

ABLC Meeting February 8, 2018: 10:00 – 11:00 AM Atlantic

In Attendance: Julie Dingwell (AIDS SJ), Lois Jackson (Dal), Susan Kirkland (Co-Chair, Dal), Michael Liddell (Community), Jeannine McNeil (PHAC), Karen Pitts (Hep NS), Caroline Ploem (AIRN), Michelle Proctor-Simms (NSACA), Cybelle Rieber (PEERS Alliance), Dena Simon (ACNS),¹

Regrets: Marni Amirault (CAAN & AHA Centre), Diane Bailey (Mainline), Larry Baxter (Community), Donna Bulman (UNB), Stacey Burns-MacKinnon (PEI DHW), Jacquie Gahagan (Dal), Greg Harris (MUN), Jo-Ann MacDonald (UPEI), Julie Thomas (HON), Gerard Yetman (Co-Chair, ACNL)²

MINUTES

1) Welcome and Check-in (Caroline)

- Susan was delayed in joining the meeting, so Caroline began by welcoming participants, clarifying who was joining by phone, and ensuring that everyone agreed with being recorded for minute-taking purposes. She then asked if anyone had any news or developments to share and reminded all that the screening of the harm reduction film, *The Stairs*, will be held Feb 15th in Halifax and in Saint John.
- AIDS Saint John will be hosting a Harm Reduction Symposium March 23-24 mainly for policy makers and health care workers. Seating is limited and accommodations are filling up fast. [Click here](#) for information about *Sounding the Alarm* Symposium. They are also presenting the [Vagina Monologues](#) as a fundraiser on May 11-12 at the Imperial Theatre in Saint John.
- Michael has been elected the Atlantic representative for CPPN (Canadian Positive People Network). It now has PHAC funding and is planning to hold three regional symposia this year – i.e. one in the Pacific Region to coincide with the CAHR Conference in April in Vancouver; one in the Prairies; and hopefully one in the Atlantic Region. Michael is on the committee to oversee the symposia and will keep us in the loop. There may be an opportunity for a CPPN-AIRN partnership (see Item 4 below).
- The NS Advisory Commission on AIDS is working on a proposal to develop provincial STBBI testing guidelines. Michelle has shared the document with colleagues in DHW, with the aim of holding broader community consultations this spring.
- The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia will be holding its annual *BMO Bid for Life Dinner and Auction* at the Atlantica Hotel March 22nd. Comedian Ted Morris – known from *The Debaters*, *Halifax Comedy Fest*, etc. – will be the host. For more info, see <https://halifax.snapd.com/events/view/1125019>.

¹ 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.

² 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.

- Several ABLC members attended *PrEP – The Pill to Prevent HIV: A Public Information Session* at the Halifax Central Library on Jan 31st. It was organized by the NS PrEP Working Group and attended by ~60 people. It was very informative, well received, and included a lot of audience engagement. A main topic of discussion was the need to include PrEP on the provincial drug coverage formulary.

Michelle is involved in discussions with DHW looking at coverage guidelines for PrEP. Draft provincial guidelines, consistent with the wording included in the national guidelines, have gone out to Infectious Disease experts for feedback.

The event included a sign language interpreter, and enabled a group of people from the deaf community to attend. Following the event, the group mentioned to Dena that they wanted to lead some HIV/STBBI/PrEP-related initiatives for the deaf community. While very preliminary, this is an exciting step forward.

2) Review and Approval of Current Agenda and Minutes from December 14th (Caroline)

- The agenda was reviewed and approved as circulated.
- A few edits to the Dec 14th were noted which Caroline will address.
- Caroline reported that all of the action items from Dec 14th were completed, and that most will be discussed as we proceed through the agenda.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Jeannine will forward her changes to Caroline by email.

3) National Organization Updates

a) PHAC update (Jeannine)

- The Harm Reduction Fund continues to be rolled out. The process for the first fiscal year (17-18) involved targeted solicitations based on discussions held with provincial governments across the country. PHAC has engaged at varying levels with the provincial governments in all four provinces. Funding for FY 18-19 will be more streamlined, and the folks at the national office are currently developing the application forms and other related documentation.
- Jeannine was in Ottawa recently and met with Lisa Lacroix, who is the PHAC lead for the National HIV Stigma Index.
- PHAC is hosting a national roundtable meeting on Feb 13th in Ottawa to discuss achieving STBBIs targets by 2030. Jeannine recommended that at least one representative from the Atlantic region and reached out to AIRN. Jacquie Gahagan agreed to attend the roundtable on our behalf. We will ask Jacquie to report back on the outcomes of the meeting.
- As a point of clarification related to the Harm Reduction Fund roll-out on PEI, Jeannine added that it has been difficult to reach Dr. Morrison (Chief Public Health Officer). PHAC has had some preliminary discussion with her, but there has not been a discussion with PHAC, the PEERS Alliance and Dr. Morrison to discuss the Harm Reduction Fund. Cybelle indicated that Dr. Morrison has recently agreed to meet with the PEERS Alliance.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Ask Jacquie to report back on the PHAC Roundtable Meeting.

