MCH EPI Conference

EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS AND TOOLS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROMOTION: WORKING TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF PRAMS AND IMPROVE PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

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ROBERT BAILEY: Good morning. Good morning. They did serve breakfast, right? Thanks for allowing me to come and present to you this morning.

I come from the Division of HIV/AIDS prevention. And I guess at first glance the question would be why would someone from HIV/AIDS be here at the PRAMS meeting. But it was because, again, the renewed focus on developing partnerships and collaborations, because, again, just as Demetrius, Angie, Mandy and Barbara have all said, that we're all having to do more with less. So it's going to be incumbent upon all of us to leverage existing resources to maximize the benefits of all of our programs.

Hopefully with the presentation I deliver this morning you'll be able to see some connections between what are the possibilities from some of the things we've done in HIV

and how those can be translated to PRAMS; and if it isn't obvious, hopefully I'll be able to tie some of those connections together to make it a little bit more obvious.

So on today's talk, I'm going to talk just a little bit about the value of public/private partnerships, the possibilities of those partnerships and then leave you with a few things to consider as you think about the possibilities of partnerships.

So why are partnerships important? Because Dr. Gerberdine says so. The whole is greater than its parts. Partnerships and specifically diversity in partnerships is one of the most effective methods of reaching a goal and making a difference.

Again, she raised this because of today's health issues, they're all too complex for one organization, one agency to do it alone. Again, organizations are all being asked to do more with less.

We've all been faced with either reductions in the budget or level funding. And I know that in some circles, as I spoke with my PRAMS colleagues prior to this meeting, there's -- I guess there's a misperception that HIV has all the money.

And I guess over at HIV we say that Bioterrorism has all the money. But by working with influential partners and stakeholders, CDC is able to extend its HIV/AIDS prevention messages and approaches to wide audiences, as well as partnerships can serve as vehicles for increasing community and organizational support for whatever your issue may be. In the case of what I do on a daily basis HIV/AIDS, what you do on a daily basis, PRAMS.

So with our partnerships -- and, again, I won't go into great depth about all the things that we do and all the goals and all the objectives, but just a few of these things are, one to expand the number of diverse partners that represent all sectors of society that may be able to influence HIV prevention norms, behaviors and attitudes of high risk and highly impacted groups and populations or other stakeholders. Similar to what Demetrius and Angie were talking about earlier, in that I think they suggested having a speakers bureau where other people can take your messages forward, again to help influence those norms.

The other thing is to develop strategic and effective relationships with some of these key partners in diverse constituencies to promote HIV prevention goals and finally to increase

the ability of our partners to mobilize their own sectors, organizations and their communities in support of our prevention goals.

Now, in the division of HIV/AIDS prevention or in the prevention communications branch, where this partnership, partnership activities are held, we actually have three major partnerships. The first being NHAP, or the National HIV/AIDS Partnership, which is our umbrella partnership. That's independent of sector. It includes all sectors, arts and entertainment, business, labor, civic, social, education, faith, health, media, as well as all races and ethnicities and both genders.

Then we have another example of the business response to AIDS, labor response to AIDS program, an example of one of our sector-specific partnership activities, and then the heightened natural response to HIV/AIDS crisis among African-Americans, which is an example of one of our ethnic focused partnership activities. So I'll talk real briefly about the three of these.

Again, the National HIV/AIDS Partnership is our umbrella partnership activity. And with this we try to apply marketing efforts or, as I like to say, we like to take private sector marketing strategies and apply it to public health. So those same types of strategies that

are used to make someone buy a microwave or a TV or a car, those are the same types of things that you need to do to make people to stand up, for people to stand up and take notice of your program to see the need.

Because everyone doesn't necessarily see the need. It seems to me that the health of pregnant mothers and -- well, the health of pregnant women and infants, it seems like a no-brainer, duh. Everybody should care about that, right? No one will see the connection unless you make it crystal clear for them.

The other thing we do is we provide these leaders with tailored communications to increase HIV/AIDS awareness and dialogue. I heard someone mention earlier about the fact that you wanted data to be presented factually or accurately. And that's one of the things you can do. Once you start bringing other people to the table, be it for radio or for TV, or it could be a civic organization's meetings, you want to make sure that they're delivering the messages that you want to have delivered.

So, again, we're not reinforcing things that may lead to sigma or misperceptions about the issue.

And the other thing is you want to increase the ability of those partners to develop and implement activities across sectors and within the organizations and communities.

So, again, with less resources, it becomes incumbent upon us to prepare our partners so they can take these messages on themselves. And, again, the more your partners are able to carry the message forward and they're able to promote the program, the less you have to devote to your budget to doing that. I'll provide some examples of that a little bit later on.

