



 ALBERTA COMMUNITY
COUNCIL ON HIV

2013 Annual Report

Our Vision:

All individuals and communities in Alberta will have the ability, capacity and desire to eliminate the harm caused by HIV.

Alberta Community Council on HIV

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Special thanks to:

ACCH Member Agencies and their representatives

ACCH Associate Members

Alberta Community HIV Policy and Funding Consortium

Alberta Health

Public Health Agency of Canada

Our Partners

Our Staff

Our Contractors

This report is dedicated to the people who work every day to prevent the spread of HIV and to support the people, families, and communities living with it.

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Our Mission:

Recognizing that social change is a necessary response to HIV, the Alberta Community Council on HIV supports community-based responses and provides provincial leadership through collective action and a unified voice

Message from the Board








2012 – 2013 was an exciting year for ACCH. The board has worked over the past year on a number of large projects. We produced the Alberta HIV/AIDS Environmental Scan and Needs Assessment. We began a bulk Harm Reduction supplies purchasing and distribution program in response to the needs of our members and as part of the implementation of the Alberta Sexually Transmitted Infection/Blood-Borne Pathogen (STI/BBP) Strategy that was released last year. The Strategy clearly outlines a leadership role for ACCH in implementing the five goals of the plan and we have accepted this challenge and already had some successes.

The next year promises to be exciting for ACCH as it continues to evolve to better meet the needs of Albertans and our membership. This year we worked very hard to renew our governance model as we complete the transition to a policy governance model. This renewal will result in greater community involvement in ACCH and a concurrent increase in the public profile of the issue and our work. We can achieve great things when we work together.

We would like to thank all the ACCH members for their dedication and commitment. We extend special thanks to our hard working ACCH staff members who have been instrumental in our success this year. Finally, our sincere thanks to the representatives of Alberta Health, Public Health Agency of Canada and the Alberta Community HIV Policy and Funding Consortium, for your support and collaboration. We look forward to working with everyone throughout the next year!

ACCH Board

2012-2013 ACCH Key Points:

-  ACCH hosted a successful skills building symposium with membership focusing on People Living with HIV
-  ACCH produced a 20th anniversary commemorative booklet entitled: *Alberta Community Council on HIV...A Reflection*. The booklet highlights the work of ACCH over the past 20 years, and publishes the photo essays and art projects of our member groups on *What ACCH Means to Me*, a participative evaluation project
-  ACCH was given an increase in funding by Alberta Health and has been implementing aspects of the provincial STI BB Strategy and Action Plan throughout this year.
-  ACCH began work on a community technology collaborative directed at Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) to provide health information
-  ACCH undertook Bulk Harm Reduction supplies purchasing and distribution program for our members group as well as a companion evaluation of the program which found it to highly successful in reaching its objectives
-  ACCH continues to grow its Associate membership and is seeking new ways to engage community, especially those disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS
-  ACCH members and partners, working with the assistance of Mary Gibson Consulting Inc. and Gabe Shelley participated in the Provincial HIV/AIDS Environmental Scan and Needs Assessment through community consultations, interviews, and an online survey

2012-2013 Staff

Tim Kim

Jessica Daniels

Kim Mackenzie

Meseret Haileyesus

Message from the Executive Administrator

This has been a year of outstanding growth and reflection. We took a fearless look at our governance and structure in order to create a broader and more diverse membership, and to complete the transition to a policy governance model from an operational one. We also surveyed the landscape of HIV in Alberta through provincial environmental scan and needs assessment.

This year also marked a broadening and deepening of the programs and services offered by ACCH to include bulk Harm Reduction supplies purchasing and distribution; a collaborative technology portal for Men who have Sex with Men; and large provincial research and evaluation projects.

I am truly excited by my work with ACCH and appreciate the opportunity to be of service to my community. My sincere thanks to the Membership and Board of ACCH, and my fellow staff members. We have done amazing things this year...and the best is yet to come.

