



THE *OPTIONS* PROJECT **Community Health Centers**

The *Options Project* will offer minority providers training in techniques they can use to help HIV-positive patients reduce HIV risk behaviors. The *Options Project* represents an important opportunity to save lives and stem the HIV epidemic. *Options* is one of the few evidence-based HIV interventions to be tested within urban communities with seropositives and demonstrated to be efficacious. Based upon powerful Motivational Interviewing techniques, the intervention was developed by Dr. Jeffrey Fisher, Dr. Deborah Cornman, and researchers at the Center for Health, Intervention, and Prevention at the University of Connecticut. To date, over 500 healthcare providers in the United States, South Africa, and Mozambique have been trained in the *Options* protocol. As yet, while there have been *ad hoc* attempts to introduce minority providers' practices into the project, there have been no systematic efforts. The goal of this current *Options* project is to assess the feasibility and acceptability of introducing the *Options* intervention into community health centers in the Northeast with the ultimate aim of a nationwide roll-out of the *Options* intervention.

Three forms of participation in the Options Project are possible: (1) participation in a provider focus group, (2) participation in a training workshop followed by implementation of the *Options* protocol, or (3) participation in both the focus group and the training/implementation components.

- **Focus groups** will be held with HIV care providers to better understand the challenges of providing care to HIV-positive patients and to tailor the *Options* intervention to best suit the needs of providers and their patients. To facilitate participation, we will conduct the focus groups via telephone or web conferencing. Focus groups are anticipated to last approximately 1½ hours. An honorarium of \$100 will be provided.
 - **Focus Group Dates:** *Dates and times will be arranged at the convenience of providers.*

- **Options training workshop** will be provided to approximately 30 HIV care providers. Involvement in the *Options* training workshop will include participation in a one-day training session. Following the training, providers will implement the intervention with their HIV-positive patients, and then complete a telephone follow-up assessment about their experiences with the intervention. Lunch (at the training) and an honorarium of \$400 will be provided for completion of the training and follow-up.
 - **Training Dates:** Saturday, August 14, 28; September 11, 18, *with additional dates in October to be arranged as needed.*
 - **Training Locations:** New York City and Boston, *with additional locations possible.*

For more information, please feel free to contact Joanne Cunningham, Ph.D., coordinator for the project at joanne.cunningham@uconn.edu or 860-486-6024.

THE *OPTIONS* PROJECT
Community Health Centers
Focus Group and Training Invitation
Response Form

I would be most happy to accept the invitation to participate in a Focus Group for the *Options* Project. Please let me know more about it: _____

Regrettably, I must decline to accept the invitation to participate in the *Options* Focus Group: _____

While I must decline the invitation to participate in the *Options* Focus Group, I would like more information about participating in the *Options* Training: _____

I would like to recommend the following as potential participant for the *Options* Focus Group and/or Training:

Name _____

Address _____

Specialty _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

My Contact Information:

Name _____

Address _____

Specialty _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Date _____

Please return this form to: Joanne Cunningham, *OPTIONS PROJECT*, Center for Health, Intervention and Prevention, 2006 Hillside Road, Unit 1248, Storrs CT, 06269-1248

Or Email to: joanne.cunningham@uconn.edu

Or Fax to: 860-486-4876 Attention Joanne Cunningham, *OPTIONS PROJECT*, UConn

Form sent out by: Community Health Care
Association of New York State