

HEART BEAT

NASHVILLESM
CARES
FOR ALL OF US


CARES360SM
COMMUNITY CLINIC



JULY - SEPTEMBER 2026

633 THOMPSON LANE, NASHVILLE, TN 37204 | HEARTLINE: 1-800-845-4266



MEET YOUR CARES 360 NURSE CASE MANAGERS

Nashville CARES is proud to highlight two dedicated members of the CARES 360 Community Clinic team: Amy Fisher, RN, BSN, ACRN and Leslie Reese, RN, ADN. Amy and Leslie each have years of experience working alongside HIV clients. And beyond clinical expertise, both bring genuine compassion to every patient interaction. They're available during regular clinic hours, and are ready to walk alongside you every step of your healthcare journey.

More Than Nurses – Partners in Your Care

As Nurse Case Managers, Amy and Leslie do far more than traditional bedside nursing. This specialized role combines hands-on patient care with behind-the-scenes coordination to make sure nothing falls through the cracks. Whether you've been newly diagnosed, are returning to care after a gap, or you're simply working to stay on track, they're here for you.

Our Nurse Case Managers help monitor your lab results, including viral load, CD4 counts, STI screenings and immunizations. They'll make sure you always know where you stand, and have a clear sense of what comes next. If you're on antiretroviral therapy, they can help you understand how your medications are working while addressing any side effects that you might be experiencing. Their goal is always to support you in reaching and maintaining viral suppression.

Removing Barriers, Connecting Resources

Amy and Leslie understand that staying engaged in care involves much more than simply keeping your appointments. Working alongside the Nashville CARES Medical Case Management team, they can connect you with mental health services, substance use support, housing assistance, transportation help, insurance navigation and a wide range of community-based resources.

If it looks like transportation issues might keep you from making it to your CARES 360 appointment, Amy or Leslie can help make travel arrangements. Just be sure to reach out to them at least 24 hours in advance.



Amy Fisher
Nurse Case Manager



Leslie Reese
Nurse Case Manager



Education, Prevention, Peace of Mind

Knowledge is power. So your Nurse Case Managers are committed to making sure you have whatever information you need to live well. From understanding U=U (Undetectable = Untransmittable) to prevention strategies and overall wellness, Amy and Leslie are happy to answer questions. We want you to feel confident and informed about your health.

Going Above and Beyond to Stay Connected

If you do ever miss an appointment, don't be surprised if you hear from Amy or Leslie. Reaching out to patients who miss medical visits is one of the many ways they show up for the people in their care. No judgment here – just a helping hand back to the support you deserve.



MEET OUR NEW THERAPIST

Cody Hammons (He/Him) LPN, MSW

Hi, I'm Cody. I'm a recent MSW graduate, and excited to be the new Behavioral Health Therapist with Nashville CARES. I worked for many years as an HIV nurse, and actually did my internship through CARES. I look forward to being a part of the good work we do here.

To inquire about counseling services, please scan the QR code.





DEARMAN - ASSERTIVENESS COMMUNICATION SKILL

At some time, we've all walked away from a conversation thinking, "I wish I'd said that differently." Maybe you agreed to do something you didn't actually want to do. Maybe you finally decided to speak up, but your words came out as an explosion. Maybe you just stayed quiet, stewing on a situation for days. If any of this sounds familiar, you're in good company.

The good news? There's a skill that can help.

DEARMAN is a tool from Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). It's designed to help you ask for what you want more effectively – or say no – in a way that protects both your goals and your relationships. This isn't about getting your way every time. It's about giving yourself the best possible shot at being heard, while staying steady and respectful in the process.

What do these letters stand for?

DEARMAN is an acronym. The first four letters (DEAR) focus on what you say. The last three (MAN) describe how you say it.

D – Describe. Start by describing the situation in plain, factual terms. Stick to what actually happened, not your interpretation of it. "This is the third week in a row the report has come to me the night before it's due" lands very differently from "You never respect my time." Facts are hard to argue with, while accusations invite defensiveness.

E – Express. Share how the situation makes you feel, using "I" statements rather than assuming the other person already knows. "I feel stressed and rushed when that happens" tells them something true about your experience. Don't expect people to read your mind, and try not to phrase your feelings as facts about them.

A – Assert. Ask for what you want clearly, or say no clearly. This is the step people most often skip. Hinting, hoping or trusting others to figure it out usually doesn't work. "Could you send me the report two days before the deadline?" is a real request. "It would be nice if things were more organized" isn't.