Jessica Daniels

ACCH Executive Administrator

ACCH Team

Board Members

Chair	Floyd Visser, SHARP Foundation
Vice Chair Evaluation & Research	Raye St. Denys, Shining Mountain Living Community Services
Vice Chair Community Action	Charleen Davidson, Lethbridge HIV Connection
Secretary/Treasurer	Andrea Quick, HIV West Yellowhead until December 2012, succeeded by Brenda Yamkowsky, HIV North Society
Member at Large	Shelley Williams, HIV Edmonton & Sue Cress, AIDS Calgary Awareness Association

Committee Chairs

Community Action	Charleen Davidson, Lethbridge HIV Connection
HIV Positive	Mark Randall, AIDS Calgary
Research and Evaluation Services	Raye St. Denys, Shining Mountain Living Community Services
Harm Reduction	Jennifer Vanderschaeghe, Central Alberta AIDS Network Brenda Yamkowsky, HIV North

Current ACCH Staff

Executive Administrator	Jessica Daniels
Bookkeeper	Tim Kim
Fund Steward	Kim Mackenzie
Communication & Resource Coordinator	Meseret Haileysus

ACCH Partners

ACCH Member Organizations

Alberta Community HIV Policy and Funding Consortium

Alberta Health

Alberta Housing Coalition

Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN)

Canadian AIDS Society (CAS)

Calgary Sexual Health

Calgary STD Clinic

CATIE

Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)

Canadian Treatment Action Council (CTAC)

Canadian UNGASS Network

Edmonton STD Clinic

Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+)

Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD)

First Nations and Inuit Health Branch

Northern Alberta HIV Clinic

Ontario AIDS Network

Pacific AIDS Network

Public Health Agency of Canada

Southern Alberta HIV Clinic

Information and Training

The purpose of the information and training program is to build upon and increase the skills, knowledge, and awareness of the ACCH membership in order to provide community-based HIV programming in an effective and responsive manner.

ACCH Website






The ACCH website averages over 20,000 hits per month. Content is updated regularly by ACCH staff and includes our Facebook and Twitter Feeds. ACCH has a members only section where meeting minutes, notices, and article archives are available for its members.

Monthly Updates

ACCH continued to send updates to its members. The variety of information of interest to ACCH members included: information about ACCH and other learning opportunities; information about provincial, national and international trends in HIV/AIDS and related topics; information about research being conducted; and announcements by government and other stakeholders on HIV and related issues. We have also published and distributed a monthly newsletter to our members and other stakeholder which is available on our website.

Skills Building

ACCH was proud to present the October 2012 skills sessions, which focused primarily on People Living with HIV and featured many HIV Positive speakers and presenters. Key topics included:

-  Treatment as Prevention
-  GIPA
-  PHA Leadership Development
-  Aboriginal People Living with HIV
-  Criminalization of Non-Disclosure



Information & Training continued...

MSM Portal

This project is designed to provide information, resources and support to MSM, Bisexual and Transgender men in Alberta affected by HIV/AIDS. Essentially, this project is a platform for MSM, Bisexual and Transgender men to access the latest information and support/counselling services to reduce the spread of HIV and other infections.

The project is a collaborative partnership with AIDS Calgary, Lethbridge HIV Connection, Safeworks, The Sharp Foundation, Central Alberta AIDS Network Society, and HIV Edmonton.

Major Activities Accomplished




-  A half day meeting was held on February 12, 2013 at AIDS Calgary Awareness Association with project partners to discuss the content, tools and processes for the portal development.
-  A focus group discussion was conducted in March 16, 2013, with HIV Positive MSM with the objective of ensuring the ongoing participation of the target population and to determine the portal's feasibility, appropriateness, and acceptability before it is fully implemented.

ACCH Meetings

ACCH membership meetings are held tri-annually (three times per year). These meetings facilitate opportunities for sharing, networking, planning, and collaborating, as well as providing a platform for educational skill building and awareness sessions.




May - June 2012 – Edmonton

Committee meetings, the general business meeting, and member updates were exchanged. Highlights include:

-  Hearing ACCH Voices governance review
-  Inclusion of Associate Members in updates
-  Linking Our Partners meeting




October 2012 – Edmonton

Committee meetings, AGM, and skills building sessions focusing on People Living with HIV were presented. Highlights include:

-  Majority of sessions facilitated by People Living with HIV
-  “The best skills building we have ever had”
-  Presentation of film: Positive Women: Exposing Injustice and positive panel

