

January 2005

Seeking for a Journal Title

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) through the project entitled; “*Enhancing Dissemination: Including Establishing an Aboriginal Community-Based HIV/AIDS Peer Reviewed Research (Annual) Journal, Promoting a Web Presence and Conference Participation*” is seeking for suggestions for the title of an Aboriginal HIV/AIDS paper and electronic Journal to be housed at CAAN.

One of the goals of the project is to enhance dissemination of Aboriginal community-based HIV/AIDS research using a variety of methods, such as a paper journal. We are looking for a journal title that will reflect the following keys words; Aboriginal, HIV/AIDS, Community-Based Research (CBR) and Ownership, Control, Access and Possession. (OCAP)

Even though the journal will be an academic one, our emphases is to make it captivating, reader- friendly and valuable to community members. Please keep this in mind when thinking of a title.

Please submit your proposed title together with your name and address by e-mail, fax or snail mail to the following address by **Friday February 25th 2005**. Should you want to know more about the project or to ask any questions, also refer to;

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“Addressing Homophobia in Relation to HIV/AIDS in Aboriginal Communities”

As the summer ends, the Anti-Homophobia Research Project is finishing up the data collection phase. Through a mail-out survey, organizations who serve Aboriginal populations were asked if they have any anti-discrimination policies and their comments on the development of solutions to address issues of homophobia. Plus, individuals who self identify as Two Spirit were recruited from five organizations across Canada about their own personal experiences with homophobia and asked suggested solutions of how organizations can reduce the impact homophobia when accessing care and services. This fall, the Anti-Homophobia Project will be analyzing the data and producing a final report, which will hopefully be released before the end of 2004. Thank you to all organizations for completing the survey and for the hard work of recruitment organizations for approaching individuals to participate in the study.

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The XV International AIDS Conference

A Convergence of Divergent Views

by Dina Epale (CBR Coordinator)

I recently got the opportunity to represent the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) at the XV International AIDS Conference that was held in Bangkok, Thailand from July 11th -17th 2004. As primary author of an abstract and scholarship recipient, I attended the conference to carry out a poster presentation entitled; *“The Results of a nation-wide environmental scan on the community-based research (CBR) skills and needs of Aboriginal AIDS service providers in Canada.”* I also took part in the cultural component (Silabha) of the conference where I displayed five posters from CAAN that were carefully designed to depict the main Aboriginal groups in Canada (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) in a joint effort to raise awareness of issues around HIV/AIDS. They were crafted to be used especially during Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Day, which coincides with the World AIDS on December 1st.

In keeping in line with the theme, “Access for All”, the conference brought together over 17,000 delegates and 3,000 journalists from all over 160 countries around the world, from all walks of life, from all races, and from all levels of government. It is therefore not surprising with this myriad of people that a divergence of opinions manifested itself. One of the most highly attended and talked about debates was entitled; *“CNN vs ABC (CNN = condoms, edles and negotiating skills/ABC = abstinence, be faithful, condoms).* Steven Sinding, Director General of the International Planned Parenthood Federation and Arushi Singh, a youth speaker from India focused on prevention models which promotes condoms, clean needles and negotiating skills while Edward Green a Senior research scientist from the Harvard school of Public Health and Simon Peter Onaba, a youth speaker from Uganda, focused on prevention models around abstinence, faithfulness and proper and consistent use of condoms. The ABC promoted abstinence as the only real prevention strategy while the CNN side believed in promoting all three equally in addition to

negotiating skills due to the different situations related to cultural practices. The debate over which prevention measures are more effective have been existing for as long as the virus has been known to be around and shows no signs of abating. What I gathered by the end of the debate was not which or if any strategy was better than the other, but how much more complex the whole HIV/AIDS issue is, than I ever realized.

Anyone who might have thought that such a convergence would make it easier to agree in principle, on some issues around HIV/AIDS (especially as we should all have the same goal in mind - finding ways of curbing the spread of the HIV virus and treatment for HIV positive people), would have been wrong because the over 17,000 conference delegates represented different opinions that stemmed from personal experiences, political motivation, career choices, public opinion etc. The mere fact that Paisan Sunwannawong (Thai AIDS Activist and former ID user), the only AIDS activist who was asked to give a talk during the opening ceremony, was left standing speaking in front of less than a 100 delegates after the majority had walked out following the key note address by UN Secretary General, Koffi Annan, did not speak well about the concerns some delegates and the conference organizers for that matter, had regarding the role of AIDS activities. After much outcry and pressure, Paisan Sunwannawong was asked to participate in the closing ceremony. This time however, the organizers made sure he spoke when the thousands of delegates were still around so as to avoid the embarrassment of the opening ceremony

Another thing that caught my attention was the lack of any major scientific breakthrough. Given the current global focus on treatment issues around HIV/AIDS and the WHO’s 3 by 5 initiative, it was the hope of thousands of delegates and non-delegates to see major scientific breakthrough during this conference as a vital step towards the ultimate goal of providing universal access to AIDS treatment to all those who need it. Haven failed in any scientific breakthrough, the focus was on other areas that could be considered of importance as well. Human rights and HIV/AIDS, Youth issues around prevention strategies. At least one session entitled; *Legal, Ethical and Human Rights Issues in Microbicides Development and Delivery; Strengthening the Canadian Response* focused on



the development of microbicides; a rather important topic in HIV/AIDS.