b) AHA Centre/CAAN update (Marni)

- Marni sent regrets; no update provided.

c) REACH update (Caroline)

- The REACH Leadership last met in mid-January and included a presentation by Janice Duddy of the Pacific AIDS Network on the impact evaluation of the Positive Leadership Development Initiative (PLDI) – a program aimed at supporting people living with HIV/AIDS to realize leadership potential and increase capacity to participate meaningfully in community life. They have developed a 3-module leadership training program exclusively by and for people living with HIV. All of the information related to PLDI is available [online](#).
- REACH has recently established two working groups.

The first is focusing on getting a CBR Community of Practice (CoP) started. Caroline has volunteered to be on the committee to assist in getting this CoP off the ground and the first meeting will be held in March. The proposal funded by CIHR described the CoP as:

Our community of practice will provide passionate CBR practitioners opportunities for regular interaction. Members will engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other with CBR-related issues and tensions, share information, and build relationships that will enable them to learn from each other.

The second working group is involved in planning the next in-person REACH meeting, likely to be held in Toronto or Montreal in the spring of 2018. The meeting will focus heavily on the evaluation the REACH 2.0 iteration and preparing for submitting a CIHR grant application for REACH 3.0 in the fall of 2018.
- The next meeting will be held Feb 12th. Caroline, Lois and Jacque will be on the call.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Contact Caroline if interested in a copy of the PLDI presentation or any other REACH-related info.

4) HIV Stigma Project Funding (Susan)

- Caroline, Susan, Michael and Larry met with Janet Connors and Trudy Parsons in January. We talked about the potential of moving two concurrent agendas forward. Janet and Trudy are interested in getting an initiative going for long-term HIV survivors. AIRN has the opportunity to apply for funding through the HIV Stigma Index project to do some foundational work to develop capacity in the Atlantic Region. Essentially, we wanted to determine if we had a collective agenda to move forward together. The response was very positive.
- As a result of this conversation, Caroline and Susan agreed to start developing a proposal for the team to access REACH funding within the next month or so. Once the draft proposal is ready, the intention is to have another teleconference with the working group prior to bringing it forward more broadly. We all need to agree on what is in the proposal and in continuing to move forward together.
- Michael added that he has joined the symposia working group for CPPN and will be bringing forward to CPPN the possibility of partnering with AIRN to potentially combine the CPPN Symposium with an AIRN event related to the HIV Stigma Project (potentially funded through REACH). We could piggy-back the two events as a cost-saving measure and to increase the number of participants able to attend. He will be stressing the unique characteristics of the Atlantic region and the need to hold a separate symposium.
- Susan noted that we are moving forward but cannot rush this project to make sure we are getting it right.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Caroline and Susan to draft a proposal for initial input from the working group.
- ✓ Michael to keep AIRN informed about any relevant CPPN developments.

5) ABLC Terms of Reference (TOR)/Membership (Susan/Caroline)

- Susan thanked everyone for their response to emails about the TOR and is thrilled that people are willing to stay on and to contribute to AIRN.
- Caroline provided an overview of the changes made to the TOR. Most are based on the discussion from our last meeting, while a few others are wordsmithing or grammatical edits.
Under the “Membership” section, Caroline noted a change of language on page 1 from “race” to “ethnicity” and also the emphasis that “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.” On the second page, a change was made to separate government and community stakeholders, and to combine CBOs with community members. The length of terms has also been changed to be staggered 2-3 year renewable terms.
- Members questioned the use of the word “ethnicity” and a discussion followed regarding proposed terminology and how best to be inclusive. The group agreed that we needed to capture both race and/or ethnicity in the wording.
- Under the “Terms” section, we don’t need to state that the staggered terms were introduced in 2018.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Caroline will make the changes and (once approved) will post the revised TOR on the public section of the AIRN website.

6) U = U endorsement

- Susan thanked members for their universal endorsement of U = U. Caroline has contacted the Prevention Action Campaign and let them know that we are endorsing the message. Once she hears from them and our name is listed on the website, she will advise REACH and promote it on our listserv, website, and social media channels.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Once Caroline hears back from the Prevention Access Campaign and AIRN is officially listed on the website, she will advise REACH and promote it on our listserv, website, and social media channels.

7) Brainstorming: Possible topics for Next AIRN Event/Webinar

- Susan noted that a targeted, high-profile, once a year webinar is a useful way to communicate with our members. While she has a presentation on HIV and Aging that she could present based on her work as a visiting professor at the University of Calgary, we held a webinar on the topic last year when Dr. Giovanni Guaraldi was here. Perhaps we want to think of another topic with another speaker. She asked the group for feedback/ideas on potential topics and any suggestions for potential speakers.
- Cybelle suggested the interactions between harm reduction and trauma-informed frameworks for populations at risk (e.g. gay men and people who use drugs) and the ways in which the two approaches are more effective when intertwined.
- The group agreed that this was a very important topic and was keen on exploring the potential of a panel discussion. Several potential speakers were identified.
 - Susan suggested Dr. John Gill from the University of Calgary. He leads the Southern Alberta HIV Clinic and he has been doing some research in the area of trauma.

