Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) has developed a theme for Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week (AAAAW) for December 1 - 6, 2019 that parallels the international theme for World AIDS Day, Communities Make the Difference.

Communities Make the Difference!

Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week offers an important platform to highlight the role of Indigenous communities at a time when reduced funding and a shrinking space for civil society are putting the sustainability of services and advocacy efforts in jeopardy.

The series of nationwide events provide an important opportunity to recognize the essential role that Indigenous communities play in the AIDS response at the international, national and local levels. The leadership and advocacy of Indigenous communities ensure that the AIDS response remains relevant and grounded, keeping people and human rights at the centre and leaving no one behind.

During AAAW, Indigenous peoples across Canada will raise awareness about the critical role of community to inform culturally safe approaches to wholistic HIV testing, care and treatment. Wholistic means in a manner that reflects Indigenous cultures and traditional knowledge, and also the unique social, spiritual, economic and political needs of specific communities.

It will also address the barriers that stop communities from delivering essential services. We will promote ‘Communities Make the Difference” with an Indigenous approach, and do so within the context of these factors:

- Canadian government’s adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
- Canada’s progress towards 90/90/90 strategy and the critical role Indigenous people play in achieving that.
- Alignment with the “Strong Medicine” documentary messaging in order to bridge the way for testing to become a sacred practice.

RATIONALE

Leading an Indigenous Response

Solutions to addressing HIV in Indigenous communities must come under the leadership of those who are most directly affected. We must be visionary leaders on the matter of HIV in Indigenous communities and be actively engaged in shaping our culturally safe, tailored responses to HIV and AIDS.

Testing to Know Your Status

This is a call for Indigenous communities to reduce the number of new HIV infections by promoting prevention, education, and testing. HIV is in our communities and our people continue to contract the virus - so we must stand up and take action! Getting tested and knowing our HIV status, so we can get early treatment to significantly reduce the risk of HIV transmission.

Eliminating Stigma & Discrimination

Our communities must fight against discrimination and keep the circle strong by including those living with HIV and AIDS. There must be zero tolerance for gender-based violence. We must have services that do not racially discriminate against Indigenous Peoples, which often become great barriers to getting tested, accessing treatment, and supports.

Ensuring Equitable Access

HIV is no longer a death sentence and a person may live a long healthy life if they receive proper testing, care and treatment. We must push towards zero barriers to treatment for all. We must insist that increased culturally relevant support and services are provided to Indigenous peoples, so that they do not become isolated, can feel safe to get tested, and increase options and access to antiretroviral therapy for people living with HIV; including access to traditional medicines and ceremonies.

Protecting Our Whole Community

We must address the alarming numbers of Indigenous youth and women disproportionately impacted by the HIV and AIDS epidemic. Our youth are contracting HIV at a younger age than other Canadians - they are a generation at risk who must need our help. We must also eliminate transmission of HIV from mother to child, which means zero babies are born HIV positive. And we must work to address and to decrease preventable HIV transmission among people who use drugs by meeting them where they are at and utilizing what works.

In solidarity,

Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network Team
Launch of the Toolkits

Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network is proud to launch the updated toolkits at this year's Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week kickoff event.

The four new toolkits include: 1) HIV Toolkits, 2) Hepatitis C Toolkits, 3) STBBIs Toolkit and 4) The Harm Reduction Toolkit. These toolkits provide First Nations On-Reserve, Indigenous Communities Off-Reserve and Metis People with up to date resources.

We want to thank the Steering Committees for their guidance and leadership, Public Health Agency of Canada and the First Nations Inuit Health Branch for their contributions to the success of this project.

These new resources are available on CAAN website at www.caan.ca.
Daily Events

Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week 2019
December 1-6: Ottawa Launch & Regional Events

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

December 1, 2019
FLAG RAISING
Ottawa, ON

December 2, 2019
OFFICIAL LAUNCH DAY
PARLIAMENTARY RECEPTION
OTTAWA, ON

Communities Make the Difference
Join us in Ottawa for a Parliamentary afternoon reception in honour of World AIDS Day and Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week featuring speakers highlighting the critical role that communities play in the local, national and global responses to HIV. Coffee, tea and light snacks will be provided.

