

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

In Attendance: Marni Amirault (CAAN & AHA Centre), Donna Bulman (UNB), Angele DesRoches (PEERS Alliance), Jacquie Gahagan (Dal), Susan Kirkland (Co-Chair, Dal), Michael Liddell (Community), Jo-Ann MacDonald (UPEI), Jeannine McNeil (PHAC), Karen Pitts (Hep NS), Caroline Ploem (AIRN), Michelle Proctor-Simms (NSACA)¹

Regrets: Diane Bailey (Mainline), Larry Baxter (Community), Stacey Burns-MacKinnon (PEI DHW), Julie Dingwell (AIDS SJ), Greg Harris (MUN), Lois Jackson (Dal), Cybelle Rieber (PEERS Alliance), Dena Simon (ACNS), Julie Thomas (HON), Gerard Yetman (Co-Chair, ACNL)²

MINUTES

1) Welcome and Check-in (Susan)

The meeting began with a brief check-in of burning issues.

- Michelle – Working with Jacquie to co-host the KTE event for the “Moving beyond Piloting” study. She will be sharing the NSACA proposal on the development of STBBI testing guidelines for feedback.
- Karen – HepNS recently completed a speaker’s bureau pilot project. Three people affected by Hep C took part in the training and have already been asked by organizations to tell their stories. Hoping to incorporate peer support in future projects.
- Stacey – The PEI Department of Health is revising guidelines for blood-borne pathogens and STBBIs. They are looking at expanding their Take Home Naloxone Program, and also exploring PrEP.
- Michael – CPPN had a successful board meeting in Montreal in early March. He is busy working on the committee organizing the three regional symposia (including the Atlantic’s) and September’s AGM.
- Caroline – Provided an update on Diane’s behalf. Mainline’s peer outreach navigator work is going well; 12 peers have trained so far through PHAC funding. The hope is to optimize the number of peers and that some will become staff (one already has). They have submitted another proposal to PHAC for a 2-year project to increase peer work centrally and provincially and their funding application to DHW also includes a peer navigator position. They also received two Law Foundation grants, one involving a peer legal navigator that will start in April.

2) Review and Approval of Current Agenda and Minutes from February 8th

- The agenda was reviewed and approved as circulated.
- The Feb 8th minutes should read “The NS Advisory Commission on AIDS is working on a proposal to develop STBBI testing guidelines.”
- All action items from Feb 8th were completed except for the edits to the minutes of Dec 14th.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Jeannine will forward her edits to the minutes to Caroline.
- ✓ Caroline will edit the December and February minutes.

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.

3) ***GREAT NEWS*** from the CIHR Operating Grant: HIV/AIDS CBR Competition 2017-2018 (**General** and **Indigenous** Streams)!

- Susan reported that we were really pleased to learn the results of the fall competition, bringing more resources into the region and enabling us to address these very important issues. The following projects were funded:
 - “Preventing the spread of HIV: The critical role of addiction treatment services” (L. Jackson)
 - “New Technologies and Chemical Culture: Examining Deployment & Effects among MSM” (M. Numer)
 - The "Weaving Our Wisdoms" Study: Using a Land-Based Approach to Optimize Whole-istic Health among Indigenous People Living with HIV (CAAN)

4) **National Organization Updates**

a) **PHAC update (Jeannine) and overview of the Feb 13th STBBI Roundtable Consultation (Jacquie)**

- The Harm Reduction Fund is starting to roll out. Organizations were invited to apply for two-year projects based on hotspots identified in discussions with the provincial governments. An invitation was not sent to PEI as there had been challenges connecting with Dr. Morrison (Chief PHO). While there may be some back and forth with the applications, it is not the typical competitive process. The following organizations were asked to apply by the March 31st deadline:
 - Nova Scotia: Mainline, the Ally Centre, and Northern Healthy Connections Society
 - Newfoundland and Labrador: ACNL and Memorial University
 - New Brunswick: AIDS Moncton, AIDS Saint John and AIDS New Brunswick.
- Jeannine is not sure when the funding will flow. This is of particular concern in Nova Scotia, because the three organizations do not have federal funding beyond March 31st.
- The Community Action Fund year-end reports are due at the end of April. The reporting process has become more streamlined (only need to fill out one tool instead of three).
- There may be more coming from the Harm Reduction Fund with a more open call. Jeannine is awaiting more information, and there should be something specific posted on the PHAC website soon.
- Jeannine hopes but is not sure whether PEI will have the opportunity to apply for funding this year. Cybelle does have a meeting scheduled with Dr. Morrison (March 13th) and has provided her with useful information about the work she is doing with PWUD on PEI. PHAC’s connect with the provinces is usually through the Regional Director (Judith Wood Bayne) who will be meeting with Dr. Morrison following the Cybelle and Dr. Morrison meeting.
- Jacquie reported on the Feb 13th *STBBI Roundtable Consultation*. This was a follow-up meeting to a 2017 PHAC meeting to talk about actions for what Canada can do to address STBBIs. This meeting was much smaller than in 2017 and focused a lot on: Where is the report and when will it be released? The hope was that it would have been released prior to the meeting. Frustration was expressed by organizations that were promised funding but still have not received it.
- The STBBI Action Plan still has not been released and it makes it very difficult for groups that are looking at applying for the next round of funding to know how to align with PHAC priorities. There was also an opportunity to go through each section of the draft action plan, talk about content, and address where the emphasis should be. There was an underlay of frustration, as momentum seems to have slowed in the last year with the loss of Minister Philpott.

