EXPONENTS
Improving Health. Igniting Hope.

Agency Background

Our Mission

EXPONENTS is a nonprofit organization located in the heart of New York City compassionately dedicated to serving those impacted by HIV/AIDS, substance use, incarceration and behavioral health challenges. We deliver these services through a client-centered, strength-based approach which greatly improves health outcomes and promotes overall wellness in our communities.

Our Vision

Our dream is to create an equal playing field for all and live in a world without AIDS where addiction is treated as a health issue rather than a criminal one.

To Improve Health and Ignite Hope as we continue leading in the field of health education and wellness, and offer services that truly increase individuals' self-management skills, self-esteem, and encourage better health choices.

Continue to be an organization that provides ultimate respect to its clients as we employ our strength-based approach of, "meeting people where they're at."

Our Overall Goal is to improve health and safety in our communities, lower health care cost, and reduce prison recidivism.

Our History

We began work with "ARRIVE" in 1988 a time when tens of thousands of drug addicts were becoming infected and dying from AIDS. There were tremendous fears both in the recently released parolees we were working with and the larger communities they were returning to. It was a time when there were no treatments and finding out you were HIV positive was akin to a death sentence. It was a time when many health care providers and drug programs refused to help addicts who were infected. "ARRIVE" was a pilot project of National Development and Research Institutes, funded as a demonstration project by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. It was one of the first government efforts addressing HIV/AIDS among drug addicts in the country and one of the

first programs of its kind. Located in a lower eastside church basement amongst the homeless and the hungry, the "ARRIVE" project began offering HIV and drug relapse prevention classes to injected drug users who had recently been released from prison. Seven men attended the first series of "ARRIVE" classes and five successfully completed the program. Our mission was to stop the spread of HIV and help those who were already living with it.

Our Programs

Our programs are tailored to complement one another and to provide a continuum of services that help active drug users through all the varying stages of recovery. We don't just treat the problem – we help the person get better. Each of our programs builds skills, educates, and provides life-saving information. Individuals learn user-friendly, self-empowering techniques to manage stress, promote healthy behavior, avoid relapse, and become self-advocates.

Exponents is a client-driven organization rather than program driven.

The individualized strategy responds to the changing personal needs of men and women with histories of substance abuse and incarceration regardless of their stage of addiction and recovery. Many are at risk for or have diagnoses of HIV, and Hepatitis C. Exponents has assisted individuals in stabilizing their lives through health and wellness training; access to primary and mental health care and professional development programs for employment in health care and substance abuse fields. We assist our clients in learning that their past life experiences have value and that they can draw on those experiences to direct their futures into purposeful lives.

We have helped over 20,000 individuals turn their lives around. In an average year, we provide over 30,000 services to over 2,000 people. Our inclusive environment welcomes people of every race, gender, and sexual orientation. The diversity of our participants also includes people at varying stages of recovery.

Our Agency: What Makes Us Different

- Our inclusive environment welcomes people of every race, gender, age, and sexual orientation. The diversity of our participants also includes people at varying stages of recovery.

- No client has ever been coerced or mandated to participate in ARRIVE, Exponents oldest and largest program, with over 10,839 graduates. Participation is completely voluntary. Our ARRIVE Post-Graduate Program (APGP) has 507 graduates to date.

- Our progressive approach to working with substance abusers is based on "meeting people where they're at." This is achieved by offering a continuum of free services to active addicts and those at varying stages of recovery.

- Our innovative model programs serve a larger percentage of chronically ill substance abusers than traditional programs serving drug abusers, yet we achieve a higher success rate.

- We have a unique learning- and value-based culture that uses role models who represent hope through overcoming their addictions and successfully coping with their chronic conditions.

- The Majority of Exponents' 44-person staff are graduates of our programs.

- 80% of our funding goes directly toward programs. Only 20% is used for management, administration, and fundraising.

- If an Exponents' participant learns something that keeps him or her out of the hospital, even for a day, it more than covers the cost of their entire eight-week training ($1000).

- In a field known for its low retention rate, 75% of those who started in the ARRIVE program have completed and graduated from it.

Program Highlights

Exponents successfully developed a volunteer based Adult Education Program that has assisted adults, ages 18 to 65 in pursuing their educational goal of obtaining their high school equivalency. Classroom and one-on-one tutoring are available Monday – Thursday between the hours of 10:00a and 4:00p. In addition, students excelling in math, provided peer support and tutored other students following each one teach one model.

Exponents successfully implemented Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), funded through Medicaid providing HCBS Education Support Services, Empowerment Services and Pre-Vocational Services to allow people with significant physical and cognitive limitations to live in their home or a home-like setting and remain integrated with the community.

ARRIVE program – conducted 199 intakes during the time period. Of the 154 individuals who presented for the first day of classes, 130 successfully completed the eight-week, 24-session class, resulting in an 84% retention rate. ARRIVE now boasts over 10,800 graduates since its inception in 1988. ARRIVE is also designated as the foundational training for individuals seeking to become NYS-Certified Peer Workers under the Ending the Epidemic by 2020 initiative.

Judith Loeb Chiara Recovery & Wellness Center (RWC) - provides a structured drop-in center for individuals seeking or new to the recovery process. Certified peer specialist and clinicians develop recovery plans in conjunction with participants, provide peer mentoring, substance use/recovery based groups and workshops, trauma-based interventions and drug-free socialization activities.

Capacity Building Initiative (CBI) – provides culturally-responsive substance use/HIV/Hepatitis C prevention and treatment support to young (18 – 28) gay/bisexual men and transgender women. CBI also allows Exponents to convene a stakeholder panel comprised of consumers and service providers from across boroughs and disciplines to strategize enhanced and expanded responses to the needs of these populations.

HIV /HCV Testing – Exponents provides both in-house testing at our offices in the Financial District, but also provides free, confidential HIV and Hepatitis C testing across the city via its mobile testing unit. The initiative also works closely with Navigation staff to ensure linkage to care/treatment (when needed) or additional prevention services (syringe exchange programs, pre-exposure prophylaxis {PrEP} and non-occupational Post-Exposure Prophylaxis {nPEP}, and mental health support}

1,963 HIV Test Provided / 15 individuals successfully linked to HIV-related medical care; 12 individuals previously diagnosed and out of care for >6months were reconnected to primary HIV care and treatment.

439 HCV Tests conducted / Diagnosed 8 reactive results.

Peer-Delivered Prison/Jail Reentry Services - Exponents worked closely with the NYC Department of Corrections, to coordinate volunteer services, whereby Certified Peer Recovery Advocates (CRPAs) assist incarcerated individuals in Manhattan Detention Complex and Brooklyn Detention Center and the Transgender Housing Unit @ Rikers' Island, link to Exponents services and other community based agencies that will provide support and linkage to care during their community reintegration.