- **Debut Global Report** – *Stigma and Discrimination Experienced by Indigenous Peoples Living With HIV and Tuberculosis in the Workplace*

Co-hosts: Interagency Coalition on AIDS & Development (ICAD), Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, Results Canada, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network

- 131 Queen Street, Ottawa ON (Room 7-52)
- December 2, 3:00 to 5:00 pm

Contact: Shayna Buhler
sbuhler@icad-cisd.com
(613) 233-7440 ext. 114

**RSVP required**: Deadline November 27, 5pm EST
Important: Please bring photo ID. Event is hosted at a parliamentary building and security requires this. Entrance will not be granted without ID and RSVP.

December 2
MORNING KICK-OFF
Ottawa, ON

Join us in launching Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week. Learn some exciting ways that communities are making a difference at the local, national and international levels.

- Carlton Suites Hotel 161 Laurier St W Ottawa, Ontario
- December 2, 10am to 12pm (Lunch will be served at noon)
- Contact: Tea O’Donnell, teao@caan.ca, 1-778-877-1619

Happy-Valley-Goose Bay, NL
Strong Medicine – Movie Luncheon
Join us at the Labrador Friendship Centre to share in a soup/sandwich luncheon where we will watch the film Strong Medicine. Discussion and resource distribution to follow.

Co-hosts: SHIELD Project-Labrador Friendship Centre, Innu Education, SIFN Ussiniun Youth Centre, Community Youth Network Sheshatshiu, NunatuKavut, Nunatsiavut and LG Health, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network

- Labrador Friendship Centre, 49 Grenfell Street Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL
- December 2, 12:00pm -1 p.m.
- Contact: Denise Cole, SHIELD Project dcole@lfchvgb.ca, 709-896-8302 ext 224

Winnipeg, MB
Manitoba Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week
Testing available for HIV and STIs. More details coming soon.

Co-hosts: Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre of Winnipeg Inc, Nine Circles Community Health Centre Inc, Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc, Manitoba HIV Program, Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc, Sisters of Fire, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network

- Neeginan Centre, 181 Higgins Ave, Winnipeg
- December 2, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm
- Contact: Monica Cyr, Director of Primary Care directorprimarycare@ahwc.ca, 204-925-1203

December 3
HARM REDUCTION DAY

Vancouver, BC
Harm Reduction

The Harm Reduction event will focus on Indigenous Brothers and Sisters who are leaving federal institutions in the Pacific Region. This event will highlight Promising Practices that communities play in responding to these issues and will highlight their efforts and how they play a major role in the successful reintegration of Indigenous people.

This event will bring together several organizations within Vancouver and surrounding area to discuss current supports that are available, discuss gaps and services and will formulate strategies to address those gaps.

Co-hosts: Circle of Eagles, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network

- 2008 Wall Street, Vancouver, BC
- December 3, 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- RSVP to Merv Thomas, merv@circleofeagles.com, 604-874-9610
Eel Ground First Nation, NB
Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week – Family Fun Day
A family fun day filled with games and learning about HIV/AIDS for all ages. Door Prizes and a flat-screen TV grand prize for participants to complete an evaluation. HIV Awareness Games ranging from Bingo (each game $50 Visa gift card) to ring toss. Indian Tacos, Cake and Water will be served. There will be opening remarks about what community members can do in their communities to spread awareness not the virus! Healing Our Nations rely on our partnerships with direct service organizations in each region to better serve our Indigenous communities. There will be information booths from our direct service partners who can serve the community members in their area in the hope of bridging gaps in Indigenous health.

Co-hosts: Healing Our Nations and Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network
- Eel Ground First Nation, New Brunswick
- December 3, 11:00am – 3:00pm
- Contact: Julie Thomas – Executive | Director – Healing Our Nations, healingournationsed@outlook.com, 1-902-492-4255 or 1-800-565-4255

December 4
GLOBAL DAY
Toronto, ON
Think Global – Act Local: Toronto To Zero for Indigenous Peoples
Indigenous organizations, AIDS service organizations, human rights advocates, Indigenous communities, people living with HIV and students for a night of cultural sharing, interactive dialogue and personal testimony.