R – Reinforce. Explain why this matters to the other person too. Help them see what's in it for them, or simply thank them. "If I get it earlier, I can give you better feedback and we'll both look good to the client." People are more willing to give you what you want when they understand there's a payoff for them as well.

M – (stay) Mindful. Keep your focus on your goal. If the other person gets defensive, tries to change the subject or brings up an old grievance, gently keep returning to your point. A useful technique here is the "broken record": calmly repeating your request without escalating. You don't have to chase every tangent.

A – Appear confident. Use a confident tone of voice and posture, even if you don't feel confident inside. Make eye contact, speak at a steady pace and avoid undercutting yourself with phrases like "this is probably stupid, but..." How you present your message shapes how seriously it's taken.

N – Negotiate. Be willing to give something to get something. If you can't get everything you want, offer or invite alternatives. "If two days ahead doesn't work, would one day be possible?" Flexibility keeps the conversation open. It also signals that you're solving a problem together, not issuing demands.

A quick real-life example.

Imagine a friend keeps borrowing money but not paying it back. A DEARMAN approach might sound like this:

"The last two times I lent you money, it wasn't paid back (**Describe**). I feel uncomfortable bringing it up, and a little taken for granted (**Express**). I'd like the \$40 from last month returned by Friday, and going forward I'd rather not lend money (**Assert**). I really value our friendship, and I don't want money troubles to get in the way of it (**Reinforce**)."

Throughout your conversation, you'd want to stay focused if the other person changes the subject (**Mindful**). Keep a calm and steady tone (**Appear confident**), and maybe offer a middle path if needed – splitting the repayment, for example (**Negotiate**).

A few things to keep in mind.

Think of DEARMAN as a menu, not a script. You don't have to use every letter, in that exact order, every time.

Before starting a conversation, take a minute to think ahead about your priorities. Sometimes the goal can be getting the outcome you asked for. Other times, what may matter to you most is keeping the relationship intact or holding onto your self-respect.

Be patient with yourself. Speaking up in a new way can feel awkward at first. This is especially true if you've spent years either avoiding conflict completely or meeting it head-on. Any awkwardness you feel is a normal part of a new skill being built, not a sign you're doing it wrong.

If you'd like, your therapist can help you walk through a real situation you're facing and help you map it onto these steps.

NASHVILLE CARESSM FOR ALL OF US

SUMMER NEWS FROM YOUR CASE MANAGERS



Beating the Heat

With the summer heat upon us, we want to make sure you all know about local resources to stay cool.

Metro Action Commission offers a fan and air conditioner program for Davidson County residents with medical conditions impacted by extreme heat conditions.

Click this link or scan the QR to get a copy of the application and learn more

<https://www.nashville.gov/departments/metro-action/fan-and-air-conditioner-program>

Metro Action also provides utility support for Davidson County residents.



Extreme Heat Resources

Scan the QR to learn more about available Summer Cooling Programs.

Patrol Teams here: <https://www.nashville.gov/departments/office-homeless-services/extreme-heat-response-and-patrols>

Local libraries and community centers in your area are also generally air conditioned, and allow people time to come in and cool off.



EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Take this quick client survey to let Nashville CARES know what we're doing right, and where we can do better.



English Version



Spanish Version



FOOD IS MEDICINE. FOOD IS LOVE.

CARES clients living with HIV can shop the CARES Store for free produce, dry goods, canned goods and healthy snacks. You can choose the items that work best for you, just like at a grocery store. That means more flexibility and control to better meet your nutrition needs.

Store hours: Tuesday - Thursdays 9 am – 3:45 pm, Fridays 9 am – 1:45 pm. Closed on Choice Pantry days.

TAKE THE NUTRITION SURVEY

What are you enjoying about the CARES Store? Where can we improve? Let us know how we can best meet your needs. After all, this is your store!

Survey link: <https://nashvillecares.jotform.com/form/nutritionfeedback>



Click or scan to schedule:

[https://app.pantrysoft.com/
login/nashvillecares](https://app.pantrysoft.com/login/nashvillecares)



CHOICE PANTRY HOURS

Jul 8: 9 am-1 pm

Jul 22: 9 am-1 pm

Aug 12: 9 am-1 pm

Aug 26: 9 am-1 pm

Sep 9: 9 am-1 pm

Sep 23: 9 am-1 pm



ARE YOU EXPERIENCING HOT FLASHES OR NIGHT SWEATS?