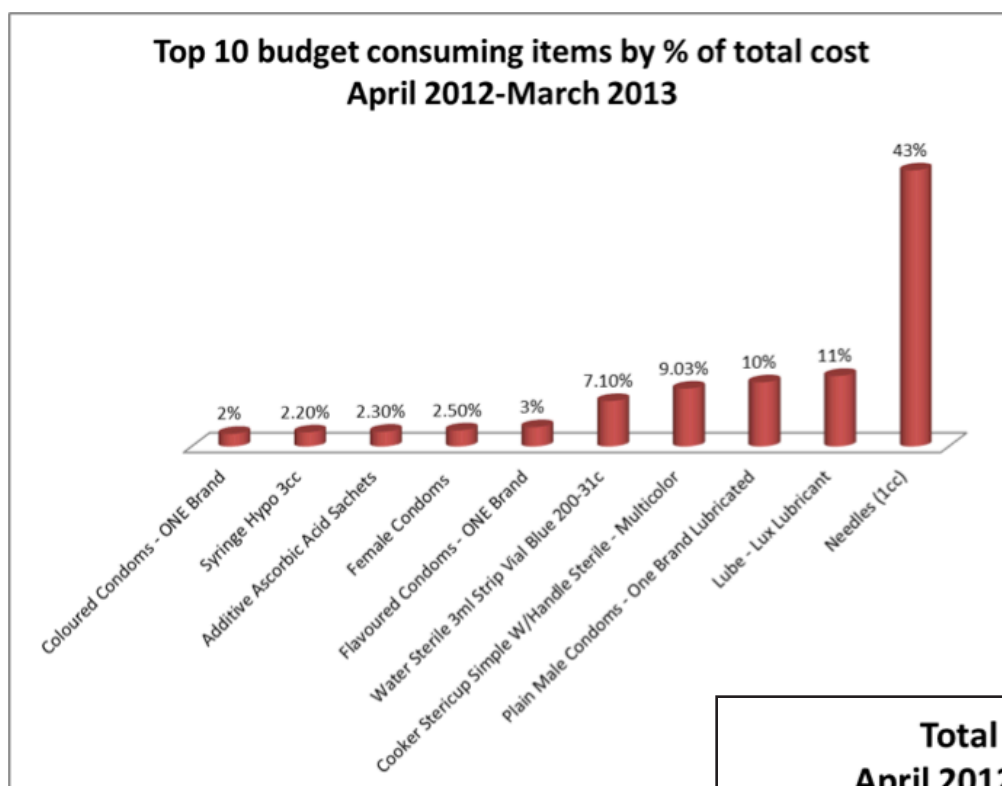
February 2013 – Edmonton

General business meeting of the ACCH membership, as well as member updates. Highlights include:

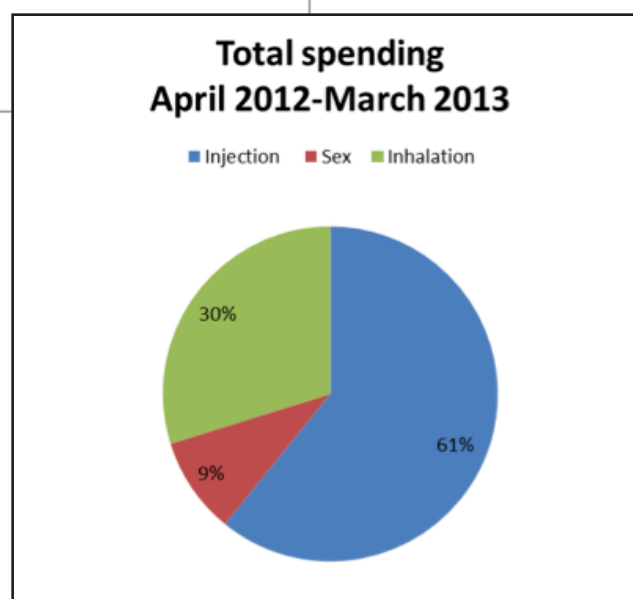
-  Strategic Governance and Structure Planning Day with Membership
-  Key Messages Development to Professionals and Vulnerable Groups
-  Access to Treatment for Prisoners Living with HIV

Alberta Bulk Harm Reduction Supplies Purchasing and Distribution Program

Starting in April 2012, ACCH began a Harm Reduction supplies purchasing and distribution program. The purpose of the program was to ensure all areas of the province had access to the Harm Reduction supplies needed to prevent the spread of HIV and other BBPs for people who use injection drugs. The program has resulted in an increase access to supplies in rural communities and a wider variety of supplies in urban centres. This program is provided free of charge to Harm Reduction programs in Alberta.



