

Protecting our Patients (POP) Fact Sheet

Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago (PHIMC) advances health justice and strengthens public health through innovation and partnerships that align people, strategies, and resources. PHIMC envisions systems that impact how we live, work, and play as compassionate, affirming, and racially equitable, supporting health and well-being for all people.

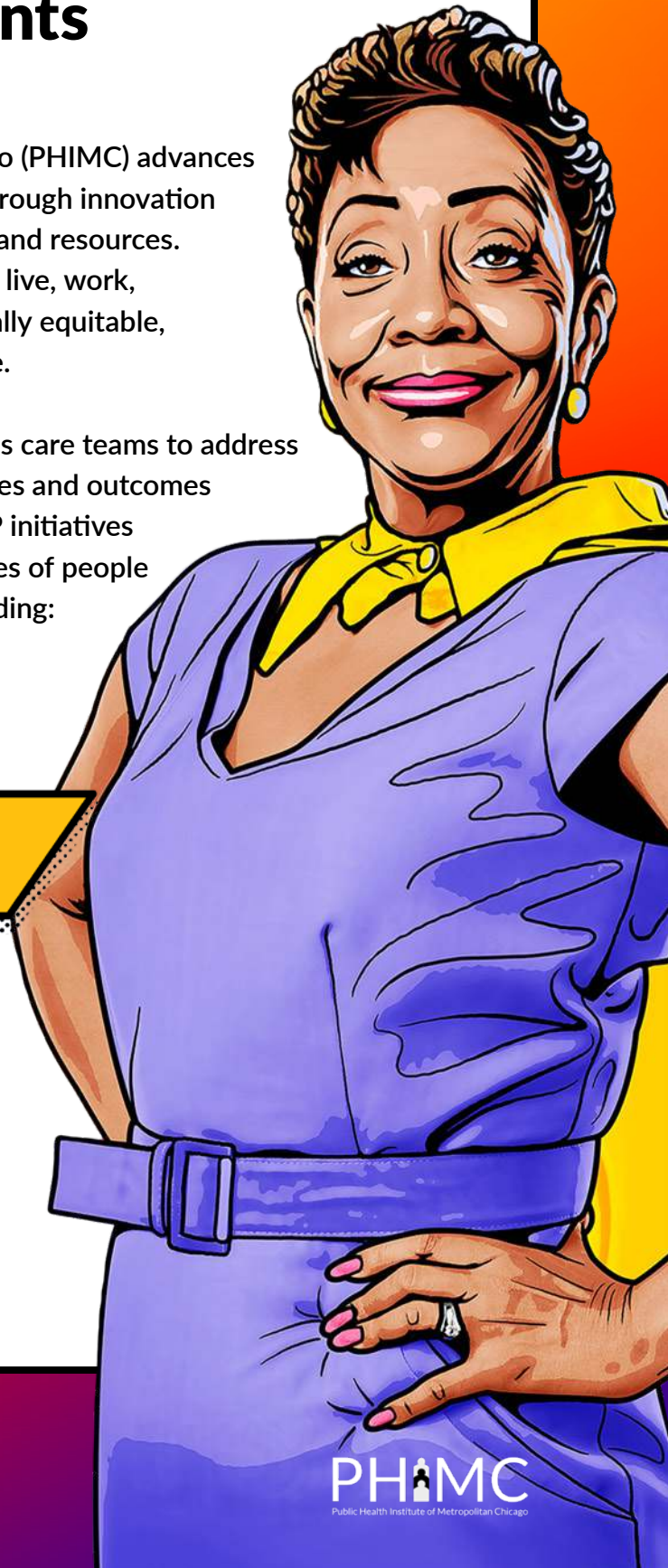
Protecting our Patients (POP) mobilizes care teams to address biases and stigmas that harm health experiences and outcomes of people in our care, including ourselves. POP initiatives promote practices that improve the experiences of people in care and support comprehensive care, including:

- 1) integrating routine HIV screening into care settings and
- 2) providing affirming care for all, especially those systematically marginalized.

We Care. We Screen. We Affirm.

POP initiatives promote practices that improve the experiences of people in care and support comprehensive care, including:

- integrating **routine HIV screening** into care settings and
- providing **affirming care for all**, especially those systematically marginalized.



The Development

After more than seven years of integrating HIV screening into general medical settings, PHIMC recognized that health professionals face personal barriers to fully implementing this standard of care. The HIV/AIDS epidemic, as with other public health challenges, illustrates the need for addressing health inequities that lead to poor health outcomes.