NHAP currently has about 120 partners from all sectors of society. A few of these are listed here. Just to give you an example of some of the things they've done. Robert Hanson, who is the president of Levis brand jeans here in the U.S., he recorded a television and Internet PSA to share facts about the impacts about HIV/AIDS. He donated his time for free.

Tom Joiner, or also known as the fly jock, participated in the urban radio search, to promote National HIV/AIDS Testing Days, one of the four awareness days we have throughout the year. He interviewed our centers director on his show in support of his initiative which is called Take a Loved One to the Doctor Day.

And to show you how partnerships can grow, initially we worked with him on Taking Loved Ones to the Doctor Day, I want to say September of 2007. It was the first time he had incorporated HIV/AIDS into Taking a Loved One to the Doctor Day, that addresses all sorts of issues, be it diabetes, be it hypertension, stroke or other things. And because of the success of that partnership, and because he was able to see the value of including HIV in that particular day, or in those five markets that we focused on in September, next year we're going to be incorporating HIV into all 118 of his markets throughout all of the various radio stations.

Another example is Dr. Greg Stone. In terms of getting the message out, one thing is developing the message, but the other thing is finding what are those partner channels. So they can extend the reach of your own communications. Dr. Stone issued an e-mail to all 180,000 employees of Ford Motor Company promoting HIV/AIDS Testing Day. The amount of money it would have cost for us to disseminate those messages were obviously offset by Dr. Stone and Ford's ability to come across and help us out.

The other is an example is [Inaudible], an artist who developed a poster to help promote HIV/AIDS awareness prevention among Latino Americans. It's about meeting partners

where they are, maximizing their strengths and using and leveraging their influence to disseminate the messages.

Again, one of the other examples that I mentioned before was the business response to AIDS, labor response to AIDS program or BRTALRTA as it's affectionately known at the office. The BRTALRTA program is a public/private partnership that promotes the involvement of the private sector in HIV prevention. We also provide tools and technical assistance to the health departments to build their capacity to engage the private sector.

So we have a few priority activities for the BRTALRTA program. One is to develop marketing and resource materials, to provide technical assistance to health departments. And what you see highlighted here is one of our local projects that I'm going to highlight for you a little bit later on where we're engaging neighborhood business and labor organizations to disseminate HIV prevention information to their employees, customers and members.

And, again, in those same communities engaging the local leadership as well to help, again, create an environment that's conducive to the dissemination of these messages.

So just to provide you just an example of the BRTALRTA materials we provide, there's a manager's kit and other things, brochures that deal with stigma, dealing with a coworker that has HIV. And these things can be co-branded with the private sector, again to help increase the number of people who going to be exposed to the messages, the number of people who are going to receive the resources. And we have, again, as I mentioned earlier, one of our ethnic-focused activities, the CDC heightened natural response to the HIV/AIDS crisis among African-Americans. HIV among African-Americans is actually the number one priority for our particular center and for the division.

And so in March of 2007 about 80 leaders came to CDC to meet with Dr. Gerberdine to talk about the impact that HIV had among African-Americans, to talk about what are CDC's priority activities to respond to go HIV/AIDS, some of those strategies. Provided some examples of what some leaders had done using their own spheres of influence to help increase awareness, communication and testing, and then asking those same leaders to make commitments to the HIV/AIDS crisis among African-Americans. One of the things I'd like to note here is one of the things we found is that leaders like to hang out with other leaders.

So if you're able to develop a small cadre of people who can be trusted messengers, they can draw the other partners for you. So, again, you don't necessarily have to go out and make 100 connections. If you can make five connections, those connections can then grow.

As evidenced by actually we are in the second year of this initiative. And so now we have about 200 leaders who have made about 315 commitments. Again, using their own resources to help expand our HIV/AIDS efforts.

And so those core messages, again, that we asked for them all to take forward is to increase awareness, communication and testing, to act, to break the silence and make people aware of the epidemic. One of the things I'm always asked about with some of our efforts is why is it that I never see what it is that you're doing? And I'm sure that some of you may get those same type of questions. You work with PRAMS. If it's such a huge issue, why don't you ever hear anything about it?

Well, that's one of the reasons why you need leaders and other strategies, again, to help normalize the presence of PRAMS to increase the awareness about the brand, as you

had mentioned, and also you want to be creative in terms of how you deliver those communication messages.

One of the mantras for our office is that we want to reach people wherever they live, work, play, worship and learn, because that's the only way you're able to saturate the environment and to reinforce those messages.