- Jeannine indicated that the Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO) – Dr. Theresa Tam – came to Newfoundland a few weeks ago and held meetings on STBBIs with a number of stakeholders. She had met with Mainline the last time she was in the region. The focus on STBBIs is a very positive shift from the office of the CPHO and she has been very well received.
- Jacquie recently attended a SIECCAN (Sex Information and Education Council of Canada) meeting in Ottawa to rewrite the Canadian sexual health education guidelines. Contracted by PHAC, SIECCAN is looking to update the guidelines and to move them out of the schools, which has not been particularly effective. New testing technologies have been flagged, and the new guidelines are meant to include a discussion on the importance of testing.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Ask Gerard to report on the meetings with Dr. Tam. If he cannot do it, Jeannine will do so.

b) AHA Centre/CAAN update (Marni)

- Marni began with an overview of the "Weaving Our Wisdoms" grant, which is being led by Sherri Pooyak, and will be looking at Indigenous land-based methodologies. They are working closely with a group of Aboriginal PHAs in BC who essentially developed the proposal.
- Just submitted a grant to the CIHR Project Scheme competition. CAAN has a lot of research that has not been widely shared. They want to look at this work to see how information was shared in the past and what different methods can be used going forward to share the knowledge. It is aimed at building a better understanding of Indigenous knowledge translation.
- The AHA Centre website is up and running. Hoping that it will be a one-stop shop for Indigenous CBR research in Canada and beyond.
- A poster and oral presentation have been accepted for the CAHR Conference. The poster will be on "capacity bridging" and the oral presentation will be around "Doing research in a good way: What does that look like and what does that mean?"
- Had their first in-person governing council meeting for the AHA Centre 2.0 in Toronto.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ If anyone has any feedback on the [AHA Centre website](#), please let Marni know.

c) CPPN update (Michael)

- CPPN just held a very successful board retreat in Montreal and accomplished a lot of work. Since Michael joined the board, Atlantic membership has increased from 8 to 20. He is hoping to increase membership across the region, particularly in New Brunswick that only has two members.
- There will be an Atlantic symposium. He is on the committee to organize the symposia nationally. There will be three one-day strategic planning events. CPPN has agreed to partner with AIRN to add an extra day to focus on what we choose.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ ABLC members asked to spread the word about CPPN membership to their networks.

d) REACH update (Caroline)

- The first part of the last meeting (Feb 9th) was spent brainstorming on ideas for moving forward on the commitment to diversity and inclusion and to the development of a draft policy with concrete guidelines (e.g. sex and gender, inclusion of people with disabilities, PWUD, language, structural exclusion, systematic racism). A working group has been formed to begin drafting a policy.

- Next year is the 10th anniversary of University Without Walls (UWW) and they are looking to establish an impact award to show contributions to the field. There is also a paper in the works describing UWW and its impacts, including the need to keep talented and dedicated folks in the HIV sector.
- The next REACH Leadership meeting is tomorrow (March 9th). There are not many details out yet, but a discussion of REACH testing initiatives is on the agenda, as is a discussion related to AHA-REACH Collaboration.
- The REACH CBR Communities of Practice Working Group is also holding its first meeting tomorrow.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ ABLC members are asked to let Caroline know if they are aware of any great resources related to Communities of Practices (CoP) that she could share.

