

## ABLC Meeting December 14, 2017: 10:00 – 11:00 AM Atlantic

**In Attendance:** Marni Amirault (CAAN & AHA Centre), Diane Bailey (Mainline), Larry Baxter (Community), Donna Bulman (UNB), Lois Jackson (Dal), Susan Kirkland (Co-Chair, Dal), Jeannine McNeil (PHAC), Karen Pitts (Hep NS), Caroline Ploem (AIRN), Cybelle Rieber (PEERS Alliance), Dena Simon (ACNS), Gerard Yetman (Co-Chair, ACNL)

**Regrets:** Stacey Burns-MacKinnon (PEI DHW), Julie Dingwell (AIDS SJ), Jacquie Gahagan (Dal), Greg Harris (MUN), Michael Liddell (Community), Jo-Ann MacDonald (UPEI), Michelle Proctor-Simms (NSACA), Julie Thomas (HON)<sup>1</sup>

---

## MINUTES

### 1) Welcome, Introductions and Check-in (Susan)

- Susan extended a special welcome to our newest member, Dena Simon, the Executive Director of ACNS. Dena was asked to introduce herself.
- Dena has been involved in the nonprofit sector for 30 years, first in the Arts and Sciences, and then with the MS Society for ~ 9 years, beginning in 2006. In 2017, she joined ACNS as Executive Director. With the shift in PHAC funding, her priority is to secure funding to enable them to continue into the future.

### 2) Review and Approval of Current Agenda and Minutes from November 16<sup>th</sup>

- The agenda was reviewed and approved with one addition – i.e. AIDS PEI rebranding to PEERS Alliance.  
  
AIDS PEI has changed its name to the PEERS Alliance. The acronym stands for: Prevent. Educate. Empower. Respect. Support. Their tag line is “Sexual Health Wellbeing and Drug Use Harm Reduction for All Islanders.” For more information, see the redesigned website: <https://www.aidspei.com>.
- While not officially added to the agenda, Susan noted that AIRN recently received the okay from Dr. Strang to release the report that we prepared for the Harm Reduction Working Group re. Provincial Models for SCS and NDD. The report is available at <http://www.airn.ca/reports.html>
- The minutes from November 16<sup>th</sup> were approved as circulated.

### 3) National Organization Updates

#### a) PHAC update (Jeannine)

- The last contribution agreement in the Atlantic region with an alliance of three African Nova Scotian organizations was signed in Dec/17. There has been frustration expressed regarding the CAF process and the major delays with contribution agreements being received.

---

<sup>1</sup> ACNL=AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador; AHA Centre=Aboriginal HIV & AIDS Community-Based Research Collaborative Centre; AIDS SJ=AIDS Saint John; CAAN=Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network; Dal=Dalhousie University; HepNS=Hepatitis Outreach Society of Nova Scotia; HON=Healing Our Nations; MUN=Memorial University of Newfoundland; NSACA=Nova Scotia Advisory Commission on AIDS; PHAC=Public Health Agency of Canada; UPEI=University of Prince Edward Island.

- PHAC's national evaluator (Militza) recently travelled across the regions to speak with groups about their evaluation plans.
- The Minister recently announced funding (30 Million over 5 years) for harm reduction initiatives. PHAC will be working with the provincial governments to identify how best to allocate the funding. The call for proposals for 2018-19 will be targeted.

While decisions have not yet been made, conversations have started in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Diane has been involved in a conversation with the province and PHAC and received an amendment to her current project for Mainline's PEER Navigator program through this harm reduction fund. Gerard has also been involved in a conversation about enhancing their program for people who use drugs.

#### **b) AHA Centre/CAAN update (Marni)**

- Marni reported that CAAN/AHA Centre met two weeks ago in Ottawa for a staff/board strategy meeting.
- Marni felt very privileged to go to two Inuit communities over the past two months for a project in which CAAN is involved regarding adapting a community readiness model to the Inuit context.

HIV is not a major concern in these communities, as compared to syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia. In terms of risk for HIV, injection drug use is not a big issue. Alcohol is the drug of choice and the two communities she visited were dry.