ACCH discontinued supplying safer inhalation supplies to our membership in October 2012. We supply injection supplies to approved Harm Reduction programs, and safer sex supplies to all of our member groups.



ACCH Committees

Research & Evaluation Committee

Since February 2012, the Research and Evaluation committees have been operating as one committee: The Research and Evaluation Committee, due to changes in Community Based Research funding across Canada. This year the committee provided Seed Grant funding to small research projects to 4 agencies: Kairos House, HIV Edmonton, Shining Mountains Living Community Services, and the AIDS Calgary Awareness Association. The committee also elected to plan a research meeting with CIHR Centre for REACH in HIV/AIDS and the CIHR REACH CBR Collaborative Centre to develop research priorities in HIV for Alberta. This meeting is scheduled for May 2013.

ACCH produced a 20th Anniversary commemorative booklet as part of its evaluation activities this year entitled: *Alberta Community Council on HIV...A Reflection*. The booklet highlights the work of ACCH over the past 20 years, and publishes the photo essays and art projects of our member groups on *What ACCH Means to Me*, a participative evaluation project.

The Research & Evaluation Committee also oversaw two key projects this year:



Provincial HIV/AIDS Environmental Scan and Needs Assessment with the Assistance of Mary Gibson Consulting Inc. The final report and research findings are available on our website.



Parallel to its Bulk Harm Reduction Supplies Purchasing and Distribution program, ACCH enlisted the assistance of Birgitta Larsson to evaluate its impact. The final report for this evaluation is available on the ACCH website.

Raye St. Denys
Chair
Research and Evaluation Committee

Community Action Committee

The ACCH Community Action Committee is committed to addressing inequalities, promoting health and well being and to facilitating change for those living with HIV/AIDS. The committee was quiet active at the beginning of the year and formed a sub-committee to put together a statement around “Treatment as Prevention.” As the initial work began, the statement quickly grew into a briefing document regarding access to testing and treatment in the province of Alberta. With only two specialized HIV clinics in the province (the Northern and Southern Alberta Clinics) and a shortage of sexual health clinics, particularly outside of larger centres, the lack of access to testing and treatment was identified as a key barrier that must be addressed and remedied before looking further at Treatment as Prevention. I extend my sincere gratitude to those who participated on the committee and contributed to the “Access to Treatment and Testing” document.

Charleen Davidson
Co-chair
Community Action Committee

Harm Reduction Committee

The Harm Reduction committee of ACCH is composed of the ACCH membership who are actively engaged in the development delivery and evaluation of harm reduction programming. The membership spans the province and through monthly teleconference calls addresses the complexities and opportunity of working in a harm reduction philosophy, in both remote communities and large urban centres. Each member brings forward their issues in their region, through joint partnership and a collaborative process the committee is effectively and efficiently able to support the growth and development of harm reduction initiatives.

The past year has seen three key areas of focus for the committee, in summary they are:

Policy - The committee began the process of developing education standards and guidelines regarding the distribution of safer inhalation supplies. Several committee members were involved in shaping a pro safer inhalation policy environment. Although there is evidence to support the distribution of the supplies, at this time only one member organization is able to distribute the supplies.

Education - committee members met to discuss and develop standards regarding basic harm reduction interventions. This included documentation and review of common health concerns of people who inject drugs. In addition the committee focused on documenting best practices in harm reduction programming. These tools will ensure consistent approaches across the province and will serve as a training resource for new staff.

Community Development - The harm reduction committee worked in partnership with Safeworks and AIDS Calgary to deliver the Alberta Harm Reduction Conference. The conference was delivered over two days and supported the education of over 250 individuals.

Governance Committee

It is my pleasure to provide this short report on the extensive work of the ACCH Governance Committee.

In October 2012 the membership received the Evaluation of Current ACCH Governance Structure and Recommendations for Best/Promising Practices completed by H. Gardiner & Associates, Inc. The membership reaffirmed its commitment to continue on a new governance direction and requested that a committee be struck and dollars found to support the work. Project money was obtained from ACHF and the Governance Committee hired Gabe Shelley of SVS Strategic Value Services to assist in the work. During the year, the Board of ACCH decided to dedicate a full day meeting of the membership to discuss and develop the principles of an ACCH governance model. "A Pathway to Sustainable Governance for ACCH" is a record of the discussions and decisions reached. Following the presentation of this report to the membership it was decided to apply for further funding to implement key steps outlined in the report. The committee continues to work towards the implementation of a governance policy model as requested by the membership.