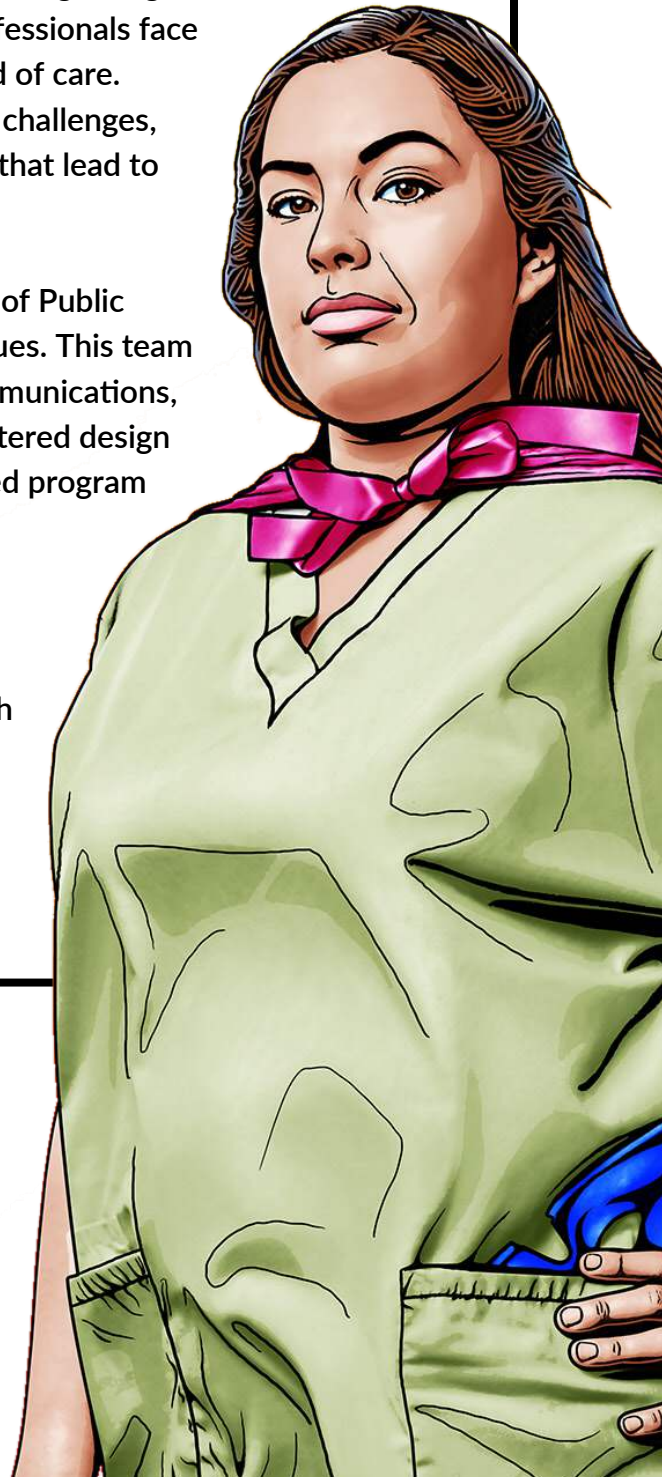
In 2014, PHIMC partnered with Illinois Department of Public Health and a cross-sector team to address these issues. This team included care, public health, community-based, communications, and creative professionals. PHIMC used human-centered design and a multimedia curriculum to create a two-pronged program with the following vision.

If we can create care settings where:

- HIV screenings are part of general health screenings, HIV gets reframed as a chronic health condition like diabetes and hypertension.
- Everyone is affirmed through reflective practice, people in our care do not have to check part of who they are at the door.

The Champions

Many heroes are already in care settings caring for people and promoting best practices. Their stories of providing routine screening and affirming care inspire others to do the same. POP elevates these heroes into POP Champions who lead peers in understanding their role in reducing stigmas, encouraging peers to be leaders, and keeping the conversation alive.



