



National Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week 2017: ***Indigenous right to equitable health without discrimination or stigma***

Ottawa, ON (November 2, 2017) – The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) announces Indigenous leadership and their supporters will gather on **November 30, 2017 in Ottawa, ON** for a **Parliamentary Breakfast** to launch Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week 2017. It will be followed **December 1 – 6, 2017** by 12 events across the country (**Vancouver, Edmonton, Regina, Winnipeg, Iqaluit, Toronto**, and more) to unite an Indigenous response to HIV and AIDS in a parallel theme to World AIDS Day: My Health, My Right.

This series of events across Canada will connect Indigenous organizations, government partners, health care providers, and community leaders as they reflect on what has been achieved and what must still be achieved to obtain their right to health: by testing to “know your status”, eliminating stigma and discrimination, and ensuring equitable access.

To end the AIDS epidemic, global efforts are aligned around a 90-90-90 Strategy which sets three measures of progress. On World AIDS Day 2016, the Government of Canada reported Canada’s advances on these measures: 80% of HIV-infected people in Canada know their status; 76% of those who know they have HIV are on treatment; and 89% on treatment have suppressed viral loads.

“Indigenous communities hold the knowledge needed to close HIV target gaps, as we continue to be over-represented 2.7 times higher than other Canadians,” said Ken Clement, CEO of Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network. “Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week is an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples, researchers, and policy makers to share wise and promising practices, learn from each other and build relationships across the country.”

Right to Health is attune to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Barriers exist to Indigenous Peoples’ Right to Health including stigma, discrimination, and systemic racism. Indigenous communities hold strengths of traditional knowledge, culture, language and connection to land which supports wellbeing and health equity.

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network and its launch day co-hosts, Canadian Global Health All-Parliamentary Caucus HIV TB & Malaria, Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD), and Pauktutit Inuit Women's Association of Canada invite you to participate in Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week as it brings awareness to the different aspects of HIV prevention and key populations such as Indigenous women and youth living with HIV and AIDS.

For more information or to RSVP, visit: www.aboriginalaidsawareness.com

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About CAAN www.caan.ca

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) is a non-profit organization that leads a national forum for Indigenous Peoples to wholistically address HIV and AIDS, HCV, STBBIs, TB, mental health, aging, and co-morbidity issues; remedy social determinants of health through advocacy; and provide resources on these issues in a culturally relevant manner for Indigenous Peoples wherever they reside.

About ICAD www.icad-cisd.com/

About Pauktuutit <http://pauktuutit.ca/>

PHAC Budget Cuts Impact Indigenous HIV/AIDS Equity Access

Imbalanced federal funding heavily emphasizes prevention, but underfunds care for People Living with HIV; disconcerting given indisputable evidence that support programs improve treatment adherence, drives down viral loads and eliminates further HIV transmission.

"In the case of CAAN, **2018 brings a 46% funding cut.** The Public Health Agency of Canada's continued decision to severely reduce funding for CAAN decimates the leading voice of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples living with HIV or AIDS and will have far-reaching consequences on both Indigenous health and reconciliation," stated Ken Clement, CEO of Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network. "Over Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week we hope to find ways to hold the process accountable to restore and create wellness opportunities for Indigenous Peoples."

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

Nov 30 :: Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week 2017 Parliamentary Caucus Breakfast
Community voices, cultural sharing and keynote speech by UNAIDS Michel Sidibe.
Ottawa, ON

Dec 1 :: International Day (World AIDS Day)
Ottawa, ON; Iqaluit, NU ~ TBC; Regina, SK ~ Feast; Saskatoon, SK ~ Round Dance

Dec 3 :: Harm Reduction
Eskasoni, NS Film Debut: "Promising Practices in Eskasoni First Nation– Utilizing Harm Reduction."

Dec 4 :: Women's Day
Montreal, QC; Prince Albert, SK

Dec 5 :: Métis Day
Edmonton, AB

Dec 6 :: Youth / 2-Spirits Day
Vancouver, BC Film Screening: "A Mile in Our Moccasins;" **Toronto, ON**

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