services of the AIDS Project are free and confidential. We are dedicated to improving the quality of life for people living with HIV and reducing the number of new infections in southern Vermont.

For more information: Call Sue Conley at 254-4444 x113 or email prevent@sover.net

Photo credits: APSV archives
AIDS Project of Southern Vermont

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

UNCOMING EVENTS

December 1 | World AIDS Day Remembrance Ceremony
Noon | River Garden, 157 Main Street, Brattleboro

December 9 | Holiday Drag Show with the Ladies of the Rainbow
A benefit for APSV | VFW, 40 Black Mountain Road, Brattleboro

AIDS Project of Southern Vermont

aidsprojectsouthernvermont.org