

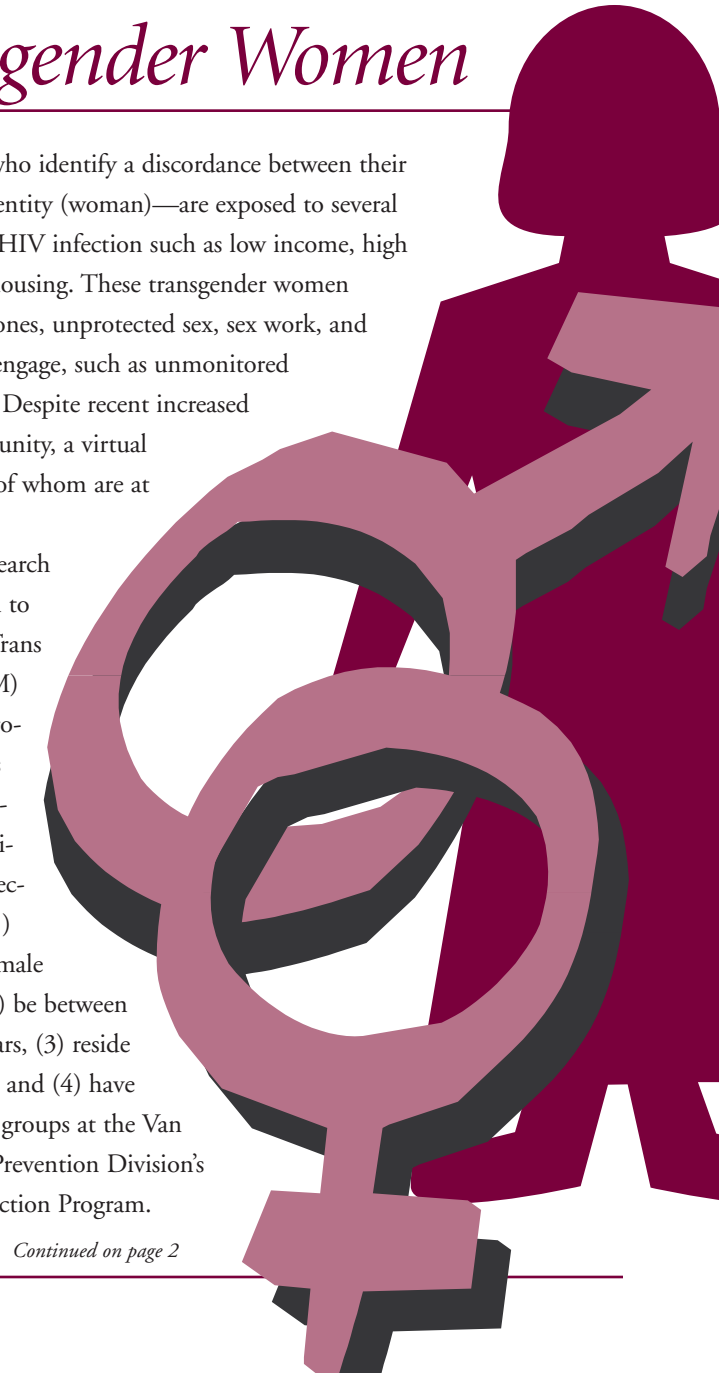
F G A T H E R I N G F R I E N D S

FRI THE NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS RESEARCH INSTITUTE

An Enhanced HIV Intervention for Male-to-Female Transgender Women

Male-to-female (MTF) transgender women—individuals who identify a discordance between their biological sex at birth (male) and their chosen gender identity (woman)—are exposed to several socio-cultural conditions that contribute to their risk of HIV infection such as low income, high unemployment, lower levels of education and unstable housing. These transgender women engage in extremely high levels of injection use of hormones, unprotected sex, sex work, and substance abuse. Many of the high-risk activities in which transgender women engage, such as unmonitored hormone use, are unique to their social circumstances and transgender identity. Despite recent increased attention from the popular media and, to a limited degree, the academic community, a virtual dearth of in-depth knowledge exists with respect to transgender women, many of whom are at significant risk for HIV infection, reinfection, and/or transmission.