So as you were talking before, I think they mentioned Mother's Day as an opportunity to help get the message out to about PRAMS. If you could envision, say, Mother's Day of 2009, were you prepared and, say, Christian faith leaders for the churches that had inserts in PRAMS in the bulletin that day. If you had at the local, one of the corporations, again that if they had special seminars or other little video vignettes that could be played during that day, or the civic social organizations that, again, they all came together and had special events that were held on that particular day.

Actually, when you're talking about, I was thinking about some of those organizations that may have built in incentives to partner with you. Like the toy companies, or those -- as the women start to collect all of the goods or the booty from the baby showers and other things, those businesses that are -- those businesses that get the revenue from those

baby showers all have an incentive in PRAMS. So it's about helping them to see the incentive, because not everybody is going to care, emotionally.

So for those that don't care emotionally, then you need to have a business case. Why does it make good business sense. And what's the impact on the bottom line if we're not protecting the lives of those pregnant women and of those newborn infants. The other thing we ask for them to also promote is testing.

So we can't rely on these different leaders to know intuitively what it is they can do. After telling them what the problem is, they're going to want to know what is it you want from them? One of the strategies we use is we provide little one-pagers that provides them with examples of what they can do to increase awareness, what you can do to increase communication, what you can do to increase testing. That's a normal part of your day-to-day business. So you don't necessarily need them to turn into PRAMS experts. All you're saying that you want them to make this as normal a part of what they do to incorporate PRAMS into those conversations.

Another example is what we do to help some of the leaders, we help to draft a letter for one of the presidents of a historically black college university. In this case Jackson State,

that he used to send out to all the other college presidents to make them aware of HIV/AIDS and to encourage them to also make commitments to get involved.

We've also provided templates for health departments and other local officials so they can replicate the same two meetings we had in Atlanta where we brought all those different leaders together that they could recreate the same thing on a local basis, because not everyone locally can see how they connect to a national figure. But they can connect to those people they see on an everyday basis.

Here's another example of the templates we provided to them in terms of all the planning. Also just to show off some of the special effects.

Here's an example of a press release of one of the communities, Baltimore, Maryland, that actually decided to take on this initiative locally and launch their own Act Against Aids campaign in Baltimore, where they recreated those same types of things. They brought all these leaders together, told them about the impact HIV was having on African-Americans in Baltimore, and asked them to make a commitment to doing that.

These same types of strategies can be used for PRAMS in terms of making those key influencers aware of what the problem is, what it is that they can do and then mobilizing them to take action, again, so then you're not the only ones who care about your programming, you're not the only ones who are promoting your programming.

The other thing we do is we also provide these local leaders with information that describes the impact locally. So, again, as I told you earlier, by making that business case, it's one thing to have an overall business case, you should care about the kids, you should care about the women because they're our future and everything else.

Well, this is the impact it can have on your bottom line if you don't take action now. Special effects are a little bit slower. I'm trying to get through. And also want to provide just kind of like a case study of what happened with one of those leaders who came to March 2007 meeting.

Big Tigger, as he's affectionately known, is a BT host and radio personality. He came to the meeting. He pledged he wanted to use his influence to help raise awareness about HIV. So in June of 2007 he vamped up his efforts to incorporate HIV into a celebrity weekend that he typically had, where he convened a series of his friends who were other

leaders in the entertainment and business community to make them aware about the impact that HIV was having and, again, to engage them in the process. So we worked with him incorporating that into his event. But then he took that on from there, after building his capacity, giving him the messages, we see that later on that year, September 30th, 2007, he promoted a Ride for Life where he's an avid motorcycle enthusiast, he wanted to see how he could use that platform to help raise awareness about this particular issue.

We see here it's not just about mobilizing our partners to act, but it's mobilizing everyone to act, where about 5,000 motorcyclists showed up that day because of his influence, this was in the DC area, all riding for the cause.

So the parallels and the opportunities for PRAMS are just the same. There's no reason why these same types of things couldn't be done on behalf of PRAMS.

And so I'll finally leave you with this local case study, because I think it probably provides examples of some real tangible ways in that leaders ponied up some money. They're always like show me the money. That's why we want to partner. Show us the money.

We wanted to pilot a local strategy to see whether or not local business merchants, those like the mom-and-pop stores, if they would be willing to partner with the health department and as well as other local leaders to help increase HIV/AIDS awareness locally.

So the goals of this were to, again, increase the community's awareness about impacts of HIV, to motivate the residents in that areas to get motivated, get tested and seek prevention, and increase the number of people who knew HIV status and were linked to appropriate care.