Marni found that there was very little stigma around HIV among healthcare workers and other staff and an openness to discussion. Marni did note, however, that two women from the community with whom she spoke held a number of myths about HIV transmission (e.g. food plates, toilet seats). This points to the need for basic AIDS 101 education, including pamphlets and posters, in some northern communities.

Marni noted that many of the people remembered an HIV+ woman visiting their communities in the 1990s and talking about HIV. This clearly had an impact on them. Gerard noted that in the 1990s, ACNL had a contract with the Inuit Health Commission and that Trudy did a number of speaking engagements in schools. To this day, there is no doubt that people living with HIV have a much greater impact when providing HIV education than those who are not living with HIV. Very little education has gone on since then.

#### **c) REACH update (Caroline)**

- The REACH Leadership met last Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. The meeting began with a presentation by Tejas Kulkarnion of bioLytical on the INSTI HIV Self Test. The test is available online as well as in pharmacies in the UK, France and Kenya. bioLytical (the developers of the INSTI Self Test and the POCT) is looking to introduce it to the Canadian market and are getting ready to do a clinical usability study in Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec with 1000 "high risk lay users". Sean Rourke is very involved in the Ontario study.
- It is time to start thinking about REACH 3.0. Funding for REACH 2.0 goes to the spring of 2019 and the grant application will likely be launched sometime in the summer of 2018 with a fall 2018 deadline. There will likely be a spring meeting of the REACH Leadership to discuss our strategy for REACH 3.0 and how to move forward from the REACH 2.0 iteration.

#### **ACTIONS**

- ✓ Contact Caroline if you are interested in seeing the slides from the INSTI presentation.

#### 4) HIV Stigma Project Funding (Proposal Development Update)

- Larry and Michael have agreed to be involved. Larry has reached out to Janet Connors and Trudy Parsons and we are planning to hold a brainstorming teleconference as soon as possible. We tried to meet before the holidays, but could not get everyone together. We intend to meet early in January and see where the conversation goes. Once we have that meeting, we will try to put pen to paper and get back to the ABLC as to what is happening.
- All agreed that it would be good to also involve the youth perspective in the early conversations. Diane and Dena may be able to connect us with some younger people who have more recently been diagnosed.

#### ACTIONS

- ✓ Caroline, Susan, Larry and Michael will meet with Janet and Trudy in early January to brainstorm around the HIV Stigma Project.
- ✓ When appropriate, Caroline will connect with Diane and/or Dena about younger contacts for the stigma initiative.

#### 5) ABLC Terms of Reference/Membership (Susan & Caroline)

##### a) Update re. ongoing interest of current ABLC members

- Thanks to all members of the ABLC for their ongoing commitment and interest. Caroline has reached everyone except for Gerry Mugford, and all have indicated that they want to continue for a second term.

##### b) Review of and suggested updates to the TOR

The group reviewed the document including the recommended track changes made by Caroline.

- **Purpose and Responsibilities:** No changes
- **Membership and Membership Criteria:** Change the term “race” to “ethnicity” in the first sentence.

We also discussed the implications of the statement, “At least 4 people living with HIV and/or HCV”. We agreed that our intention is to ensure that people living with HIV participate on the ABLC, but that there is no requirement for anyone to disclose their HIV status to be on the ABLC.

It was suggested that the statement specifying the number of people living with HIV be removed in favour of one indicating that we strive for having the first voice perspective at the table, but that no one is required to disclose their status. We also agreed to talk about Community and Government stakeholders separately and to include community organizations and community members under the “Community” heading.

- **Terms:** Given the concern that everyone will rotate off at the same time (every three years), it was agreed that we would introduce staggered terms and change the wording to indicate that ABLC membership is on a two or a three year renewable term.

##### c) Need for new member recruitment?

We reviewed the list of confirmed ABLC members for 2017-2020 prepared by Caroline. We currently have 19/20 confirmed members from the following sectors: CBOs (8); Academia (6); Government (3); and Community (2). Provincially, ABLC membership is as follows: NS (12); PEI (3); NB (2); and NL (2). If Gerry Mugford renews his term, membership from academia will increase to 7, and membership from NL will increase to 3.

In looking at the membership list, it is clear that we have fantastic, active and engaged people on the ABLC.

Based on our Terms of Reference, we are able to increase our membership if we so desire. When we bring on new people, it will be important for us to continue thinking about the overall composition of our group to ensure we strive to meet our targets around representativeness.