Further more, in my opinion, the presence of indigenous groups was barely noticeable. As someone who was representing an organization that actively works for Aboriginal people, I would have wished to be able to share my knowledge and gain some insight into what other indigenous groups around the world are going to address the rather high incidence of HIV amongst these groups. It is my wish to see that at the next international AIDS conference being held in Toronto in 2006, Aboriginal people play an active role and are well represented at the conference.

All in all, attending the World AIDS Conference was an experience in itself-one which opened my eyes to a lot of things and realities and probably more important enhanced my perception of the challenges we still face when dealing with issues around HIV/AIDS. To see what other countries are doing and how they are coping with the situation was something that thrilled me. It was also interesting to see that there is no universal strategy for combating HIV/AIDS for each region and country in the world have particular needs which if not considered when carrying out HIV/AIDS work, is sometimes bound to end in a fiasco.

I would like to seize this opportunity to thank the CBR National Steering Committee at CAAN, as co-authors of the poster, for their guidance and suggestions which made the whole process worth it. Special mention also goes to CAAN management and staff for their support and suggestions and for giving me the opportunity to represent the organization.

See you all in Toronto in 2006 and let the presence and voices of indigenous people be seen and heard.



Seeking Members for the Editorial Board for CAAN's Aboriginal Community Based Research Journal

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) through the project entitled; "*Enhancing Dissemination: Including Establishing an Aboriginal Community-Based HIV/AIDS Peer Reviewed Research (Annual) Journal, Promoting a Web Presence and Conference Participation*" is seeking for members for its Aboriginal Community-Based Research (ACBR) paper and electronic journal to be housed at CAAN.

One of the goals of the project is to enhance dissemination of Aboriginal community-based HIV/AIDS research using a variety of methods, such as a paper journal.

You, together with the other members of the editorial board, will be required to conduct blind reviews of article submissions about two or three times a year or as directed by CAAN.

We are looking for members from Aboriginal communities residing anywhere in Canada. None Aboriginal applicants should have a good research background and be interested in HIV/AIDS and Aboriginal issues.

Letters of interest should be received no later than **Friday February 25th 2005** and should be forwarded to;

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Should you want to know more about the project or to ask any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.



Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Anti-Discrimination Policy Framework

The purpose of the AHAAD project is to develop a workbook and fact sheets that outline a flexible HIV/AIDS anti-discrimination policy framework to be used in Aboriginal organizations and communities. While the project met with some staffing and administrative difficulties in the early stages, it has been underway since October 2003 and is making steady progress. However, one notable change is that Gilbert Deschamps has left the project and Tracey Prentice has taken over as project coordinator.

To date, the following activities have taken place: a steering committee has been struck, a 1st draft of the literature review has been written and revisions are under way, existing policies are being collected for review, and interviews have begun with individuals working and living in the communities the policy is intended for. A first draft of the policy workbook is also underway and should be completed by the end of November.

This project will conclude on March 31, 2005. Fact sheets, workbook and related materials will be available in both official languages from CAAN or on the CAAN website. As well, watch for training sessions on how to use the workbook in your region or at regional/national conferences.



Errata (mistakes, errors, omissions, etc.) for **HIV/AIDS and Aboriginal Women, Children and Families:**

A Position Statement

- Page 3 1) The source for the graph entitled “HIV/AIDS among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Women, 2002” should read:
- Health Canada (2003). “HIV/AIDS Among Aboriginal Persons in Canada: A Continuing Concern”. *HIV/AIDS Epi-Updates*, pp. 35-40. Ottawa, ON: Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control.
- 2) The bar graphs “IDU” and “Heterosexual Contact” indicate percentages for *all* Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons in provinces with reported ethnicity.
- Page 5 3) The first sentence in the second paragraph under *Gender Roles, Self-Esteem and Violence Against Women* should read “Repeated sexual or physical abuse affects women’s vulnerability in other ways as well.”
- Page 9 4) The first bullet on this page should read “Research efforts, in collaboration with community-based organizations, need to be focused on Aboriginal women living with HIV/AIDS. Qualitative and quantitative data are required.”
- Page 10 5) The reference for Gatali and Archibald, should read “Gatali, Marlene & Chris Archibald.”