Some of the strategies, three primary strategies, communications and other marketing and technical assistance. The communication strategies were designed to help pique the merchants' interest about the impact that HIV could have on their particular business. And then we created a different marketing strategies and materials to make the merchants aware of how they could get involved in helping to stop the spread of HIV in their community. And, finally, we provided technical assistance to the merchants and health departments so they could tailor the tools so they could educate their employees, customers and peers about HIV.

What role did the health departments play? For the health departments, we asked them to leverage what were their strengths. One had to do with local planning. With that, coordinate the development of the plan, to oversee its implementation, to provide HIV 101. It wasn't necessarily anything that was out of the ordinary for what it is that they normally did.

The merchants, we asked for them to disseminate HIV point of purchase materials to their customers, talk about HIV with their employees, customers and peers. Encourage other neighborhood businesses to join them in protecting their community. Because what we found is that with a lot of local merchants, actually with most leaders, these local merchants, in particular, they view themselves as leaders and view themselves as kind of like the gatekeepers to the community.

So, again, it seems like the possibilities here are endless also for PRAMS. Particularly with Mandy, the study she talked about, where the population was primarily African-American or one of the indicators for what the postpartum issues for African-American women with low economic social status and other sorts of issues. Finding those communities where people live and then saturating those environments with the information is what's needed to promote people to action.

So we wanted to take away the excuse that people don't know. But we want to let them know that they -- let them know what they should know, so they know what they should know and then incentivise it so they take some type of action. Take me, for instance, I was on my sick bed earlier today but I decided to come because I remembered there was supposed to be lunch.

(Laughter)

So with these local communities, we provide these materials such as your traditional posters, postcards and other issues, again, to help raise awareness about the impact. And all of these materials in the business are designed to help promote some type of dialogue between the merchant and their customer.

And we also provide those point of purchase materials. So, again, these are materials that businesses will use in their everyday business.

So, again, in this case we're talking about HIV. But what about like BabiesRUs or those other places that can have the PRAMS material on the shopping bags as they leave it as a way to standardize, a way to normalize the conversations about PRAMS, to reduce the

stigma associated with it. Put it on dry cleaning bags and beverage sleeve holders, anything in that particular business that's where we put those HIV/AIDS messages on. The more you're able to saturate the environment, the more it's going to normalize the conversations about it, the more it's going to increase those who are aware about the problem.

So currently we have these projects currently in Detroit, Chicago, Miami, Oakland. We're going to be launching in Baltimore actually within a couple of weeks and looking to expand to other cities. But I raise this as an example because in Detroit, in Miami, some of the other studies, all those materials you saw were all paid for by local leaders.

So if you go to the printer and the printer is able to put the name of their business on the materials, then they're willing to produce it.

In Miami, for example, those merchants are going to be getting those dry cleaner bags regardless. So they were able to go to that local, the local manufacturer of those dry cleaner bags. So he's now providing those at a discounted cost to them, if they get it with the HIV/AIDS message on them. Again it builds in the incentive for the leader as well as for the community, because what we also know, in terms of corporate social

responsibility, that people are more prone to buy from those organizations, from those businesses that they feel care about their welfare. That's the reason why Starbucks and the other ones have information up in the stores about going green.

Again, first of all, it makes a good business case in terms of helping them save money, but also the people get the warm fuzzies as they're drinking their coffee that Starbucks cares.

I want to leave you with a few things to consider. One is don't assume that people don't care about your program. If people see the benefit, leaders and organizations will partner with you. And so one of the things, kind of shows you what kind of a top down approach, but it certainly works bottom up, but top down in terms of leaders set the tone of organizations. If you're able to get to one or two key leaders that care and equip them with the information, they will set the tone then for organizations and start to become a culture, to change that culture in the organization to increase the foot soldiers that will take your message forward. Those organizations all can be become, can set the tone for sectors. The reason that people look to like Microsoft and the other ones, it's because people, leaders, again, want to be like other leaders.

I think they were talking with like JZ, or there's another Will Smith and some other artists, they asked who was you wanted to be, couple of them said they wanted to be Warren Buffet. So it's building in that incentive for them.

So with these leaders, the organizations and the sectors, collectively, all of us, we can change community norms. And, finally, I want to leave you with this thought: That partnerships are about relationships. Relationships then can translate into more resources. You can't necessarily go in the door expecting to get a check for the project. But if you're able to nurture that relationship, and it doesn't necessarily have to take a long period of time, people then will give you what it is that you need without you even having to ask for it in most cases.

I finally leave you with this thought: The potential for PRAMS does exist. Are you ready to partner? Thank you very much.