You may be eligible to participate in a study testing an investigational menopausal hormone therapy to address these and other symptoms. Total compensation for completing this study is up to \$775.

Who we're looking for:

- Women living with HIV
- Aged 40-60
- Perimenopausal or postmenopausal
- Experiencing hot flashes or night sweats



This therapy consists of a transdermal estradiol gel (to be rubbed on the skin) and a progesterone pill. The study lasts up to five months.



INTERESTED?
REACH US AT: (615) 294-3733
OR SCAN FOR MORE INFO





Condom Delivery

If you need condoms and/or lube, contact Lisa at 615-761-4474 or lbinkley@nashvillecares.org to make arrangements.



Get specialized counseling, regardless of your HIV status.

Reach us at nashvillecares.org or 1-800-845-4266.



Did you know you can receive a full range of expert HIV medical care at CARES 360 Community Clinic?
Call 615-499-7406 to schedule an appointment today.

AGENCY CLOSURES

JULY

Independence weekend, July 3-6

SEPTEMBER

Labor Day, September 7

Title VI Notice

- All CARES services are offered to you without discrimination based on age, race, gender, gender identity, ethnic background, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.
- As a client, you will have open access to all of the Client Services: HEARTLine, Case Management, Behavioral Health, Peer and Practical Support Services.
- As a client, CARES encourages you to take an active role in the decisions concerning your care and the services you receive.
- All information concerning you, your HIV status, and the services you receive at CARES are kept private and confidential.
- If you have concerns about the services or the way you have been treated at CARES, there is a formal grievance procedure for you to use or contact TN HRC directly at (800) 251-3589 or 312 Rosa L Parks Ave, 23rd floor, Nashville, Tennessee 37243 or email at ask.thrc@tn.gov.

HEALTHYU GROUP ACTIVITIES

See calendar on final page for dates and times



M.A.L.E.S. – Men Advocating Life Education Support

This men's group meets every Monday that Nashville CARES is open. The only requirement is that you are living with HIV and identify as male. We are fathers, sons, husbands, co-workers, friends, lovers, etc. We talk about all those relationships, our lives, politics, social media, love, and of course any HIV-related issues. Dinner is provided. Come out and enjoy a meal. Have a good talk. Meet some new guys. Without you, there is no group! Weekly virtual meetings on Mondays from 5-6 pm. Contact Lamont at 615-906-2706 if interested.



Express Yourself: Opening Pandora's Box (For those who identify as Male Only)

Express Yourself is a welcoming and open vibe session for men from all walks of life. You can present individual poetry or spoken word, or simply hang out and appreciate the expressive nature of others. This group session serves to tear down the walls of toxic masculinity, allowing emotions, suppressed thoughts and various points of view to be shared freely in a supportive environment. The base topic will be different for each session. The opening session will be an introduction to the experience, ending with a discussion of the works presented. Contact Darrell at HealthyU: dearly@nashvillecares.org. Weekly virtual meetings on Tuesdays from 5-6 pm.



Women's Group - S.W.E.E.T.

A group designed specifically for women living with HIV, with a focus on providing social support and education. This group provides a safe space that affirms and celebrates who we are as women. It's ideal for any woman who's looking for ways to connect with others living with HIV, but doesn't know where to start. All discussions are confidential. A meal is provided. Contact Temya at (615) 259-4866 ext. 330. Catch one of our virtual meetings on the 4th Thursday of each month from 1-2 pm.



Artsy Hearts

Designed specifically for people living with HIV, this group focuses on improving mental health and promoting well-being by "providing meaningful spaces for expression and achievement." Artsy Hearts is designed as a fun social activity where people can learn new skills and enjoy sharing their creativity together. This group also focuses on in-person bonding within the community. **A meal is provided, so it's important to RSVP in advance.** Contact Latoya at lalexander@nashvillecares.org. The group meets on the 4th Friday of every month from 1:00-3:00 pm.



The B Side

A group dedicated to sharing positive energy, health tips, self-care advice and life skills for navigating your best life after a positive HIV diagnosis. The B Side focuses on social support through networking with others living with HIV. It's a great way to build community, learn about community resources and create a bonding space to share experiences and solutions for living with HIV. Contact Latoya at lalexander@nashvillecares.org. This group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 4:00-6:00 pm. Meetings are virtual between September-February, and in-person from March-August.