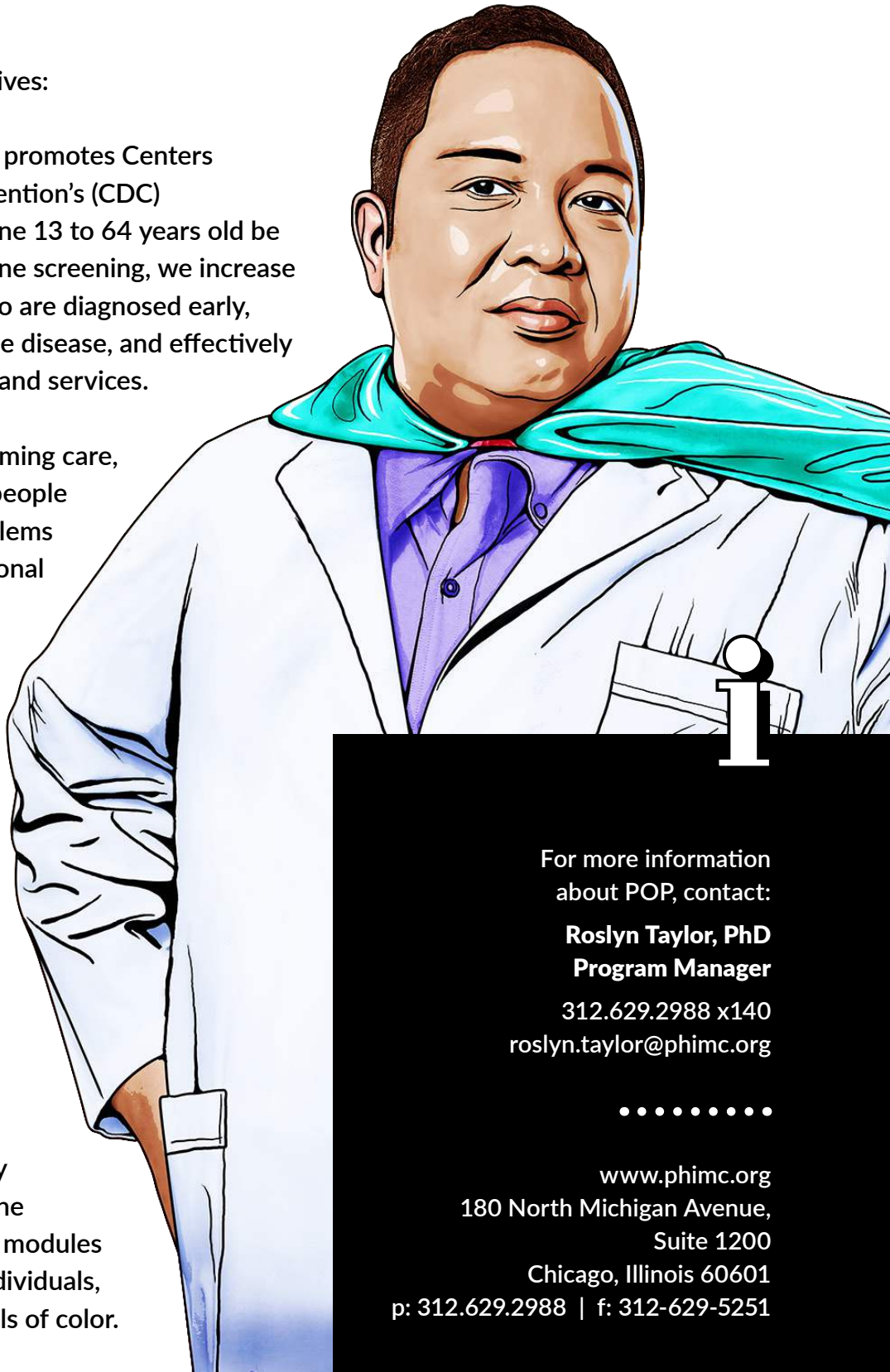
The Initiatives

POP currently has two initiatives:

Routine HIV Screening: POP promotes Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommendation that everyone 13 to 64 years old be tested for HIV. Through routine screening, we increase the number of individuals who are diagnosed early, reduce stigma surrounding the disease, and effectively link those we serve into care and services.

Affirming Care: Through affirming care, people are viewed as whole people and not distinct medical problems to be solved. Through intentional reflective practice to deepen awareness of and examine implicit biases, mindsets and behaviors can be modified for care that serves all people, especially those systematically marginalized.

PHIMC has implemented POP in several care settings across Illinois with strong evaluation results; through June 2022, we've implemented POP in 17 care settings. PHIMC's Community Reentry Program expanded the bank of storytelling films and modules to include justice-involved individuals, along with LGBTQ+ individuals of color.



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