To address this gap Dr. Cathy Reback, Principal Investigator for Friends Research Institute, has partnered with the Van Ness Recovery House/Prevention Division to embark on a research/community collaborative project called “e.Trans.” The e.Trans project adds a high-intensity enhanced HIV prevention case management (PCM) intervention to the existing low-intensity standard transgender risk reduction program already provided by the community partner. The e.Trans project addresses the problem of extreme and ongoing HIV high-risk behaviors among this population as well as the limited access to services for transgender women. To be eligible for e.Trans, a prospective participant must (1) identify as a male-to-female transgender woman, (2) be between the ages of 18 to 64 years, (3) reside in Los Angeles County, and (4) have completed at least four groups at the Van Ness Recovery House/Prevention Division’s Transgender Risk Reduction Program.



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The e.Trans Project staff from left to right: Cheryl Hoffman, Prevention Case Manager; Dr. Cathy Reback, FRI Principal Investigator; Kathy Watt, Community Partner; and Dr. Mely Silverio (seated), Project Director.

Once enrolled in e.Trans the participants may have up to 10 PCM sessions with a highly trained prevention case manager who works with the participants to help (a) reduce sex work by facilitating legitimate employment; (b) lower HIV injection risks by helping participants to obtain legal and monitored hormones; (c) reduce substance abuse by helping participants with the decision to enter treatment and facilitating the referral process when the decision for treatment is made; and (d) reduce homelessness by helping participants to obtain stable, affordable housing.

To date, e.Trans has met its target recruitment objective of 60 participants. Predominantly non-white in its racial/ethnic composition, the sample is 30% Hispanic/Latina, 28% Caucasian/white, 22% African American/black, 12% Native American, and 8% multi-racial/other. Ages range from 20 to 64 years, with a mean age of 38.3 years (S.D.=10.1). Moreover, 70% (n=42) identify as either transgender or transsexual and, while none have had genital reconstruction surgery, 28% (n=17) identify as a woman. HIV infection among this sample is high, with 28% (n=17) of the participants self-reporting an HIV positive serostatus. At baseline, the most cited areas in need of behavioral change were unemployment (25%), homelessness (22%), substance abuse (13%), sex work (12%), and HIV risks due to sexual behaviors (10%). Fifty-three percent of the participants reported engaging in sex work in the previous six months, with 66% of those participants reporting at least ten sexual partners.

Findings from the e.Trans project will help to inform policy makers on the extreme HIV risk behaviors of transgender women as well as the level of PCM services that produce maximal behavior changes in this vulnerable group.

Reorganization Within FRI's Board of Directors

FRI is pleased to announce that several new members have been added to its Board of Directors, and several positions have been reshuffled in response to term expirations. *Sheldon Glass, M.Ed., M.D.* has been elected as the new President, *Faith Feingold, M.S., LCSW-C* has been elected as Vice-President, and *Judith Blackburn, Ph.D., M.B.A.* has been elected as Second Vice-President. *Steven King, C.P.A.* will serve as Treasurer, and *Thomas Whedbee, M.S., M.Ed.* will serve as Secretary. Other returning members include *Janet Klein Brown, M.S.W., J.D.*, *Keith Haynes, M.P.A., J.D.*, *Matthew LaMotte, John Ramsay, III, M.S.*, and *Beverly Rosen*. The newest additions to the Board include *Curtis Decker, J.D.*, Executive Director of the National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems, and *M. Ross Seligson, Ph.D.*, a licensed psychologist in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

FRI is also pleased to announce the following additions to its Advisory Board: *Joseph Brady, Ph.D.*, President of the Institutes for Behavior Resources, Inc.; *Jerome Jaffe, M.D.*, Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Maryland School of Medicine; and *Jay Katz, M.D.*, Elizabeth K. Dollard Professor Emeritus of Law, Medicine, and Psychiatry at Yale Law School.

