

AIRN Blended Leadership Committee

Thursday March 10th from 9:30am-10:05am Atlantic

In attendance: Greg Harris (MUN), Susan Kirkland (Co-Chair, Dal), Jeannine McNeil (PHAC), Michelle Proctor-Simms (NSACA)

AIRN Staff: Caroline Ploem (Minutes)

Regrets: Marni Amirault (CAAN and AHA Centre), Larry Baxter (Community), Lois Jackson (Dal), Zack Marshall (MUN), Gerry Mugford (MUN)

Absent: Diane Bailey (Mainline), Stacey Burns (PEI DHW), Carla Densmore (HepNS), Julie Dingwell (Co-Chair, AIDS SJ), Jacquie Gahagan (Dal), Michael Liddell (Community), Cybelle Rieber (AIDS PEI), Julez Thomas (HON), Gerard Yetman (ACNL).¹

MINUTES

1) Welcome and check-in

- Susan welcomed everyone to the call.

2) Approval of current agenda and minutes from February 11th

- There were no additions to the agenda. The Feb 11th minutes were approved as circulated.

3) In-person Meeting with REACH Leadership (April 8)

- The April 8th meeting has been cancelled and will be rescheduled. The date had been set prior to PHAC's call for LOIs with a deadline of April 15th. This significantly impacted community involvement— i.e. only 3/21 people who were planning to attend were from ASOs/CBOs. We felt that it did not make sense and was disrespectful to hold a meeting with limited community involvement one week prior to the funding application deadline. REACH agreed.
- After discussing potential timeframes for rescheduling, the group agreed that it would be advantageous to hold the meeting as soon as possible, but after the LOI results are known so that we have a sense of the funding landscape. Since there will be a minimum of two-weeks turnaround between the LOI deadline (April 15) and the announcement of results, we should try to hold the meeting in early May.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Caroline will check with Sean and Susan for potential dates in early May (May 5th as a starting point).
- ✓ Caroline will send out another Meeting Request to the group ASAP.

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.

4) Thoughts re. AIRN applying for PHAC's Community Action Fund (CAF)?

- Based on the review of the call for LOIs, AIRN appears to be eligible to apply for the CAF.
- In preparing for this discussion, Caroline reviewed a high level draft SWOT analysis and asked for reactions and feedback.
- While acknowledging the potential value of the opportunity in terms of AIRN's funding and sustainability, a number of serious concerns were raised by the group, including:
 - There is less money in CAF than before than under ACAP (1.496 million for Atlantic Region).
 - More organizations will be applying, and it is likely that some currently funded organizations will lose some/all funding.
 - It is a very delicate situation. How would CBOs react to AIRN "competing" with them?
 - Entering into a funding competition would fundamentally change AIRN's relationship with the community and impact AIRN's role, which has focused mostly on research, rather than KTE.
 - None of AIRN's community members were online to provide their input/perspective.
- In light of these concerns and angst, all agreed that we should not proceed if applying would negatively change our role and relationship with the community.
- The only justification for going ahead would be if the CBOs/ASOs are supportive of the idea, and think what we are proposing would be of great benefit to them, enhancing rather than detracting from their work. Our work would need to be seen as adding value, and not duplicating, overlapping or taking away from the community.
- We need to get a clear sense of how the community would feel about AIRN applying through discussions with the Executive Directors of ASO's/CBOs in the region.

It will be important to convey that we are not bound either way (we're not trying to convince) but simply want to explore whether the idea makes sense and would benefit the community. While we see this as an opportunity, we understand the implications, and will not proceed without the community's support or "blessing." We will honour the overall sentiment of the community.

Other points of discussion

- If AIRN does apply, we would do so as an individual organization, rather than as part of a much more complex community alliance.
- AIRN has a unique purpose in the Atlantic and if AIRN no longer existed, the work would be set back significantly.
- We need to clearly communicate our intent behind applying. There will likely be groups who will have objections or concerns.
- ACNS has hired a new ED who will be starting later in March. ACNS and AIDS PEI are submitting a LOI as an Alliance; New Brunswick ASOs are applying as single organizations, as are NACS and ACNL. Direction 180 and Mainline have spoken about submitting a joint LOI, but were not sure if they had the capacity to proceed. Not sure what HepNS is planning.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Caroline will arrange informal phone conversations with all the EDs and the Chair of ACNS (week of March 14-18) and report back to the ABLC.

NOTE: After discussion with a number of community members following this meeting, the risk to our relationship with the community was deemed too high. AIRN will NOT consider applying for CAF.

