

## Abstract

Since 2002, Project HANDLE has been providing HIV/AIDS counseling, substance abuse prevention, and treatment for underage drinking and drug use. Through our collaboration with existing neighborhood organizations, we focus on these public health issues that are particularly prevalent in immigrant and low-income communities.

Neighborhood House proposes to expand Project HANDLE (**HIV/AIDS Network Development and Life-skills Experience**) to reduce HIV among high-risk African Americans (U.S. and foreign born - primarily Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Oromo) of all genders and sexual orientations, 18 years and older with unknown HIV status communities in Seattle/King County. Our activities include HIV prevention education using VOICES/VOCES and implementing RESPECT into our HIV counseling, testing and referral program.

African Americans make up 4% of Washington's general population but account for 16% of the state's population living with HIV. African Americans in King County are 4.5 times more likely to be infected with HIV than whites, and are the most disproportionately impacted racial group. NH prioritizes high risk populations with the following risk factors: males/ females who had vaginal, anal, or oral sex with an IDU; males/females who had vaginal, anal, or oral sex with unknown HIV status without a condom; females who had vaginal, anal, or oral sex with Men who have Sex with Men (MSM); males/females who had vaginal, anal, or oral sex with person is HIV positive. High risk populations identified for this program include re-entry, homeless, substance abusers, sex workers, johns, MSM, and women whose partners are high-risk men.

The goals of this proposed grant are to: 1) 1,296 U.S. and foreign born African Americans in Seattle and King County complete the VOICES/VOCES intervention in the 5 year grant period and 2) to perform 1,575 rapid HIV tests (using RESPECT) on high risk African Americans (U.S. and foreign born) that do not know their HIV status or have not tested in the past 6 months.

The evaluation process measures participants' increased knowledge, attitude and behaviors regarding HIV using CDC's Performance Evaluation Measuring System and other CDC's required tools, and other best practice (qualitative and quantitative) instrument sensitive to the cultural and linguistic needs for the targeted populations. Many individuals from the targeted communities will be involved in every aspects of HANDLE including bi-cultural and bi-lingual Project Director, Medical Director, Community Outreach Associates, Community Advisory Coalition Members and other stakeholders. These diverse groups are responsible in disseminating HANDLE data in accordance to the CDC guideline, reports and sustaining the comprehensive HIV program long after CDC grant.