FRI is confident that the restructuring of positions within the Board and the addition of members to it will help generate fresh insight, enthusiasm, and expertise. Each member's hard work, commitment, and dedication to FRI is always greatly appreciated.

Gathering Friends is a publication of Friends Research Institute, Inc. (FRI). Please forward any correspondence to Julie Simon Agetstein, FRI, 505 Baltimore Avenue, P.O. Box 10676, Baltimore, MD 21285.

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Contributor: Cathy Reback, Ph.D.

Restructuring Within the IRB Department

Due to a decreased submission of new protocols and an increased influx of current protocols into long-term follow up of participants, and data analysis, FRI has decided to make use of only one IRB at this time. Therefore, we are suspending the IRB registration of the IRB located in Los Angeles, CA, until such time that the number of protocols warrants its re-opening. In addition, we will be restructuring the Baltimore IRB, so that it will be better able to review both behavioral and biomedical studies, and will be able to take over the review of the current studies from the Los Angeles IRB.

Beginning in January 2005, all FRI current and new protocols will be reviewed by the Baltimore IRB. To help facilitate this transition, we will be reorganizing the Board so that it will include members of both IRBs. The Los Angeles IRB members will provide information regarding the history and IRB related issues of the protocols that have been transferred, and will provide a local review for the West Coast studies. These members will attend the meetings via video-conference.

Because of this reorganization, FRI has had to say good-bye to several dedicated and hard-working IRB members. We would like to sincerely thank these former members' for their service to FRI and to the protection of human subjects. Additionally, we would like to thank the current members for their commitment, hard work, and willingness to take on the additional workload necessitated by this transition to one IRB.

The Baltimore IRB will now meet three additional times throughout the year to accommodate the increased workload. At right is a list of the 2005 IRB Meeting and Submission Dates.

All submission materials should be emailed to Julie Simon Agetstein, Human Protections Coordinator, on or before the submission deadline. Additionally, all pages requiring a signature should be faxed to Ms. Agetstein at 410-823-5131, on or before the submission deadline, and a hard copy should be mailed to the Baltimore office shortly thereafter. If the materials are sent several days prior to the submission date, Ms. Agetstein will pre-review the materials, and send the investigator a list of suggested changes in time for him/her to make corrections, prior to sending them to the IRB. We feel that this is an invaluable process and encourage investigators to take advantage of it, when they are able to do so.

From this time forward, all IRB related questions should be addressed to Ms. Agetstein. She can be reached at 410-823-5116, or via email at jagetstein@friendsresearch.org.

Meeting Date	Due Date for Submissions
January 11, 2005	December 20, 2004
March 8, 2005	February 21, 2005
April 12, 2005	March 28, 2005
May 31, 2005	May 16, 2005
July 12, 2005	June 27, 2005
August 9, 2005	July 25, 2005
September 8, 2005 (Thursday)	August 24, 2005
October 11, 2005	September 26, 2005
November 8, 2005	October 24, 2005