A meal is provided for in-person gatherings, so it's important to RSVP in advance.

HEALTHYU GROUP ACTIVITIES

(Continued)



PsiR. – Peers In Research

A group designed specifically for people living with HIV who want to serve as ‘community researchers,’ utilizing their lived experience to assist other researchers in developing and designing research tools as well as collecting and analyzing data. This group also focuses on disseminating the findings of the research projects that they have assisted with. “Nothing about us without us.” Discussions are confidential. Contact Dr. Tiye (615) 428-4401. Virtual meetings schedule TBA.



G.R.O.W.T.H. (Gaining Realistic Outcomes and Weaving-in Transformational Health)

Consists of two 16-week cohorts over the next three years. Partners include Orangetheory Fitness and the Nashville Black Wellness Collective. Activities include art and music therapy, nature walks, yoga, mindfulness, exercise, radical acceptance, and goal-setting. Contact Dr. Tiye (615) 428-4401.



Spiritual Connection

This is a group designed to promote hope and healing for people living with HIV, as well as their family and friends. Participation in Spiritual Connection can help prevent many of the physical, mental and spiritual challenges that often lead to medication non-adherence, depression, issues with forgiveness, stress from stigma and many other barriers that lead to unsuccessful decision-making and negative life events. We focus on healing, empowerment and real-world tools for living successfully with HIV. This group is based on a broad set of principles that transcends all religions. Contact Temya at HealthyU@nashvillecares.org. Registration not required, but RSVP is appreciated. Please check the calendar on the final page to confirm meeting type (in person or virtual). Virtual meetings occur the 2nd Friday of each month from 1-2 pm.



Silver Strong

A group especially for people aged 50 and older who are living with HIV. This is a safe, supportive forum for discussing all topics related to aging and/or HIV. We'll discuss health issues older adults with HIV face, learn effective ways to deal with stigma, educate family and friends, and talk about dating and relationships. Bring your life experiences and your questions. Virtual meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Contact Temya at HealthyU@nashvillecares.org.



Peer Check-in

Have a good talk. Meet new folks. Check in! Our monthly Peer Check-in happens on the 4th or 5th Friday that Nashville CARES is open each month. The only requirement to attend is that you are a person living with HIV. This is a great opportunity to discuss any issues relating to HIV, along with anything else going on in your life. We talk about our relationships, our lives, politics, social media, love, etc. Share as much or as little as you want (or just kick back and listen). Come out and enjoy the fellowship and a lunch voucher (must attend for the full session). In-person or virtual meetings TBA. Contact Temya at HealthyU@nashvillecares.org.



HEALTHYU GROUP ACTIVITIES

(Continued)



Ask-a-Pharmacist

In partnership with various Nashville pharmacies, CARES provides opportunities each month for clients to talk with a trained pharmacist about their medications, HIV care and other pharmacy-related topics. Virtual meetings are held quarterly, giving you a convenient way to connect with pharmacists online and get your questions answered. We also have a growing library of virtual information available. Please contact the HealthyU Staff to learn more about accessing online videos and other helpful resources. Schedule TBA.



Healthy Relationships

We created this 3-session program to equip you with effective problem-solving and decision-making skills designed to reduce stress around disclosure. Each two-hour session offers a combination of teaching, group discussion and movie clips to make things fun and engaging. A meal is provided with each in-person session, and participants who complete all 3 sessions receive a valuable gift card. Contact Darrell or Temya at HealthyU@nashvillecares.org. Advance registration and assessment REQUIRED. Meetings are virtual on Thursdays from 5-6 pm.



E.P.I.C. (Empowering Positive Influence in Communities)

At EPIC, we strive to empower People Living With HIV (PLWH) with tools, knowledge and skills to help them become influential leaders, mentors and members of their communities. In a relaxed small group atmosphere, we talk about ways we can improve and inspire change, starting at the local level and building upward. Our goal is to be champion representatives of our prestigious perspective by being informed, committed and fully present. The only requirement is that all participants must be PLWH. Meeting schedule TBA.



IAMSTRONG

What are your true strengths? What are your inner resources? How strong do you want to be? This one is all about developing a plan to help achieve a healthier you. Your plan will provide a roadmap for moving forward in your life, along with proven tools to help you develop a healthier outlook and make better decisions. Recognize your own strength and become a stronger version of yourself. Reach out to the HealthyU staff and get your plan started today! Virtual meetings available. Contact Dr. Tiye at HealthyU@nashvillecares.org.