5) HIV Stigma Project Funding: Proposal Development and Next Steps (Susan)

- Caroline, Susan, Larry and Michael have been working with two women living with HIV on a proposal to do some development work toward implementing the HIV Stigma Index. We are not ready to implement the Stigma Index in this region without doing some capacity building.
- A draft document has been prepared and will be shared with the working group for feedback prior to sending the funding proposal to REACH. The timelines are tight, in that one of the first phases of the project involves partnering with CPPN to add an extra day to the Atlantic Symposium planned for June.
- The Stigma Index implementation involves Peer Research Associates (PRAs) — i.e. people living with HIV — interviewing other people living with HIV. AIRN has committed to interviewing ~100 people living with HIV. Through this project, we hope to identify people who are interested in becoming PRAs, as well as to build connections with and among people living in the region who are living with HIV.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Caroline will circulate the first draft of the proposal to the working group and others as appropriate for feedback with the aim of sending the proposal to REACH as soon as possible.

6) ABLC Terms of Reference (Caroline)

- Susan thanked the ABLC for the feedback received at the last meeting, noting that the ToR had been revised as discussed, with one additional change resulting from a discussion between Caroline and Marni. Rather than saying “race/ethnicity,” they proposed the change to “cultural diversity.”
- Feedback from the group revealed that “cultural diversity” did not adequately capture what we are trying to convey. Ethnicity, race and culture are interwoven but separate determinants of health and oppression.
- We all agreed on using the term “ethnic, racial and cultural diversity” instead.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Caroline will revise the ToR to reflect the discussion above.
- ✓ Jacquie will forward a paper that addresses the unique characteristics of ethnic, racial and cultural diversity to the ABLC.

7) Continued Brainstorming for Next AIRN Event/Webinar (Susan)

- At our last meeting, we talked about an event addressing the intersection of trauma-informed care and harm reduction in our work. There was significant interest in moving forward. Should we now commit to arranging a webinar on this topic?
- We spoke about potentially bringing in Nancy Poole (BC Centre of Excellence in Women's Health) and/or John Gill (University of Calgary) to talk about the work that they are doing. Does it make sense to have both speakers on a webinar?
- Do we want to think of holding a panel discussion? A couple of potential speakers from Nova Scotia were also mentioned (i.e. Dale Gruchy and Art Fisher). It could work with a 1.5 hour webinar, each presenting for 10-15 minutes.
- We need to do some more background work to make sure that these potential speakers have sufficient expertise in HIV and drug use.

We know that Nancy Poole's main focus has been on tobacco, pregnant women, children and youth. What about HIV and drug use? Nancy has come to the Atlantic Region several times and PHAC has always had a good experience with her in terms of making her training relevant.

Cybelle and Angele attended a harm reduction training in Halifax provided by Dale Gruchy. HIV was a small part of the training.

- As for timeframe, May could potentially work. We will likely be very busy in June and we want to avoid the summer months.

ACTIONS:

- ✓ Caroline will gather bios for the four potential speakers to determine how relevant it would be to proceed on this topic with these speakers.

8) Grants Recently Funded/Pending

(a) Recently Funded (Feb 28/18)

- CIHR CBR Catalyst Grant – “*The PANACHE study (Preferences And Needs for Aging Care among HIV Elders in Canada)*” (S. Walmsley and K. Murzin - Realize)
- CIHR CBR Operating Grant – General Stream
 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)
- CIHR CBR Operating Grant – Indigenous Stream
 3. *The "Weaving Our Wisdoms" Study: Using a Land-Based Approach to Optimize Whole-istic Health among Indigenous People Living with HIV* (S. Pooyak, R. Masching, S. Nixon)

(b) Pending Decisions

- CIHR Project Grant Spring 2018 APPROACH 2.0 – A Scaled-Up "APPROACH" to HIV and Other STBBI Testing through Pharmacies” (D. Kelly) – Decision: July/18

9) Current Research Funding Opportunities

- NSHRF 2018 Funding Competition (deadline: Mar 22/18)
 - Establishment Grant (\$50,000 per year for up to three years)
 - Development/Innovative Grant (\$15,000 for one year)

10) 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)

11) Recently Held and Upcoming Events (February 2018 –)

- [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: 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
 - [CATIE Webinar: Strengthening efforts to eliminate hepatitis C – An overview of the latest in research and implications for frontline workers](#) – Feb 28/18
 - [PHAC Webinar: Barriers and Facilitators to Hepatitis C Virus Screening and Testing](#) –Mar1/18
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- [Community Meetings - How Anti-black racism impacts the blood system in Canada](#) — March 8-10 [Halifax, Dartmouth, North Preston]
 - [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]
 - [Realize: Translating HIV, Aging & Rehabilitation Interventions into Practice](#) — June 15-16 [Toronto]
 - [IAS, AIDS 2018, 22nd International AIDS Conference](#) —July 23-27/18 [Amsterdam]

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

- April 12 and May 10, 2018