## **ACTIONS**

- ✓ Caroline will revise the Terms of Reference to reflect the changes agreed upon.
- ✓ Caroline will contact all members of the ABLC to determine their preference for a two or three year term.

## **6) Grants Recently Funded/Pending (Updates)**

### **a) Recent Decisions (since Nov/17)**

- MAC AIDS Fund (Decision: Nov/17): *“HANDUP Stands Up”* (C. MacIsaac) - \$20,000 [Funded]
- CIHR Team Grant: HIV Implementation Science Component 2: *“APPROACH 2.0: A Scaled-Up “APPROACH” to HIV and HCV Testing through Pharmacies”* (D. Kelly) [Declined]

### **b) Pending Decisions**

- CIHR CBR Catalyst Grant (Decision: Feb 28/18) – *“The **PANACHE** study (**P**references **A**nd **N**eeds for **A**ging **C**are among **H**IV **E**lders in **C**anada)”* (S. Walmsley and K. Murzin - Realize)
- CIHR CBR Operating Grant (Decision: Feb 28/18)
  1. *“Preventing the spread of HIV: The critical role of addiction treatment services”* (L. Jackson)
  2. *“New Technologies and Chemical Culture: Examining Deployment and Effects among MSM”* (M. Numer)

## **7) Ongoing Research Projects**

- [Canadian Blood Services “ACB and MSM – it’s not an oxymoron”](#) (Omisoore Dryden)
- “Additional Harm Reduction Services in two Sites in Nova Scotia: An Exploration of Advantages, Community Interest, and Methods of Delivery” (Lois & Diane)
- “The Canadian HIV Stigma Index CBR Project” (Francisco)
- Ending HIV Stigma in Canada: Adapting & Applying Contact-Based Interventions (Sean Rourke)
- “Halifax Area Network of Drug Users” (HANDUP) (Cindy)
- Catalyst Grant: “Moving Beyond Piloting POCT: A Social Ecological Exploration of Barriers and Facilitators to Scaling up HIV POCT in Canada” (Jacquie)
- “A New APPROACH to HIV Testing: Adaptation of POCT for Pharmacies to Reduce risk and Optimize access to Care in HIV” (Debbie Kelly)
- Others?

## **8) Recently Held and Upcoming Events (see <http://www.airn.ca/event-calendar.html>)**

- [CATIE Webinar: HIV and HCV point-of-care testing in Canada](#) — Nov 20/17 [Online]
- [CATIE Forum and Annual Meeting](#) — Nov 23-24/17 [Toronto]
- Red Ribbon Flag Raising & Reading of HIV/AIDS Awareness Week Proclamation — Nov 24/17 [Halifax]
- [PHAC Webinar: Epidemiology of HIV and other STBBI in Canada](#) — Nov 30/17 [Online]
- ACNS World AIDS Day Vigil — Dec 1/17 [Halifax]

- National Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week: Harm Reduction Day – Promising Practices Film Screening Dec 3/17 [Eskasoni]
- [1st CRISM Maritimes Symposium/Exchange Session](#) — Dec 5/17 [Halifax]
- [PHAC Webinar: Scoping Review of Barriers and Facilitators for HIV Screening and Testing](#) — Dec 6/17

- 
- [CATIE Webinar: New testing technologies and approaches for syphilis](#) — Dec 18/17 [Online]
  - [CanHepC: 7th Canadian Symposium on HCV](#) — Feb 9 - 11/18 [Toronto]
  - [Rainbow Health Ontario Conference](#) — March 21-24/18 [Sudbury]
  - Sounding the Alarm: Harm Reduction Symposium (Save the date) — March 23-24/18 [Saint John]
  - [CAHR 2018](#) — April 26-29/18 [Vancouver]
  - [Canadian Public Health Association 2018](#) — May 28-31/18 [Montreal]
  - [Global Hepatitis Summit 2018](#) — June 14-17/18 [Toronto]
  - [IAS, AIDS 2018, 22nd International AIDS Conference](#) — July 23-27/18 [Amsterdam]
  - Others?

**9) Next Meetings** (every second Thursday of the month from 10:00 – 11:00 am Atlantic Time)

- January 11, 2018 (cancelled) and February 8, 2018