5) AIRN Survey 2016 Update

- Caroline reported that, based on feedback received at the last meeting, the survey was revised for online administration.
- It went out March 2nd to 40 members (current and previous leadership; grant team members; potential funders)
- 12 responses received to date (30% RR), with a deadline of March 11th. Since the meeting with REACH has been postponed to May, we have gained some time to compile the results.
- All agreed it would be worthwhile to extend the deadline. Since many people will be away next week (March Break), the deadline should be at least two weeks.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Caroline to send out a reminder about the Friday March 11th deadline.
- ✓ Caroline will follow-up by email on the week of March 14th with all non-responders. She will let them know about the extension and provide the option of responding by phone.

6) Grants Recently Submitted

- Susan reported that the following grants were recently submitted:
 - NSHRF Development and Innovative Grant: *PREP-aring for the New Age of HIV: Examining the capacity of Nova Scotia to prevent HIV among MSM through pre-exposure prophylaxis treatment* – March 10 (Matt Numer)
 - CIHR Project Scheme: Testing Innovation: Bridging the Gaps to STBBI Testing Among At-Risk Youth in Select Non-Urban Settings – March 1 (Jacquie Gahagan)

7) Research Funding/Proposal Development Opportunities:

- [PHAC Community Action Fund](#) – April 15th LOI Deadline
- MACAIDS = <http://www.macaidsfund.org/thework/applications> – Application to be released April 1st with and deadline of May 2
- Upcoming: REACH, OHTN & CANFAR – Date TBA (PREP Implementation Project)
- [CIHR Catalyst Grant: HIV/AIDS Community-Based Research](#) (Summer 2016 Competition) – LOI call not yet released – Application Deadline will be June 28th
- No other opportunities were identified

8) Ongoing Research Projects – Updates

- Mainline Evaluation – The project is 99% completed and is back with Susan for a final read. Michelle offered to review again if need be.
- HIV, Aging and Frailty – Susan is working with a team from Italy and Montreal on to understand how the research on frailty can be of benefit to working with aging HIV patients. The team is looking to apply for international funding.
- Naloxone Demonstration Project – As indicated in the blog prepared for REACH, the one-year “Take Home Naloxone Project” funded by DHW is underway in Halifax and Sydney. It was launched in mid-February with the training of front-line staff and opioid users and the first of 600 kits hitting the streets. It is being conducted being conducted by Direction 180, Mainline and the Ally Centre. AIRN serves in an advisory capacity.
For more info: <http://www.reachprogramscience.ca/naloxone-pilot-project-launched-in-nova-scotia>
- Trans Priorities Project (Zack) – No update available.

9) Update on CBR Collaborative Centre and REACH 2.0

- Caroline has taken on the support role for the Peer Working Group who are looking to conduct an environmental scan. The overall goal is to look at the formal and informal policies and practices related to supporting PHAs involved in HIV-related paid or volunteer work.
- First tasks include scheduling regular meetings, updating the list of Peer Working Group membership and developing a short survey to determine level of participation in the Environmental Scan.

10) Upcoming Conferences/Events:

- [2016 International Conference on Viral Hepatitis \(ICVH 2016\)](#)
International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC) — March 14 to 15, 2016 [San Francisco, CA]
- HIV IN CANADA: Surveillance Reports & Estimates to December 2014 – March 16 (2 pm Atlantic).
<http://bit.ly/1QpOIVb>
- Participatory Action Research and Evaluation Workshop (Halifax): April 25-27.
- [CAHR Conference, 2016](#)
Canadian Association for HIV Research (CAHR) — May 12 to 15, 2016 [Winnipeg, MB]
- [CANAC Conference, 2016](#)
Canadian Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (CANAC) — May 19 to 21, 2016 [Halifax, NS]
- [Indigenous Health Conference, 2016](#)
University of Toronto— May 25 to 27, 2016 [Mississauga, ON]
- [AIDS 2016, International AIDS Conference](#)
International AIDS Society — July 18 to 22, 2016 [Durban, South Africa]
- [Guelph Sexuality Conference, 38th Annual](#)
University of Guelph— June 23 to 24, 2016 [Guelph, ON]
- See CATIE's What's New Listings for additional listings: <http://www.catie.ca/en/news/events>

11) Anything else?

- Susan thanked everyone for their input, highlighting the value of the feedback received related to the LOI submission.
- Our next two meetings are scheduled for April 14th (day before CAF LOI deadline) and May 12 (conflict with CAHR Conference). We will aim to reschedule at least one of these meetings.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Caroline will send out a Meeting Wizard request to reschedule meeting(s).

Next meetings: Dates to be determined – Stay tuned for a Meeting Wizard Request