



Canadian AIDS Society
Annual Report

2013-14

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
Message from the CEO	3
Advocacy and Government Relations	4
Governance	4
People Living with HIV/AIDS Forum and Annual Meeting	4
Membership Engagement	5
World AIDS Day	5
World AIDS Day Gala and Parliamentary Event	5
The AIDS Memorial Quilt (Names Project) Handover	6
Mother's Day 2013	6
Pride 2013	6
Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life	7
Active, Aging and HIV+ - A One Foot Forward Toolkit	7
Trans* People Needs Assessment	7
Rural and Remote Needs Assessment and Webinars	8
HIV and Women	8
Medical Marijuana	8
HIV Transmission: Biological Factors that Affect Risk Webinars	9
Canadian Blood Services	9
Depression and Anxiety	9
Faith-based Communities Framework	9
Digital Repository Project: SAGE	9
5 Diamond Charity Golf Tournament	10

Message from the CEO

The government has heard from each of you that your constituents are not comfortable with their proposed model of integration. We have brought about a response, by sharing our individual stories and concerns about how this integration will effect the grass-roots movement in Canada. Your stories, your concerns, your voices — they have been heard.

Each of you brought your voice to this discussions, and through your efforts, and our efforts of your behalf, we have made a difference. The concerns we shared on your behalf were ones that affected the lives of the people we serve every day, and when we took their attention, and focussed it on that, on the lives of Canadians, they had no choice but to listen.

*“In 2013 the Agency discussed the outline of the new fund with key national and regional stakeholders including, as one component, a proposed new delivery model. After due consideration, the Agency has determined that the delivery model as envisioned may not be a viable and cost effective option, nor the right fit for all provinces and regions. **As a result, the Community Planning process intended to support the development of the delivery model has been put on hold.** Over the next few months the Agency will explore other approaches that would reduce the number of contribution agreements it manages, while continuing to ensure that the overall funding for community work remains the same.*

*Marsha Hay Snyder
Director, Programs and Partnerships
Centre for Communicable Diseases and Infection Control”*

This is our success. This is the first step in ensuring that the the new delivery model will be one that we help define.

Some may question our impact, some may not realize the hours each of us spent lobbying, communicating, and building relationships, were for this moment; but I want you to know here and now, that our voice was heard, because you came together and gave us - CAS and its Board - the voice that stopped this change.

We did this together. And it gives me pleasure to be here again with you, as a conduit, as the voice of the community-based AIDS movement.

It is your passion that feeds me, the stories shared, the supports shown, and your extraordinary leadership in your passion for the communities you serve, that holds me up on *those* days (you know the days). I want to thank you, and to tell you that we can do so much more now. We are on the right path, and we are leading the way.

Yours, in service,



Monique Doolittle-Romas
CEO

Advocacy and Government Relations

Based on the direction given by the membership at the 2013 Annual Meeting and People Living with HIV/AIDS Forum, we focussed our attention on the imminent changes to the funding structure at PHAC.

Throughout the year we met multiple times with the Minister of Health - and we used every opportunity, including her attendance at the 2013 World AIDS Day Gala, to deliver the message that the community would not bear the impact of the proposed changes easily.

Working closely with PHAC staff and senior managers, we were able to deliver our message and address our concerns to the appropriate parties to effect a change in the direction of integrated funding structures.

Governance

The Board of Directors meet monthly to oversee the direction of the agency and to give direction to the Chief Executive Officer. Twice a year they come together for face-to-face meetings during which members have been known to work 16 hour days. The commitment of these individuals is applaudable every day. They are your voice throughout the year and your conduit for information.

At our Annual Meeting in June of 2013, we presented the new Bylaws for the Canadian AIDS Society, which were adopted by the membership.

While our regions tend to be geographically large, each regional director and person living with HIV/AIDS regional director strives to maintain contact with their members and be available as a representative of CAS.

