



20th Anniversary of National Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week: *Leading Indigenous Voice Faces Funding Impact on HIV Programs*

Ottawa, ON (November 6, 2018) – The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) announces Indigenous leadership and their supporters will celebrate its 20th Anniversary of Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week on **November 29, 2018 in Ottawa, ON** with a **Parliamentary Breakfast** followed by **December 1 – 6, 2018** events across the country (**Vancouver, Edmonton, Peace River, Grande Prairie, Saskatoon, Winnipeg** and more) to unite an Indigenous response to HIV and AIDS in a similar theme to World AIDS Day: *Health For All – Know Your Status*.

- Ottawa November 29 Keynote: **Hon. Jane Philpott, Minister of Indigenous Services**
- Peace River Correctional Centre event includes an open dialogue on Prison Needle Exchange Program and Harm Reduction with incarcerated inmates.
- Vancouver event focus on Harm Reduction for Indigenous peoples leaving Federal Institutions in Pacific Region.
- Indigenous peoples are over-represented in the HIV epidemic 2.7 times higher than other Canadians.

This series of events will connect Indigenous organizations, government partners, health care providers, and community leaders as they share lessons learned in order to create community readiness and culturally safe approaches to wholistic testing, care and treatment.

For over 20 years Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week has provided HIV prevention, treatment and support resources and worked with Indigenous communities to empower them to address infectious diseases. In addition, CAAN's Promising Practices documentaries have received awards and accolades and Comcast has acquired global distribution.

The annual campaign is supported by CAAN's network which spans over 400 individuals and AIDS services partners; along with international alliances in 11 countries.

Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week 2018 will also act as a platform for CAAN to continue to lobby for an urgent review of the HIV and Hepatitis C Community Action Fund, which has left so many long-standing organizations crippled by reduced funding or no funding. CAAN is experiencing the harsh impact of a 46% funding cut from the Community Action Fund.

“CAAN's severely reduced funding decimates the leading voice of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples living with HIV or AIDS and will have severe consequences on both Indigenous health and reconciliation,” states Ken Clement, CEO of Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network. “We struggle to identify and support the newly funded groups in order to add an Indigenous voice to their work, and with our work we face losing the momentum we've made to eradicate the spread of HIV.”



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 Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada invite you to participate in Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week as it addresses the different aspects of HIV prevention in a manner that reflects Indigenous cultures and traditional knowledge, and also the unique social, spiritual, economic and political needs of key populations.

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 collective response to protect the wholistic wellness of First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples impacted by HIV, hepatitis C and related diseases and issues, such as mental health, addictions and aging. Through research and programming, it informs and influences public health policy from an Indigenous worldview and advances self-determination to address health determinants with Indigenous traditions, values and knowledge.

About Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD) www.icad-cisd.com

ICAD is a Canadian coalition of approximately 100 Canadian AIDS service organizations (ASOs), international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), faith-based organizations, educational institutions, labour unions, and engaged individuals. ICAD helps Canadians contribute to international HIV/AIDS work and ensures that the lessons learned from the global response to HIV/AIDS are utilized by Canadian organizations to improve prevention, care, treatment and support work in Canada. ICAD does this through improving public policy, providing information and analysis, and sharing lessons learned.

About Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada <http://pauktuutit.ca>

Pauktuutit is the national non-profit organization representing all Inuit women in Canada. Its mandate is to foster a greater awareness of the needs of Inuit women, and to encourage their participation in community, regional and national concerns in relation to social, cultural and economic development.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

*Nov 29 ~ Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week
2018 Parliamentary Caucus Breakfast
Nov 29 & 30 ~ Community Readiness Training
Ottawa, ON*

*Dec 1 ~ Indigenous Day (World AIDS Day)
Ottawa, ON
Saskatoon, SK (Round Dance)
Peace River, AB (Round Dance)*

*Dec 2 ~ Northern/Rural
Peace River Correctional Centre*

*Dec 3 ~ Youth Day Vancouver, BC
Testing Grande Prairie, AB
Testing Winnipeg, MB*

*Dec 4 ~ Métis Day Edmonton, AB
Film Screening Toronto, ON*

*Dec 5 ~ Family Day Membertou, NS
Testing High Level, AB*

*Dec 6 ~ International Day/Harm Reduction
Vancouver, BC*

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