The Influence of Stigma on Access to Health Services by Persons with HIV Illness Project

By Joyce Seto

This project is a collaborative research project with the University of Alberta. Thirty two interviews with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants have now been completed to explore the role of stigma in access to health care services. The interviews, conducted in Edmonton and Ottawa, represented the first phase of the project. Coding and analysis of these interviews is now in progress. As the Stigma Project moves to phase two, project staff will be collecting documents including health centre practices, policies and guidelines, from participating organizations. These documents will be analyzed to determine stigmatizing and discriminatory actions and practices in HIV care. Interviews and focus groups with healthcare providers will be conducted during phase 2. Health care providers will be asked to reflect upon the themes emerging from the phase one interviews with HIV sero-positive individuals.

Diagnosis and Care of HIV Infection Among Canadian Aboriginal Youth

Guided by the principles of OCAP, the "Youth Testing Project" represents a collaborative effort between community, universities and government, to understand the perceptions and experiences of Aboriginal youth in relation to HIV testing. To date, project staff have completed 345 of 400 surveys with Aboriginal youth from across the country and 8 of 20 in-depth interviews. In the near future, project staff will be traveling to Halifax, Toronto, Vancouver and Inuvik to complete the data collection.

Next steps include analyzing the survey data, inputting and analyzing the interview data and disseminating the results to community, government and academia. Our dedicated steering committee will be invaluable in this process.

This project is scheduled for completion on March 31, 2004. If you are interested in learning more about this project please contact me at traceyp@caan.ca.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ABORIGINAL HIV/AIDS COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCHERS

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) is pleased to announce the availability of a service for Aboriginal Community-Based Researchers. This technical assistance (TA) will assist you in securing scholarship funding to present at various conference venues as well as in the development of presentations.

CAAN will;

- Use existing channels such as our newsletter, web site, etc to disseminate information regarding conferences/scholarship opportunities as well as tips on how to access these, as well as what to do when you want to submit an abstract to one of these conferences.
- When requested, review abstract submissions and presentations and provide comments to authors.
- Develop resources that support abstract submission and/or presentation format

This service is free of charge to any CAAN member organization regardless of geographical location.

For more information or to begin the process of identifying a workshop/conference and submitting an abstract, contact the following;

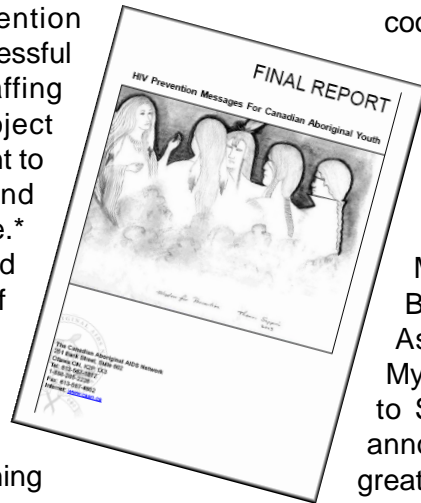
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HIV/AIDS Prevention Messages for Canadian Aboriginal Youth

In March 2004, the Youth Prevention Messages project came to a successful conclusion. After some initial staffing difficulties, CAAN secured a project coordinator and a research assistant to work closely with a dedicated and energetic youth steering committee.* Together, these individuals completed a literature review, a survey of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service providers, fact sheets, and a final report. The final report includes recommendations for communities and organizations wishing to begin or strengthen a prevention program as well as an annotated bibliography of existing youth prevention programs and resources. The fact sheets and final report are available from the CAAN office or on the CAAN website.



In addition to the project deliverables mentioned above, project staff co-facilitated a 3 hour workshop at “Let’s Talk: A National Capacity Building Conference on Children, Youth and Families Affected by HIV/AIDS” held in Toronto. This was a very successful collaboration with CAAN’s community-based research coordinator and individuals from the Family Life Association of Swaziland. A poster presentation of final research results and recommendations was also made at the 13rd annual Canadian Conference on HIV/AIDS Research (CAHR) in Montreal.

Many thanks to Angelina Amaral, Franco Buscemi, Dale Unrau, Raymond Harper, Ashley Norton, Suzanne Nyce and Jamie Myrah for all your excellent input! Also, thanks to Sheila Grantham for pulling together the annotated bibliography. All your efforts were greatly appreciated!

CAAN WebLibrary

Eve Louttit

In our March 2004 newsletter, it was stated that CAAN would be launching the Eloquent WebLibrary, but due to the priority of other projects, it has been put on hold until further notice.

However, all our HIV/AIDS and other resource materials are still being entered into the system. With this Eloquent WebLibrary has been identified as a stable and easy to use database that allows the cataloguing of the collection and on-line (web) access to the catalogue.

Those interested in downloading any of our resource materials please go to: www.caan.ca or www.linkup-connexion.ca and follow directions as given.

Also <http://www.caan.ca> CAAN’s new publications that have been entered and updated for easy downloading. Anyone who are interested downloading these new publications are welcome.

But unfortunately, we are out of stock on these documents: (1) Summer Training Awards, Final Report 2003-2004, (2) Foundations of a Good Practice 2004, (3) HIV/AIDS Community Project Yearbook 2004. (4) Joining The Circle: Aboriginal Harm Reduction Phase II.