This year the board of directors have begun the process of strategic planning, a process that they are bringing to the Forum and Annual Meeting for further consultation. This is an important time, not just for CAS, but for the movement, as we need to provide leadership and direction during the planning of a new service model from PHAC.

People Living with HIV/AIDS Forum and Annual Meeting

The 2013 People Living with HIV/AIDS Forum and Annual Meeting was held in Ottawa in June of 2013. This annual gathering brings together people living with HIV/AIDS from across Canada to participate in workshops, trainings and governance of the Canadian AIDS Society.

The key issues raised at the Forum in 2013 were: The Role of people living with HIV/AIDS in GIPA, public awareness, youth, and stigma and discrimination.

This event is unique in Canada, as a gathering strictly for people living with HIV/AIDS. It would not be possible without the support of the Public Health Agency of Canada and a generous scholarship program coordinated by the CEO through the following donors: ViiV Shire, Abbvie, Gilead, and Janssen.

Canadian AIDS Society Annual Report 2013-14

The Annual Meeting was held immediately following the Forum and featured an opportunity for CAS' membership to meet and set priorities for the agency for the coming year. The membership gave clear direction about the upcoming changes to the funding structures and during the year CAS' Board of Directors acted upon this direction. In addition, the membership prioritized communication and engagement as an area for CAS to work on in the coming year.

A very important part of our Annual Meeting is the presentation of the Individual Leadership Award. The 2013 award was given posthumously to one of the true leaders in the response to HIV and AIDS in Canada - Mr. John Plater (1967-2012). John was a lawyer by training and an activist by nature. As an HIV positive man, John lobbied tirelessly on HIV, hepatitis C, co-infection and Hemophilia. He is greatly missed, as an advocate and as a friend to CAS.

Membership Engagement

Given the severity of the impact of PHAC's funding structure changes, CAS felt it important to keep our members apprised of the situation and changes effecting geographic regions of Canada. Throughout the year, CAS hosted regional teleconferences and made efforts to attend regional meetings across the country. In addition we hosted national conference calls to provide updates on the proposed model of integration, giving our members the opportunities to ask questions and give direction.

World AIDS Day

The theme for World AIDS Day in 2013 was HIV and Aging. Working with the HIV and Aging Working Group hosted at the Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation (CWGHR) and members of CAS' community, we formed a national advisory group to guide this important project.

Building on lessons learned from past campaigns, and working with social media and print media, we delivered a national awareness campaign that lasted for 1 month, leading up to World AIDS Day.

Print media included the posters and a series of fact sheets, developed in partnership with CWGHR. The fact sheets covered topics such as diagnosis, treatment and care; prevention; and psychosocial considerations.

This project also include our most integrated social media strategy yet, with a series of bilingual advertisements being developed for sharing and linking on Facebook. With an accompanying contest for those who shared and liked our images, we had an unprecedented response to this aspect of the campaign with over 7,000 likes and shares. This has improved CAS' presence on social media platforms and our presence continues to grow throughout the year.

Abbvie was a proud private sector sponsor of this year's campaign.

World AIDS Day Gala and Parliamentary Event

As in previous years, CAS, with the support of Abbvie, hosted a Red Ribbon Event on Parliament Hill. This event not only allows Members of Parliament to pick up their red ribbons and show their support for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, it gives us the opportunity to meet and share our concerns and experiences in the work that we do.

Canadian AIDS Society Annual Report 2013-14

This year over 150 Members of Parliament and 4 Cabinet Ministers came to meet with CAS' CEO and Board Chair, including the Minister of Health.

The Minister of Health was also a guest of honour at Rouge: The Canadian AIDS Society's World AIDS Day Gala. In addition to being CAS' premier fundraising event, this annual gala brings together politicians, funders, community partners and people living with HIV/AIDS to mark World AIDS Day.

