



B.E.S.T. – Backstretch Employee Service Team of New York, Inc.

Achieving Health Equity Through Education Collaboration and Action;
Innovative Approaches to Engage Underserved Population
N.Y. State Department of Health; AIDS Institute

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Executive Summary

- B.E.S.T. is a 501(c)(3) organization which is devoted to meeting the health and social welfare needs of the several thousand barn area (“backstretch”) workers at Aqueduct, Belmont and Saratoga racetracks by providing:
 - On track primary and urgent health care services
 - Assistance with enrollment in the N.Y. Health Exchange, Medicaid, and Medicare
 - For those who are ineligible for the exchange, B.E.S.T. has a charitable plan which reimburses workers’ medical providers for expenses which workers incur.
 - Alcohol and drug counseling and comprehensive drug toxicology testing
 - Case management assistance
 - Transportation, translation, food and clothing distribution
 - Access to the internet and Skype
- B.E.S.T. is funded by the NY State Department of Health. B.E.S.T.’s primary sources of funding are from the racing industry and private philanthropic giving. (N.Y.R.A. and N.Y.T.H.A.)

What B.E.S.T. Provides Today

Health Services

- B.E.S.T. gives “backstretch workers” (i.e. workers in the stables) two on-site primary and urgent care health facilities, at Belmont and Saratoga, which provide essential primary health care for the backstretch communities.
- These services are made available free of charge to all backstretch workers.
- In addition to primary care services, workers are able to seek chiropractic and podiatric care at Belmont and Saratoga. B.E.S.T. provides acupuncture at the Belmont Clinic.
- B.E.S.T. hosts annual Flu Shot programs from October to February as well as ongoing Hep C and HIV testing. B.E.S.T. also vaccinates for TDAP and Hepatitis A&B.
- In addition to B.E.S.T.’s own services, the New York Thoroughbred Horseman’s Association (NYTHA) pays for dental, ophthalmologic and optometry services for backstretch workers: B.E.S.T. provides transportation and translation for all these patients in Saratoga.

Health and Life Insurance

- B.E.S.T. assists workers to enroll on the N.Y. Health Exchange, Medicaid and Medicare.
- B.E.S.T. provides a subsidy (in addition to the Federal subsidy of ACA) of up to \$150 per month for insurance provided on the exchange.
- B.E.S.T.’s charitable assistance plan reimburses directly the providers of medical services for care given to backstretch workers
- B.E.S.T.’s “auxiliary” fund
- Term Life Insurance

Transportation and Translation Services

- B.E.S.T.’s team of outreach coordinators and volunteers provide free transportation to and from medical and social services appointments as well as translation services to the Aqueduct, Belmont and Saratoga backstretch communities.
- Over 500 workers benefit from these vital services annually.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counseling

- B.E.S.T. is licensed by the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse to provide on-site counseling for Alcoholism and Substance Abuse for Aqueduct and Belmont based workers.
- B.E.S.T. counselors take a holistic approach to treating chemical dependency, utilizing individualized treatment plans which include cognitive, behavioral, motivational enhancement and 12-step oriented therapies
- Since 1989, B.E.S.T. has sponsored Alcoholics Anonymous Support Groups and recently became home to the only Spanish-speaking Narcotics Anonymous Group in Nassau and Saratoga Counties.

**B.E.S.T.'s
Concrete
Services**

- Transportation and translation
- Meals/Emergency food
- “Free Store”
- Sober Café
- Communications lab
- Tax Preparation Assistance

**Demographics
of B.E.S.T.'s
Population
2012-2013**

<u>Territory or Country of Origin</u>	<u>Number of “Unduplicated” People</u>
Mexico	607
Argentina	11
Peru	127
Dominican Republic	80
Guatemala	109
Colombia	21
Chile	137
Puerto Rico	94
Honduras	26
Jamaica	20
U.S.A. (African American)	53
U.S.A. (Caucasian and Latino)	197
Total MSFW visits to B.E.S.T. 2,557

Diagnosis**Number of Unduplicated Patients****Medical
Diagnoses
and
Services
Rendered****Infections and Parasitic Diseases**

Syphilis & STD's	65
Hepatitis B & C	238

Diseases of Respiratory System

Asthma	17
Chronic Bronchitis or Emphysema	12

Chronic Disease Conditions

Diabetes mellitus	219
Heart Disease	12
Hypertension	290
High Cholesterol	209

Other Medical Conditions/Diseases

Contact Dermatitis or Eczema	23
Muscular Skeletal Conditions	27
Unintentional Injury or Trauma	88
Gastrointestinal Conditions	17
Neurological Diseases	7
Cancer	5
Emergency Medical Services	21
Vision Disorders	46
Hearing Disorders	8
UTI	70
Eye Infection	5

Diagnosis**Number of Unduplicated Patients****Mental Health, Emotional and Substance Abuse Conditions**

Alcohol Abuse/Addiction	24
Other Substance Related Disorders	202
Psychiatric Disorders	30

Diagnostic Tests/Screening/Prevention

HIV	59
Vision	110
Hearing	15
TB	33
Cholesterol	388
Blood Pressure	476
Diabetes	106
Routine Physical	250
Routine Blood Work	2679
Radiology	530
Monogram	56
Contraceptive Management	2000
Pap Test	48
Annual Gynecological Exam	53
Dental Exams	111

**Medical
Diagnoses
and
Services
Rendered**

Challenges for Achieving Latino Health Equity in MSFW's

- **A.C.A. not sufficiently accessible for MSFW's**
 - Residency requirements
 - Exclusion of dependents
 - Media and other misrepresentations of the ACA
 - Affordability problems
 - Coverage is not truly portable from state to state
- **Drug and alcohol abuse/addiction**
 - Lack of Spanish language/culturally sensitive treatment & self help options for AOD and mental health.
 - Lack of treatment options for undocumented workers
 - Disproportionately high prevalence of past trauma complicates the therapeutic process
 - Distrust of authority due to immigration, political and other concerns
 - Denial about the primacy of addictions (including gambling)
- **Other Challenges**
 - MSFW's exemplary work ethic
 - Lack of history with preventive care
 - Functional illiteracy
 - Sleep disorders
 - Recreational needs
 - American diet
 - Ethnic tensions/racism

Approaches that have been successful

- Holistic medical practices (chiropractic, acupuncture)
- Spanish language services/culturally sensitive clinic environment
- Outreach (spoken, written, electronic) respect the human internet/use of food incentives
- Spiritual approaches
- Empathic delivery of care (seamless/non bureaucratic)
- Provision of practical needs (shoes, warm clothing, socks, eye wear etc.).
- Access to care at work-site
- Multi communication strategies (verbal, written, electronic)