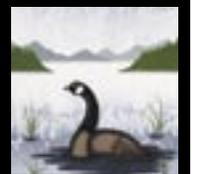




Aboriginal People living with HIV/AIDS (APHA)
The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN)

AGM APHA ORIENTATION PACKAGE

A Publication of the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network



THE CANADIAN ABORIGINAL AIDS NETWORK (CAAN)

Organizational Overview

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network is a national, not-for-profit organization:

- Established in 1997
- Represents over 340 member organizations and individuals
- Governed by a national thirteen member Board of Directors
- A four member Executive
- Provides a National forum for members to express needs and concerns
- Ensures access to HIV/AIDS-related services through advocacy
- Provides relevant, accurate and up-to-date HIV/AIDS information

Mission Statement

As a key national voice of a collection of individuals, organizations and provincial/territorial associations, CAAN provides leadership, support and advocacy for Aboriginal people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. CAAN faces the challenges created by HIV/AIDS in a spirit of wholeness and healing that promotes empowerment, inclusion, and honours the cultural traditions, uniqueness and diversity of all First Nations, Inuit and Métis people regardless of where they reside.

Vision Statement

A Canada where First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, families and communities achieve and maintain strong, healthy and fulfilling lives free of HIV/AIDS and related issues where Aboriginal cultures, traditions, values and Indigenous knowledge are vibrant, alive, respected, valued and integrated into day-to-day life.

Acknowledgements

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network would like to thank the members of the APHA Caucus for their guidance in creating this document. Production of this document has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

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MARCH 2008

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1. APHA Caucus Terms of Reference

Ratified on October 4th, 2005 Regina, Saskatchewan

Objective

To ensure continuity and continual representation of the CAAN APHA Caucus views, issues and recommendations within the Board of Directors of CAAN.

Membership

Any Aboriginal (First Nation, Métis, Inuit) Person Living with HIV/AIDS with a current and approved CAAN membership is a CAAN APHA Caucus member.

Confidentiality

The identities of CAAN APHA members shall be kept in the strictest confidence by the board, the staff, the membership and APHA membership of CAAN.

Representation

Two (2) APHA representatives elected from the CAAN APHA Caucus shall occupy staggered positions on the Board of Directors of CAAN and Shall Act in Good Faith.

Nominations and Elections

Nominations for the vacant position of the CAAN APHA Board Representative will be moved and seconded on the floor of the annual CAAN APHA Caucus;

Nominated APHA's will announce their intention to accept or decline their nomination; those who agree will have a reasonable amount of time to give personal presentation

Two (2) scrutineers shall be appointed by APHA Caucus from CAAN staff;

Voting shall occur by secret ballot;

The nominated APHA who secures the most votes shall occupy the position of CAAN APHA Board Member for a term of two (2) years;

In the event of a tie, a re-casting of votes shall occur from the floor for the nominees who received an equal number of votes;

An alternate shall also be appointed by the floor in the event the elected APHA Board member is unable to complete her/his term.



Purpose of the CAAN APHA Caucus

The APHA Caucus meets annually prior the CAAN Skills Building Symposium/AGM in order to draft resolutions to be presented to the floor of the CAAN AGM and to provide caucus members with the opportunity to meet, discuss issues, strategize, network and to share skills and information.

Accountability

APHA Board members function within the By-laws of the CAAN Board of Directors and are accountable to the members of the CAAN APHA Caucus.

Communication

APHA Board members are elected to communicate and advocate for the views, issues and recommendations put forward by the floor of the APHA Caucus as represented in any resolutions resultant of the APHA caucus;

On-going communication amongst CAAN APHA Caucus members shall occur throughout the year to expedite the proceeding of the up-coming CAAN APHA Caucus.

Committees

Committees shall be struck from time-to-time consisting of CAAN APHA members;

Terms of Reference shall govern the activities of such committees to solidify purpose, structure, time-frame, activity and accountability;

Any Board member of CAAN shall oversee and support the activities of such committees.

Reporting

Each APHA Board member shall provide quarterly written up-dates of their activities in representing the views, issues and recommendations of the APHA Caucus.

All other activities, lessons learned, accomplishments and successes of the APHA Caucus shall be presented as a final written report with question and answer period to occur at each annual CAAN APHA Caucus/Skills Building Symposium/AGM.

APHA Board reports shall be summarized and included in the CAAN APHA Caucus report.

Written reports will be directed to APHA advocate, Caucus and to the Executive Director.

Quarterly written up-dates, final reports and any committee minutes and/or reports shall be made available **WITHOUT ATTENDEE NAMES OR OTHER IDENTIFIERS** to registered CAAN APHA members in good standing. Complete reports shall be secured at the CAAN head office.