- Jeannine recommended Nancy Poole from BC. She has a breadth of knowledge around trauma-informed practice, gender-based analysis and addictions work.
- Cybelle is aware of a few people in Nova Scotia who have been doing a lot of work on trauma-informed care (e.g. Dale Gruchy and Art Bishop).

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Anyone with additional thoughts about potential topics or speakers to let Caroline know.

8) Grants Recently Funded/Pending

Pending Decisions

- CIHR CBR Catalyst Grant (Decision: Feb 28/18) – “*The PANACHE study (Preferences And Needs for Aging Care among HIV Elders in Canada)*” (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)

9) Ongoing Research Projects

- “Harm reduction and addictions interventions among people hospitalized with injection drug use-associated infective endocarditis” (Tommy Brothers)
- Canadian Blood Services “ACB and MSM – it’s not an oxymoron” (OmiSoore Dryden)
- “Project PEER (People living with HIV Engaged in Employment Roles): Uncovering the Impact of GIPA/MIPA and the Wise Practices of Informal and Formal Supports” (Greg Harris)
- “Additional Harm Reduction Services in two Sites in Nova Scotia: An Exploration of Advantages, Community Interest, and Methods of Delivery” (Lois Jackson & Diane Bailey)
- “The Canadian HIV Stigma Index CBR Project” (Francisco Ibáñez-Carrasco)
- Ending HIV Stigma in Canada: Adapting & Applying Contact-Based Interventions (Sean Rourke)
- “Halifax Area Network of Drug Users Stands Up” (HANDUP Stands Up) (Cindy MacIsaac)
- Catalyst Grant: “Moving Beyond Piloting POCT: A Social Ecological Exploration of Barriers and Facilitators to Scaling up HIV POCT in Canada” (Jacquie Gahagan)
- “A New APPROACH to HIV Testing: Adaptation of POCT for Pharmacies to Reduce risk and Optimize access to Care in HIV” (Debbie Kelly)

10) Recently Held and Upcoming Events (January 2018 –)

- [Community Forum: Isolation & Brain Health in Adults Living with HIV](#) — Jan 18/18 [Webinar]
- [Harm Reduction: Saving Lives through Compassion, Respect, and Dignity](#) — Jan 19/18 [Halifax]
- [PrEP – The Pill to Prevent HIV: A Public Information Session](#) — Jan 31/18 [Halifax]
- [African, Caribbean and Black Canadian HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#) — Feb 7 /18 [Various]

-
- [African Heritage Month](#) — Feb/18 [Halifax]
 - [Webinar: Ageism and Age-Based Discrimination in Older LGBTQ2 Communities](#) — Feb 8 [Online]
 - [CanHepC: 7th Canadian Symposium on HCV](#) — Feb 9 - 11/18 [Toronto]
 - [New PHAC Webinar - Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Syphilis in Canada: National Surveillance Data, 2006- 2015](#) — Feb 15 [Online]

- PHAC Roundtable meeting on STBBIs Canada — Feb 13/18 [Ottawa]
- Roundtable Consultation hosted by Mainline, D180 and Pro Bono Dalhousie (Opening a safer consumption site in Halifax’s North End) — Feb 15 [Halifax – no link available]
- The Stairs Screening, Harm Reduction Panel, and Discussion with HANDUP at Dalhousie — Feb 15/18 [Halifax and via webinar]
- [The Stairs Screening and Discussion](#) at the Carbon Arc — Feb 17/18 [Halifax]
- [Webinar: Reaching the Undiagnosed: Dried blood spot testing for Hepatitis C and HIV – a new approach for the rural and remote communities](#) — Feb 21/18 [Online]
- [Crossroads Interdisciplinary Health Research Conference](#) — March 9-10 [Halifax]
- [Rainbow Health Ontario Conference](#) — March 21-24/18 [Sudbury]
- [BMO Bid for Life Dinner and Auction for ACNS](#) — March 22 [Halifax]
- [Sounding the Alarm: Harm Reduction Symposium](#) — March 23-24/18 [Saint John]
- [CAHR 2018](#) — April 26-29/18 [Vancouver] – *AIRN Abstract Accepted*
- [Canadian Public Health Association 2018](#) — May 28-31/18 [Montreal] – *AIRN Abstract Submitted*
- [Global Hepatitis Summit 2018](#) — June 14-17/18 [Toronto]
- [IAS, AIDS 2018, 22nd International AIDS Conference](#) — July 23-27/18 [Amsterdam]
- Others?

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

- March 8, 2018 and April 12, 2018