S.E.T. Group Meeting (Support, Encourage, Trust)

The mission of the S.E.T. Project is to improve linkage and retention to care focusing on women, with special attention on breaking down the isolation and stigma that may come from living with HIV. The program includes biweekly calls with peers from within the network, along with monthly meetings to develop peer mentoring and accountability. The S.E.T. Project also includes bi-monthly social engagement with other women in the program. This is all about building community and strengthening the connections of sisterhood. Virtual meetings take place on the first Friday of each month from 1-2 pm. Contact Temya at HealthyU@nashvillecares.org.



HEALTHYU GROUP ACTIVITIES

(Continued)



Start Here

This 90-minute course is designed to provide participants with the basic understanding they need about living with HIV successfully. It provides a great starting point, whether someone is infected or affected. Family, friends and partners are all welcome to share in this workshop with you. But all attendees must register in advance. Virtual meetings available. Contact HealthyU@nashvillecares.org.



Under Construction (A&D Group)

This group is specifically to help people living with HIV who are also struggling with alcohol or drug use. It provides a safe, judgment-free opportunity to learn and share the kinds of recovery skills that can lead to better living. For more information, contact Temya at HealthyU@nashvillecares.org. Virtual meetings available. Check out the calendar on the final page to confirm.



Fresh Clothing

The Healthy University staff wants to make life less stressful for our clients who are housing-unstable and may need a clean set of clothes. So we're offering a free set of clothing to anyone currently experiencing homelessness. Call Dr. Tiye at (615) 259-4866 ext. 270, or contact your Case Manager.



Laundry Service

Do you have difficulty going to a laundry facility to clean your clothes? The Healthy University staff has partnered with a laundry service to take the stress out of this concern. They'll come pick up your laundry, then wash, fold and drop everything back off at your home, all on schedule you set with them online. Best of all, this service is free to you. But we do have limited capacity, so it's available on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact your Case Manager for details, or contact Dr. Tiye at HealthyU@nashvillecares.org.



2026 SUMMER GROUP CALENDAR

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

MONDAYS

Under Construction
10-11:30 am - virtual weekly
M.A.L.E.S.
5-6 pm - virtual weekly

Under Construction
10-11:30 am - virtual weekly
M.A.L.E.S.
5-6 pm - virtual weekly

Under Construction
10-11:30 am - virtual weekly
M.A.L.E.S.
5-6 pm - virtual weekly

TUESDAYS

Silver Strong 50+
1-2 pm on the 21st
SWEET
1-2 pm on the 28th
Express Yourself
5-6 pm - virtual weekly

Silver Strong 50+
1-2 pm on the 18th
SWEET
1-2 pm on the 25th
Express Yourself
5-6 pm - virtual weekly

Silver Strong 50+
1-2 pm on the 16th
SWEET
1-2 pm on the 22nd
Express Yourself
5-6 pm - virtual weekly

WEDNESDAYS

Choice Pantry
8th & 22nd
The B Side
1-2 pm on the 15th
Healthy Relationships
5-6 pm on the 8th, 15th, 22nd

Choice Pantry
12th & 26th
The B Side
1-2 pm on the 18th
Healthy Relationships
5-6 pm on the 9th, 12th 26th

Choice Pantry
9th & 23rd
The B Side
Cancelled this month

THURSDAYS

GROWTH
10 am-12 pm at TSU
OrangeTheory Fitness
1:15-2:30 pm on the 16th

GROWTH
10 am-12 pm at TSU
OrangeTheory Fitness
1:15-2:30 pm on the 20th

GROWTH
10 am-12 pm at TSU
OrangeTheory Fitness
Cancelled this month

FRIDAYS

S.E.T. Group
Cancelled due to holiday
Spiritual Connection
1-2 pm on the 10th
Artsy Hearts
1-3 pm on the 24th
Fun Friday
1-2 pm on the 31st

S.E.T. Group
1-2 pm on the 7th
Spiritual Connection
1-2 pm on the 14th
Artsy Hearts
1-3 pm on the 28th

S.E.T. Group
1-2 pm on the 4th
Spiritual Connection
1-2 pm on the 11th
Artsy Hearts
1-3 pm on the 25th