Highlights will include 20 hand drums to bring the spirit of music to the sharing of lived HIV experiences. Including a speaker who will share his journey with PrEP. Attendees will participate with the different drums until they are raffled as prizes! Cultural entertainment will also include Jingle Dress Dancing (a rare ceremonial healing garment) by Spotted Eagle Woman.

Speakers will cover the impact of local Indigenous communities on global issues, such as, a Toronto to Zero – an initiative to make Toronto a UNAIDS Fast Track City.

- Free HIV testing will be provided (method TBC).
- A light dinner and refreshments will be served.
- This session is free and open to everyone.


Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation
AAAW Youth Movie Night
Join us for food and a screening of Strong Medicine followed by discussion and information sharing at the Sheshatshiu Ussiniun Youth Centre. Open to youth aged 12-18 and free to attend.

Co-hosts: Sheshatshiu Innu First Nations Ussiniun Youth Centre and SHIELD Project-Labrador Friendship Centre, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network
- Ussiniun Youth Centre, Sheshatshiu, Labrador
- December 4, 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- Contacts:
  - Angelina Rich, SIFN Ussiniun Youth Centre Coordinator 709-899-5796 lucyrich26@gmail.com; Denise Cole, SHIELD Project, Labrador Friendship Centre 709-896-8302 ext 224 dcole@lfchvgb.ca

December 5
WOMEN & YOUTH DAY
Montreal, QC
We Are ‘Strong Medicine’: An Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week Event
Opening & words of welcome to start off the day followed by the history & reason for Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week. Lunch will be served by the NFCM following which Doris Peltier will introduce the film Strong Medicine. Following the screening Doris Peltier will lead a talk back. The event will also include a health information fair on subjects like, but not limited to, HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis C, HIV + pregnancy, youth, STBBI’s, drug use, harm reduction as well as Naloxone Training available from AQPSUD. At all times there will be art supplies available, information, tea, coffee & conversations. as well as a collaborative art project to take part in.

Co-hosts: The Native Friendship Centre of Montreal (NFCM), The Quebec Association for the Promotion of the Health of Drug Users (AQPSUD), Southern Quebec Inuit Association (SQIA), Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network
- Native Friendship Centre of Montreal, 16 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON
- December 4, 2:00pm – 4:00pm
- RSVP, Trevor Stratton trevor@caan.ca, 416-999-3250
- Contact: iehtente@caan.ca, 514-805-8650
December 6
MÉTIS DAY

Edmonton, AB
Activities aimed at increasing awareness of HIV and promoting testing of HIV. The informational afternoon will feature a Métis “Night Out” Survival Kit (including Harm Reduction tools), Dry Blood Spot Testing, Naloxone Training, and HIV positive speaker, Joe Richards. There will be HIV games to win a 32” flat screen TV and gift cards along with face painting for youth. Serving Chili and Fry Bread

Co-hosts: Northern Indigenous Health Alliance, Sagitawa Friendship Society, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network
- Yellowhead Tribal College, 10045 – 156 St, Edmonton, AB
- December 6, 11:00am – 3:00pm
- Contact: Raye St. Denys, rayestdenys@gmail.com, Ph: 403-348-9562

Happy-Valley-Goose Bay, NL
AAAW at Mealy Mountain Collegiate
Wellness Cafe will be distributing HIV and STBBI information to students over lunch hour along with freebees and light refreshments.

Co-hosts: SHIELD Project and Wellness Café (Labrador Grenfell Health), Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network
- Mealy Mountain Collegiate, 1 Voisey Drive, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL
- December 6, 12:15pm – 1:15pm
- Contact: Denise Cole, SHIELD Project dcole@lfchvgb.ca, 709-896-8302 ext 224

Sturgeon Lake, SK
HIV Wellness workshop

Sturgeon Lake is having its annual HIV wellness workshop. Come learn about HIV, Wellness, traditional teachings, mental health and addictions.

Cohosts: Sturgeon Lake Health, CAAN
- 726 Education Road, Sturgeon Lake, SK
- November 26, 27, & 28, 2019 at 10 am to 3 pm each day
- Contact: James Roberts, CAAN jroberts.jr57@gmail.com
  Darren Skibinsky, RN Sturgeon Lake Health, dskibinsky@slhc.ca 306-764-9352