Quality Improvement Story Board
Emergency Medication Assistance Program

Team Members: Amanda Buck-McCray, Lisa Hack, Rhonda Johnson, Christene, Anthony L. (participant), Paul Tisdale
Date submitted: October 15, 2012

PLAN
Getting Started
It is important for clients with HIV to have undetectable or low viral loads which can lead
improvements of their overall health. The Health Department’s HIV Care Coordinator
program has set a performance objective that 90% of our clients will report stable or
improved health as demonstrated by undetectable viral loads by June 30, 2013.
Because the Care Coordinator Program assists individuals with the acquisition of
medications, we have identified issues with the internal process that may create
barriers to timely access of medications.

AIM Statement
By September 30, reduce the number of steps, amount of paperwork, and time currently
required for requesting permission, authorizing, and paying for medical prescriptions for
clients enrolled in the HIV Care Coordinator Program.

Examine the Current Approach
Data collected included staff time in hours per month dedicated to the authorization
process prior to the pilot project implementation, the type of paperwork needed for
authorization, the number of unduplicated clients served in a year’s time, salary costs
per staff member, the number of steps involved in the authorization process and the
dollar amount spent at Kroger and CVS pharmacies in FY 2012.

Identify Potential Solutions
- Implement an open purchase order to be issued on an annual basis for major pharma-
cies served
- Institute limited check run and send payments to pharmacies on a monthly basis
- Develop a standing authorization letter for case managers’ use for recurring prescrip-
tion refills for major pharmacies served
- Design and issue Rx prescription assistance “process” cards for clients to use when
  picking up their medications from the pharmacies served

Improvement Theory
If we streamline the process for receiving medications, we predict our clients will be
better served and they will be able to achieve the goal of improved overall health.

DO
The pilot project was initiated in mid-September after contacting a few key pharmacists
in order to ascertain the feasibility of billing once a month. A new annual open purchase
order for Kroger and CVS pharmacies was submitted and approved, thus eliminating the step
for case managers of having to submit a new purchase order for every pre-authorized
prescription for each client. Case Managers began tracking expenses as a way to show
the amount drawn down from the annual purchase order amount, and Accounting began
submitting monthly checks with the first check run in early October. It is estimated that
the amount of paperwork, time, and steps will be reduced by at least 50%.

CHECK
Results of the Pilot
The most important of the improvement solutions has been the implementation of the
open purchase order. Invoices will be sent to Accounting who will hold and pay them on
a monthly basis. This solution, with the tracking system, will give us a more accurate
and timely record of expenses for this area of financial assistance and help our program in
managing our funds and planning for future budget needs.

A complete analysis of the results of the pilot project will not be known until after we
have completed one full month of the new billing and purchase order process at the end
of October. Data will need to be collected so a determination may be made as to the
effectiveness of the new process. The flow charts that follow in this section illustrate
projected savings in time, paperwork, and improved effectiveness in ensuring our clients
receive their medications in a timely manner.

Unexpected Observations/Lessons Learned
One unexpected benefit of the new strategy of issuing checks once a month is that
Kroger may be the ability to have a consolidated bill which would result in one invoice for all
prescriptions filled the month prior and remitting one payment to a lock box address.
This will further reduce the amount of time and paperwork necessitated by the old
process. Further, clients would be able to fill their prescriptions while on vacation or
away from home at any Kroger pharmacy, thus reducing a potential barrier to
immediate access of needed medications.

ACT
Future Plans
Once the pilot project is completed and analyzed, we will know the outcome of our
improvement solutions. It is anticipated we will also be able to finalize the standing
authorization letter and provide clients with an Rx Assistance card as shown below. It is
also projected that the meeting with Kroger pharmacy will further simplify the acquisition
and payment methods, as well as serve as a model to propose to the other major
pharmacy we use on a regular basis.