2. APHA Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Ratified Oct 6, 2005

Objective

To increase participation of Aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS (APHA) and to provide advice on the development of activities under the Aboriginal Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Coordination Program.

Time Line and Communication Framework

The Chair of the APHA Advisory Committee reports on the advice given by APHAs to:

- the Board of Directors of CAAN
- Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network's (CAAN) APHA Advocate

Members of the Advisory Committee will hold their seats for a two (2) year term.

Meetings will take place on an as-needed basis (approximately four times a year) by meeting in person or by teleconference.

Mandate

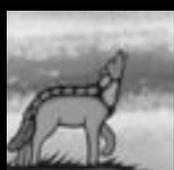
The purpose of this Advisory Committee is to provide advice, direction and comments to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CAAN on the development of the Aboriginal Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Coordination Program, proposals that are being considered for funding submission, talking circles, capacity-building for APHAs, Link-Up Discussion Forum, Position Paper development, and National Committee Participation (Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network) and the discussion/recommendation of resolutions to be brought forward.

Accountability

Members of the Advisory Committee are accountable to the CAAN Board of Directors, APHA members and the Aboriginal Community.

Reporting

Minutes of all proceedings will be filed with CAAN and made available, upon Advisory Committee approval, to the general public.



Composition

The Advisory Committee shall be made up of not more than thirteen (13) representatives with experience and familiarity with issues and problems confronting Aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS. The Advisory Committee will represent Aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS with attention given to gender, cultural and regional representation.

Members must be publicly disclosed as an Aboriginal Person living with HIV/AIDS (APHA) to sit on the committee.

Knowledge and Responsibilities

- Knowledge of problems and issues confronting Aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS.
- Ability to represent the diversity and collective wisdom of Aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS.
- Commitment to the Advisory Committee for the duration of their term.
- Knowledge of the goals of the Aboriginal Strategies on HIV/AIDS, government policy and structure.
- Ability to actively promote the work of CAAN and the broader Aboriginal HIV/AIDS movement.

3. The role of CAAN

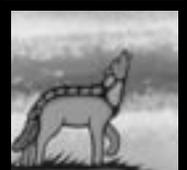
The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network

Overview

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CAAN, is primarily a “network” or a collective of individuals and organizations all committed to the mission statement of the organization. Members can disagree with the organization but in order to be a member in good standing, they cannot willfully work against destroying the organization’s mission statement.



CAAN has no authority over its members, so it cannot “force” a member to follow any particular position on an issue. For example, if CAAN supports harm reduction, but an individual member does not, CAAN has no authority to make that member change their position. It can however apply or enforce various policies it has, for example, if a member disrupts the floor of the AGM, they can be asked to leave or forcibly removed by security because there are rules and procedures for how these meetings are conducted.

CAAN is not a political organization but it does seek to influence politicians, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. As an advocacy group, it uses the weight of its collective membership which serves Inuit, Métis and First Nations, regardless of where they reside, to raise issues or concerns and call for action. These can be done through letters, meetings, requests for resolutions, support, press conference participation, press releases, petitions, etc.

An example could be Non-Insured Health Benefits (which only applies to Inuit and First Nations) fails to cover baby formula. For breastfeeding mothers who are HIV-positive, this increases risk for the infant, especially if the mother (family) cannot afford to pay for baby formula. CAAN could work with groups like the Assembly of First Nations and the National Aboriginal Council on HIV/AIDS (NACHA) to urge First Nations and Inuit Health Branch to change their policy to allow baby formula coverage.

Therefore, CAAN asserts a form of politics but in partnership with an Aboriginal political organization. In some cases, if it is the politician that is not being responsive, CAAN may use its weight to call them to task, as it did when former National Chief Ovide Mercredi and federal Health Minister David Dingwall failed to address a national Aboriginal HIV/AIDS conference in 1996 in Halifax NS.

Mission Statement

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CAAN has a primary mandate (job) to address HIV/AIDS in the Aboriginal population. Other national Aboriginal organizations, including the political organizations may do HIV/AIDS work but it is not their sole mandate. This places CAAN at an advantage of being a lead expert organization. CAAN is a key leader in the Aboriginal HIV/AIDS movement but it does not stand alone. There are many others who make up this movement.

CAAN does not:

- Offer an APHA fund
- Finance or fund any direct services
- Provide condoms or needles/bleach kits, etc.
- Write proposals or help any member complete paperwork or applications
- Advocate only for itself or its own interests



CAAN does:

- Seek to be a lead voice on Aboriginal HIV/AIDS issues
- Represent what its collective membership says through resolutions and committee work
- Offer support letters to members and non-member groups who apply for funding, even when the group is competing against CAAN in the same fund
- Policy development, resource development, research, advocacy, skills building, communications and social marketing
- Consults its members, especially APHAs, through various ways
- Offers scholarships to attend the AGM and Skills building, which includes the APHA Caucus
- Shares its resources and research findings free of charge to its members and non-members.
- Shares materials to the Aboriginal population as a whole and to non-Aboriginal organizations.