The AIDS Memorial Quilt (Names Project) Handover

CAS has officially become the stewards on The Names Project. We are slowly collecting and curating the quilt, building a database of the individual pieces, where they are located and presented and examining each quilt panel for damages, which we will eventually see repaired and conserved. The panels are currently being stored at the CAS offices, but we are working with contacts in the government to determine if a part of The Quilt can be housed at Canada's Human Rights Museum. Additionally we are seeking a photographer with a studio to prepare high resolution images of the quilt so we can relaunch the website and bring The Quilt to a new generation of people affected by HIV/AIDS.

Mother's Day 2013

Working with Hyperactive, an Ottawa-based marketing firm, we held our second annual Mother's Day campaign. Building on our work in 2012 in using Mother's Day as a vehicle to deliver HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness messages to women and their children, we hosted a smaller version of this campaign.

With social media and print-on-demand resources, we hosted a campaign where, once again, we asked participants to share a message in our 15 minutes for Mom campaign. This campaign showed us what we could do with a simple, on-line campaign.

Pride 2013

The relationship between the HIV community and the Gay community is longstanding. Indeed, even as the epidemic shifts and changes in Canada, we still see an overwhelming representation of gay men infected every year.

This year, CAS was lucky to have the support of Janssen to participate in Pride Festivals across the country with a community fair exhibit highlighting our work on HIV and Aging.

Our staff and volunteers attended Pride Festivals in Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and, by popular demand, Vancouver.

With visitors being asked to share their "Recipe for Living Well" our staff and volunteers collected inspirations from people of all walks of life and shared them via our website (<http://www.recipes4livingwell.ca/en/main>) and twitter feed at the hashtag #HIVAIDSRecipes4livingwell.

The website included a link to the resource *One Foot Forward: Active aging and HIV+* and later was updated with links to the fact sheets developed for World AIDS Day.

Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life

The Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life remains one of Canada's largest awareness raising and fundraising events for the community-based HIV/AIDS movement in Canada.

We are proud to work in partnership with Positive Living BC and the AIDS Committee of Toronto to bring this event together every year. Each year, our small team works to secure support and resources to bring attention to Walk Week in support of the Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life.

This year, we were extraordinarily lucky to be working with a team from TBWA\Toronto which is an international marketing firm that works with such brands as Nissan, Apple and Gatorade. They developed a public service announcement and print ads for the event that received international attention when the social media group upworthy.com featured the video on a daily highlight to its subscribers. The impact was felt, with over 40,000 views and 60% of viewers clicking through to the giving platform.

We were also proud to count Gilead, Santa Margarita Pinot Grigio, and BMS among our national partners for the Walk.

Active, Aging and HIV+ - A One Foot Forward Toolkit

During the summer of 2013 we ran a campaign to promote the latest addition to our One Foot Forward series - this time, a toolkit on aging. During various Pride festivals we highlighted this resource, seeking to direct people to download it from our website.

The resource is a work-book that challenges people living with HIV and Aging to become engaged in the community and to also look at their needs as they age. The document is available for order from CATIE.

Trans* People Needs Assessment

With the support of funding from the *ViiV Healthcare Shire Canada Positive Action Canada HIV/AIDS Innovation Program* we completed a national needs assessment of trans* people in Canada.

The primary objective of the research was to gain a better understanding of the needs of trans* people (including transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, intersex, and otherwise gender non-conforming) in order to enhance capacity among AIDS service organizations (ASOs) to serve them.

Under the guidance of a National Community Advisory Committee, and with ethics approval from the Public Health Agency of Canada's Research Ethics Board, we conducted a bilingual national survey of trans people between September 2013 and January 2014. There were eighty-one questions on the survey, exploring gender, income, employment, housing, experiences of discrimination and harassment, support, health care, health status, transition, use of AIDS service organizations, and other needs.

Data from over 400 surveys were used in the analysis. We also conducted key informant interviews with representatives from seven AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs) and two LGBTQ health services organizations, to explore trans needs from the service providers' perspectives, as well as challenges in service delivery.

The final report and a series of fact sheets are available on our website on the CAS website in the Social Issues, Population Specific Information, Trans* people folder.

A limited number of fact sheets are available in hard copy as well for those who require them.