Investigators' IRB Manual

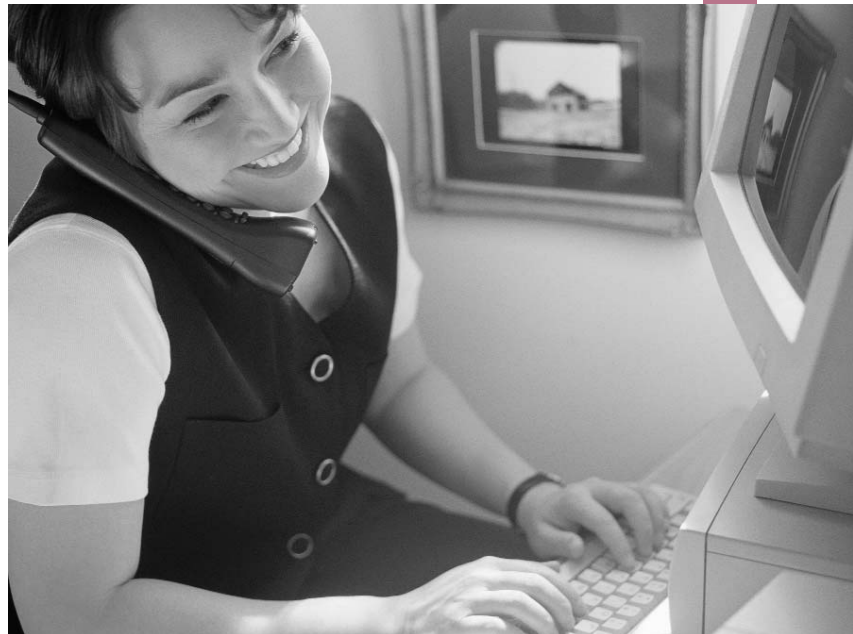
FRI is pleased to announce that its *Principal Investigators' Manual for the Protection of Human Subjects* has been added to the Investigators' IRB section of FRI's website. This informative manual contains information regarding investigators' responsibilities, types of IRB review, IRB initial review considerations, special review considerations, review throughout a study's approval period, continuing review, submission and termination procedures, conflicts of interest, non-compliance, education, reporting requirements, and maintenance of records and files. Two appendices regarding state requirements pertaining to the review of human subjects research currently supplement the manual and can also be found on the website. Investigators are encouraged to download this manual and its appendices, to use as a guide throughout the IRB review process.

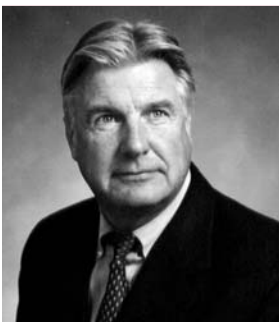
To access the manual and its two appendices, click on the Investigators' section, IRB related information, and then scroll down to FRI policies.

FRI E-mail Etiquette

The Human Resources Department would like to provide FRI's employees with the following guidelines regarding the use of the electronic mail system (e-mail) provided by the company. As a reminder, all electronic communications and stored information transmitted, received, or archived in the company's information system are the property of FRI, and FRI reserves the right to access and disclose all messages sent by e-mail.

- E-mail should follow the same formality as a business letter. It should be treated as a formal document with proper business standards being followed. Spelling, grammar and punctuation should be checked.
- Follow the chain of command. Do not copy or jump management levels unless absolutely appropriate.
- Use professional language. Never send abusive, harassing, threatening or ethnic oriented messages, even in jest.
- Use common sense about what you say or send. You cannot control who will ultimately read it. Confidentiality is a misnomer and privacy does not exist. A good rule of thumb is "never write anything to e-mail that you would not want to become public knowledge."
- Any employee who wishes to send out an e-mail message to "All Employees," must first have the message approved by their supervisor.
- Review your message before you send it. A sentence that might be clear to someone talking to you face to face might come across quite differently without the tone of your voice or the facial expressions.
- Think before you send e-mail to more than one person. Do the additional people really need or want to see the message?
- Practice good housekeeping rules. Storage space on the computer is critical:
 1. Create folders for received and sent messages. Use folders to save important information but make it a regular habit to review all folders and delete old or out-dated material. Delete unimportant messages as you read them.
 2. Keep your "in" and "sent" boxes clean. We recommend that all employees purge their files every 60 days.
 3. Do not save multiple copies of threads. When you send a message and get a response with your original message attached, you begin to have several layers. You only need to save the last one. Do not reply with attachments or use "reply all" unless the response requires it.
- Use professional courtesy and business etiquette:
 1. Always use a short informative subject line. This gives the receiver some indication of the importance of the message.
 2. Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without the personal interaction, your joke could be viewed as criticism.
 3. Do not type in all caps and keep paragraphs short and concise.
 4. Sign your messages.
 5. Generally focus on one subject per message.