4. How Do Committees Work?

CAAN By-Law Article 12.

The Board Of Directors may establish, from time to time, permanent or temporary committees to assist the Board in its responsibilities and the administration of the Corporation. The mandates of these committees are determined by the Board. The Board shall also appoint, at pleasure, a Chairperson for each committee.

Think of AGM Resolutions as New Year's Resolutions made earlier!

The first task of any committee formed is to develop a TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR). This spells out why the committee exists, what its job is and the rules on how the job will get done.

Working Committees

Some committees are defined as Working Committees meaning that the committee gets down to the nuts and bolts developing things. The "Working Group" (or committee) for building the Aboriginal Strategy on HIV/AIDS in Canada (ASHAC) is a good example. A working group doesn't just wait for the worker to do things. They do some of the actual work.

Advisory/Steering Committees

Some committees are defined as Advisory or Steering Committees meaning that they still do work. However, a committee member's role is more to review and comment on draft documents but not actually writing the drafts themselves. That is the job of the worker who is in charge of the project or initiative. They let the worker know if the project is on track or needs to be changed. The advice doesn't have to be followed but most times it is.

Internal Committees (includes those that help CAAN operate.) Examples: the Personnel, Communications, Governance, AGM-Planning and Membership Committees. They are made up of board only with staff support.



External Committees (includes members and non-members at times.) Examples: APHA Committee, Project Steering/Advisory Committees, Issues Committees (ie youth)

Terms of Reference

It is a good idea that each committee of an organization (aka working group or sub-group) be clearly defined in writing. This promotes understanding of who is in the group, what they aim to achieve, and how they intend to go about doing it. Below is a detailed template (blank model) of what such a committee charter or definition sheet might include. Each committee basically customizes this basic format to best match its own unique needs and character.

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE TEMPLATE

Name: (Official name of the committee or working group)

Members: Name, Contact Information - Roles / Responsibilities (e.g. chair, secretary, treasurer, report to the board)

Goals:

1. (primary)
2. (secondary)

Deliverables: (Specific outputs required/requested from the committee.)

Scope / Jurisdiction

(What are the bounds of responsibility and authority of this sub-group? What do they need to address and what is outside their area of concern? What can they decide on and what needs group/board input?)

Guidance from the Board / Group

(Initial direction and suggestions from the board and/or larger group.)

Resources and Budget

(E.g. equipment, materials, rooms, funds available to the committee.)

Governance

(Decision-making technique, e.g. consensus, 2/3 majority vote or chair's authority, etc. Relationships of authority within the group and with the greater organization.)

Additional Notes

- Relationships to other committees
- How communications outside of meetings will be conducted, e.g. phone or email. *Where shared information, such as plans and contact information, will be stored.
- Related policies / by-laws.
- How reporting back to the organization will be conducted.



- History of the committee.
- Schedule or meetings and/or other important timelines.
- Information about specific committee projects.

5. So, You Have An Idea For A Resolution?

Resolutions passed by full members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) give the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) new ideas and the fire power to get the ball rolling on issues around Aboriginal HIV/AIDS.

Only a full member of CAAN may present a draft Resolution for consideration at the floor of the AGM. It must have a Mover and a Secunder, who must also be a full member.

All draft Resolutions must be submitted to the Resolutions Committee at a stated time on the day before the final day of the Annual General Meeting. The draft Resolution will be reviewed, registered, typed and copies made for distribution.

If a draft Resolution is found to duplicate or contradict the direction provided in a previous Resolution, the Resolutions Committee will try to assist the Mover and Secunder to revise the draft Resolution, if necessary.

The Mover and Secunder must be present in the meeting room at the AGM when the draft resolution is being discussed. Both the Mover and the Secunder will be asked to come to the microphone to read out the draft Resolution and explain why it is important. After any necessary discussion takes place, the membership determines whether or not the Resolution will pass by a vote. Fifty-One Percent (51%) is a pass.

Think of AGM Resolutions as New Year's Resolutions made earlier!



6. APHA Caucus Sample Evaluation Form

1. What did you like best about the APHA Caucus?

2. What didn't you like about the APHA Caucus?

3. Was it organized and/or informative?

Not Very
Organized or
Informative

Somewhat
Organized or
Informative

Organized or
Informative

Very
Organized or
Informative

Extremely
Organized or
Informative

4. Were the resources provided helpful?

Not Very
Organized or
Informative

Somewhat
Organized or
Informative

Organized or
Informative

Very
Organized or
Informative

Extremely
Organized or
Informative

5. Any other comments?



