

## AIRN BLENDED LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE (ABLC)

### Terms of Reference

March 2018

#### Purpose

The AIRN Blended Leadership Committee (ABLC) ensures that AIRN achieves its aims and objectives through a representative, interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral leadership body. The ABLC is the primary vehicle through which AIRN works with a key set of critical stakeholders in the Atlantic region to advise, support and set priorities in an effort to address community-identified research needs specific to HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C (HCV) and related sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBIs). The ABLC strives to ensure that REACH 2.0 and the CIHR CBR Collaborative: A Program of REACH (CBR Collaborative 2.0)<sup>1</sup> also achieves identified national aims and objectives through regional support and collaboration.

#### Responsibilities

- Set strategic priorities and directions for AIRN.
- Provide direction regarding the scope and management of the AIRN network.
- Provide strategic direction for defining the research agenda and CBR priorities based on knowledge of emerging trends, current research, and new developments in the region and nationally. Continue to monitor and revise agenda and priorities as needed.
- Enhance the research agenda and CBR priorities by providing input into the development and dissemination of initiatives.
- Support and oversee the activities of the network.
- Enhance partnerships and promote networking among stakeholders.
- Enhance knowledge uptake and utilization of research findings into policy, programs, practice, and further research.
- Facilitate the identification of and response to capacity building, training, partnership development, and research development needs within the Atlantic Region.
- Identify opportunities for both regional and cross-regional initiatives and information sharing to avoid duplication of research and to ensure that overall research and CBR efforts are complementary and cumulative rather than repetitive or a reduplication.
- Determine need for temporary working groups and monitor ongoing relevance.
- Communicate ABLC activities to the broader AIRN membership, report activities back to the REACH National Leadership Committee (NLC) and participate in national initiatives, where applicable.

#### Membership

Twenty to twenty-five members, with the aim to ensure appropriate representation in terms of geography, academic/community/policy, gender, and cultural diversity. While AIRN strives to ensure that people living with HIV and/or HCV participate on the ABLC, there is no requirement for any disclosure of health status. The aim is to include:

- Academic Co-Chair
- Community Co-Chair

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<sup>1</sup> Community-based research (CBR) is defined as a methodological practice that places community partnerships at the forefront, marked by principles of collaboration, equitable partnerships, attending to process, and being action-oriented.

- The Director of the CIHR Centre for REACH in HIV/AIDS (REACH 2.0) and CIHR CBR Collaborative: A Program of REACH (CRB Collaborative 2.0) or designate
- Up to 6 Academic representatives
- Up to 6 Government stakeholders
- Up to 12 Community stakeholders (including people living with HIV and/or HCV)
- At least one student representative
- Other members deemed necessary by virtue of their role in addressing these issues

The ABLC is supported by the AIRN/REACH Atlantic Research Manager, who acts as secretariat to the committee.

## **Criteria for Membership**

### **Academia**

- Members of an academic institution who teach and/or do research in HIV/AIDS or HCV related fields
- Knowledge of, and/or interest in, HIV/AIDS and/or HCV issues
- Commitment to improving the quality of life of those affected by HIV/AIDS and HCV

### **Government**

- Senior officials who are able to influence policy within their departments or who have been given responsibility for HIV/AIDS and/ or HCV related issues
- Knowledge of, and/or interest in, HIV/HCV issues
- Commitment to improving the quality of life of those affected by HIV/AIDS and HCV
- Function as a direct link between AIRN and the Department/Governments of each jurisdiction

### **Community**

- Staff or board member of a recognized HIV/AIDS or HCV service organization, where they exist, or have direct linkages to them
- Play a community leadership role in HIV/AIDS or HCV issues
- Represent equity priority groups
- Have knowledge of and commitment to the issues
- Represent a regional, or provincial, group that is committed to improving the lives of those affected by HIV/AIDS and/ or HCV
- People living with HIV and/or HCV who may or may not be affiliated with an HIV/AIDS or HCV service organization

## **Terms**

The ABLC membership is on a two or three year renewable term. Membership will be reviewed for representation on an annual basis. In the event that the addition of new members is warranted, the ABLC members will collaborate in the nomination and selection of new members.

## **Decision Making**

The ABLC follows a consensus-based decision making model. The ABLC is committed to finding solutions that all members support, or in the absence of complete agreement, to which all members can consent. The ABLC will assess, on an annual basis, the functioning of the consensus-based decision making model and make any appropriate changes to the processes.

## **Deliverables and Reporting Responsibilities**

- Annual report to AIRN membership
- Annual progress report for the CIHR CBR Collaborative: A Program of REACH and contribution to the CIHR evaluation of REACH centres.
- Annual workplan (bridging AIRN, REACH 2.0 and the CIHR Collaborative 2.0) and priority setting (research/CBR and capacity building)
- Additional information as required to the REACH NLC to meet CIHR reporting responsibilities (TBD)

## **Frequency of Meetings**

- Monthly 1.0 hour video/teleconferences
- One annual face-to-face meeting (funding dependent)
- Other meetings to be arranged as required

## **Minutes**

The Atlantic CBR Manager records, circulates, and files minutes for all meetings. Minutes are written in a general format and posted on the AIRN website. A link to the minutes will be circulated to the AIRN membership monthly.