A Message from the Executive Director

This year marks the beginning of our 50th Anniversary, and although we have experienced our share of “ups” and “downs” along the way, I

am confident that this year will prove to be an exciting and productive year for Friends Research Institute, Inc. (FRI). Throughout the past 50 years, our growth and outreach have increased, and FRI has furthered its mission to “promote health and well being through research, grants administration, education, and treatment.”

FRI is an organization that was founded in response to human needs and has grown by seizing varied opportunities to serve. FRI has evolved into a unique, small company that assists scientific researchers with their paperwork and reports to their sponsors, and conducts research of its own in the rapidly growing fields of psychological, social, and bio-behavioral disorders and their treatment.

Many investigators have been with FRI since the beginning; many new investigators join each year. We administer federal, state and private grants and pharmaceutical clinical trials in 22 states, as well as internationally. The company does this work exceedingly well, and has gained a reputation for excellence. FRI has also expanded recently into managing several counseling, treatment, recovery centers, and clinics, and at one point, running national conferences.

In all of these areas we continue to work towards our vision that FRI will be an internationally renowned research institute, publicly recognized for its credibility and integrity, which promotes the advancement of scientific knowledge. At the start of its fiftieth year of operation, FRI continues to be guided by the following principles that were set at its inception in 1955.

1. FRI is committed to maintaining the highest professional and ethical standards.
2. We are committed to providing services and support that enable the pursuit of scientific excellence.
3. We believe in providing opportunities for people to do their best and achieve their highest expectations.

4. We are committed to offering the best, most personalized service.
5. We believe that sustaining our efforts will enable us to address the needs, priorities, challenges, and opportunities implicit in our mission.
6. We believe in respectful dialogue and the expression of diverse points of view.

Thus, I am confident that the potential for a company with our emphasis on customer service, hard work, dedication, and experience is vast.

Thank you to all of the employees who have helped FRI to become the exceptional organization that it is today, and that it will continue to be in the future.

Patrick F. Bogan

Employees' Corner

FRI would like to remind the employees of its inclement weather policy, which is as follows.

If the administrative offices of FRI close due to inclement weather, employees will not be expected to come to work. If employees are not informed of a closing before the offices are scheduled to open, employees must assume that FRI is open for business. For those employees who may face substantial difficulty in getting to work because of severe inclement weather, or with family situations related to the inclement weather that prohibit leaving home at their regular time, a two hour grace period will be given, for which there will be no deduction in pay. If FRI is open and an employee makes a personal decision to be absent, time off will be charged to accrued vacation leave or accrued personal leave. This is considered FRI's Liberal Leave policy. If an employee does not have any accrued vacation or personal leave remaining, the employee's paycheck will be adjusted accordingly. This same policy exists for any type of natural disaster (flooding, earthquakes, snowstorms, etc.).

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Happy Anniversary!

*Congratulations to this quarter's employees who have celebrated an anniversary with FRI.
We appreciate your loyalty and dedication to the organization.*

OCTOBER	YEARS	NOVEMBER	YEARS	DECEMBER	YEARS
Timothy Kinlock, Ph.D.	25	David Hoyte	8	Thomas Hanon, Ph.D.	45
Peter Guarino, M.D.	6	Marsha Swilley	8	Patrick Bogan	36
Felicia Beanum	5	Robert Storey	5	Donnette Randolph	9
Jason Callaman	4	Michael Gordon	5	Jessica Fradis	5
Michael Agar, Ph.D.	4	Carla Johnson	4	John Roll, Ph.D.	5
Deborah Pfeiffer	1	David Highfield, Ph.D.	3	Erin Rotheram-Fuller	5
		Michele Ricketts	3	Luna Yojay, Ph.D.	4
		Regina Willis	3	Elena Nieves	4
				Jessica Lopez	3