I would like to thank the dedicated work of the ACCH Governance Committee members Floyd Visser, Brenda Yamkowy, Jennifer Vanderschaeghe, Susan Cress and Jessica Daniels.

Respectfully,
Shelley Williams
Chair, ACCH Governance Committee

HIV+ Committee

The work of the HIV+ Committee the past year and ½ has focused primarily on the development and execution of the 2013 Alberta Positive Voices Conference that was held at the Goldeye Centre in Rocky Mountain House. This was a return to a location used twice before with positive results from participants and was agreed to be the best choice after hosting the previous Conference in a more formal hotel that was not as well received by participants as the Retreat Centre had been in past.

The biggest challenge faced in this planning was that we had a full slate of participants and rooming spaces were not the same for everyone attending. Some were challenged by the ice and the bunkhouse type accommodations but overall the event was incredibly well received.

There were also some personal and medical issues that arose that were addressed in both a professional and respectful manner. A final report is available on the ACCH website and historical documents submitted after the event as part of the final report.

The task of organising, planning and executing this event fell to the member organisation Lethbridge HIV Society and in concert with the advisory committee and the hired event coordinator this event was truly the best one we have done to date. We thank both Charlene Davidson and Patty Fraser for their incredible efforts and support of the advisory members and the participants present for the weekend.

Overall; the Alberta Positive Voices Conference was a success and very well received by participants and presenters alike with great feedback from National partners and presenters. Our conference has been and continues to be a conference that National and Provincial PHA organisations want to be part of and included in.

The HIV committee will focus more on the recruitment and retention of solid PHA leaders and mentors identified at the conference and additional trainings have been planned in partnership with Leadership Training provided by our allies in Ontario.

The Committee intends to continue its work and meetings at ACCH through in person and teleconference gatherings including the earlier planning for the next conference. We are very happy to report that we will be starting with funds in hand for the first time due to great effort made in seeking additional funding sources and adhering to strong fiscal accountability.

HIV+ Committee continued...

A new Co-Chair has been identified for the HIV Committee moving forward that will allow me to support another person to lead the planning of the next conference with direction and additional resources available through the ongoing learning opportunities that have been provided through the ACCH meetings, and learning conferences that have been included in regular meeting this last year.

It is the intention of the HIV+ Committee Co-chairs to increase the knowledge and awareness of the committee and the ACCH to PHA's throughout the Province that will increase participation, create a broader voice that includes the perspectives of the many people living with HIV and hepatitis C Co-infection in our Province.

There is also a discussion moving forward to review the name of the HIV+ Committee and suggest a possible change at the next gathering of ACCH members.

I have been and continue to be grateful for the opportunity to chair this committee and help to encourage the greater involvement of people living with HIV, AIDS and Hepatitis C Co-infection into the work of the ACCH.

Respectfully;

Mark Randall
Chair, HIV+ Committee
Co-Chair, Alberta Positive Voices Committee 2013

Alberta Community HIV Fund Stewardship

ACCH administers the Alberta Community HIV Fund (ACHF). The overall role of the ACHF Steward is to maintain the integrity of the fund and to support funded organizations in ensuring they are delivering competent HIV programming and services. The Steward must ensure that funding is distributed in accordance with the Alberta Community HIV Policy and Funding Consortium’s allocation decisions, and that spending by funded groups is in keeping with approved budgets. The Steward provides sound support to groups in preparation of their proposals to ACHF and monitors financial and narrative reporting. The Steward also acts as liaison between funded groups, Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Alberta Health (AH) and ACCH.



2012-2013 was the third year of the 2010-2013 Funding Cycle. Twelve (12) organizations received operational funds.

ACHF 2012-2013 Operational Funding	
Alberta Community Council on HIV	\$727,825
AIDS Calgary Awareness Association	\$902,686
Central Alberta AIDS Network Society	\$316,788
HIV Network of Edmonton	\$748,000
HIV North	\$417,540
HIV West Yellowhead	\$177,922
Kairos House	\$108,949
Lethbridge HIV Connection	\$247,797
Safeworks	\$268,069
SHARP Foundation	\$145,000
Shining Mountains Living Community Services	\$76,000
Streetworks	\$481,001
TOTAL	\$4,617,577

Alberta Health Contribution \$3,715,000

Public Health Agency of Canada Contribution: \$902,577



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