Rural and Remote Needs Assessment and Webinars

Working with an advisory committee made up of people working and living in rural settings, CAS developed and conducted a needs assessment of organizations providing service to rural and remote settings.

Interestingly the respondents were often in urban centres, providing services to rural clients. A number of challenges were identified through the research process and CAS developed a final report which include recommendations for improvements to funding structures, programs and supports to address stigma and discrimination, and recognition of the reality that many services simply are not available in Rural and Remote settings, and AIDS Service organizations work daily to manage priorities and serve all who seek their support.

To wrap up the work on this needs assessment, CAS hosted several webinars, offered in French and English, on the results of the needs assessment and on the services provided by one service organization in the north.

HIV and Women

With the support of Gilead CAS has been able to continue its work on women, girls and trans women. First, through the ongoing support and working with the Gathering of Spirits Collective. This group has worked tirelessly on the The National Consensus Statement on Women, Trans People and Girls and HIV Research and efforts were made throughout the year to promote it.

Over the year we also conducted a review of literature and a scan related to an upcoming project on the economic impact of HIV on women and in developing a prevention toolkit for women and girls.

We also participated in the development of a Concensus Statement on Women, Girls and Trans Women and HIV/AIDS Research, including co-hosting a meeting at the 2013 CAHR Conference.

Medical Marijuana

This year, we have seen significant changes to the regulations for accessing medical marijuana. With a new set of regulations, comes many questions and concerns, which CAS seeks to answer through its research and communications on this topic.

In addition to providing member updates on the changed regulations, CAS has been active in a national research project Cannabis Access for Medical Purposes which seeks to examine barriers to access and trends in use of marijuana for medical purposes. A community summary of the results of this research entitled “Barriers to Access for Canadians who use Cannabis for Medical Purposes” was developed and is available on our website.

HIV Transmission: Biological Factors that Affect Risk Webinars

In partnership with the International Rectal Microbicides Advocacy Group we offered a series of webinars, in French and English, with a global expert in new prevention methods and biological factors that affect risk.

These were conducted in order for people to learn about our new publication *HIV Transmission: Biological Factors that Affect Risk* which was released in the fall of 2013.

Canadian Blood Services

Working with stakeholder groups from across various health concerns, CAS was proud to be a part of an initiative that saw the lifetime deferral for gay men to give blood reduced to 5 years from the last MSM activity. While we are aware of, and agree, that this is not ideal, we see it as a step forward in ensuring that blood donors are able to give in the future. We look forward to more research and understanding of how this policy change effects the blood supply in Canada, and hope that Health Canada will one day approve a shorter deferral in the future.

Depression and Anxiety

Working with a small advisory groups made up of volunteers from across the country, we developed a resources on depression and anxiety and HIV/AIDS.

This resource will be released in June of 2014 and will be the first in our new series: *Let's Talk*, a series of resources developed to help people living with HIV/AIDS.

Faith-based Communities Framework

CAS had the opportunity to work with a group of relatively new partners in developing a resource document for faith-based communities seeking to respond to HIV and AIDS in their community.

This resource, titled *FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESSING HIV/AIDS IN CANADA: A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK*, is a resource for those working in a pastoral care context to support people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHIV/AIDS) in their communities, and to encourage communities to affirm PLWHIV/AIDS in a societal context.

The document is available for download on our website and limited numbers of hard copies will be made available through CATIE.

Digital Repository Project: SAGE

In partnership with CATIE and the HIV/AIDS Legal Network, we have been working for several years to define and build an on-line repository for electronic documents. These can be working documents, final reports, templates, and other resources. The digital repository will be launched at that CAS Annual Meeting in 2014.

5 Diamond Charity Golf Tournament

CAS was once again lucky to benefit from a third party fundraiser, put on in Gatineau Quebec at Hautes Plaines Golf Club. Five local hotels come together to host this annual event, that has become an important opportunity for CAS to raise awareness and strengthen partnerships with local community partners.