

September 18, 2021

Co-Chairs' Annual Report

At this time last year, we had just entered a global pandemic and it was not without significant individual and organizational challenges. As with many AIDS Service Organization the CPPN found ourselves revisiting our work plan and asking ourselves what is possible; despite those challenges however we have had many successes over the last year and we are pleased to highlight a few here today.

On April 1st, 2020, we officially launched our toll-free telephone number and new email accounts; April 30th our new website launched! Check it out at <https://cppnrcps.ca/> if you have not done so already!

In June Bob Leahy reported back on how CPPN members are coping with the COVID19 pandemic; highlighting some of the challenges, celebrations and what they might be missing. Themes of loneliness turned up frequently. Surprisingly “sex” only appeared twice. Other challenges mentioned included isolation, cabin fever, keeping healthy and fed, getting bloodwork done – plus concerns about becoming infected with COVID-19. It was clear through the consultation that people living with HIV are resilient, celebrating things like a high CD4 count, gardening, personal projects, and pets. The very act of surviving a cause for celebration for some.

Canada Day came and many Canadians, including the CPPN Board of Directors, absorbed the confrontations of our racist and broken systems; in May the murder of George Floyd brought back front and center the message that Black Lives Matter with global protests happening over several weeks. At least five people have died because of Police Wellness checks across Canada since April of 2020. Regis Korchinski-Paquet. Chantel Moore. D'Andre Campbell. Rodney Levi. Ejaz Choudry. We are sure if we do some digging there are more. This brings back to the forefront the need now more than ever for culturally appropriate mental health services, supports and responses.

The Opioid Crisis continued to hit people who use drugs hardest and we seen a direct increase of preventable overdose poisoning deaths directly due to COVID19, the closure of various programs and services and ultimately the lack of action from our government that continues to undermine despite call-to-action coast to coast. There is a critical need for supervised consumption services and safe supply across Canada.

Finally in addition to the on-going pandemic and overdose poisoning crisis; it's estimated a quarter of a million Canadians are currently homeless. The CPPN board of directors cannot help but take the time to reflect that while COVID 19 seems to be the most visible crisis it is not the only crisis Canadians are facing and that now more than ever it important for us to recognize how truly interconnected we are as humans and come together once and for all.

Board of Directors

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In October Jimi and Marlo later shared their stories of lived experiences - Jimi highlighting how his life behind bars allowed him to live vicariously through others and Marlo in sharing her stories of anxiety and depression reminded us of the beauty is in the rebound and regardless of how far one sinks within the seasons there is always a reprieve that lies just around the bend.

In November we held our Annual General Meeting for fiscal year 2019/2020 and welcomed Dakarayi, Jimi, George, and Mike to the Board of Directors.

One of the most notable achievements was close to year end. It is with great pride that we launched of the first ever National “Love Positive Women Campaign” from February 1st to 14th. This campaign aimed to celebrate and lift the voices of women living with HIV across Canada. For many of these women this was the first time they shared their stories in such a public way. Carla, Kellie, Deborah, Denise, Dakarayi, Marlo, we admire and acknowledge your bravery in sharing. To our friends and allies who shared words and videos of support, we thank you. Without the voices our people living with HIV and AIDS across the country the work of the CPPN wouldn’t be possible.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge that regaining the trust of all CPPN members has not been easy over the last few years, but it has been and will continue to be of paramount importance in coming years. We are committed to you, the CPPN’s members, and we are unshakable in our resolve to learn from you with a view to paving the way to a meaningful collective of people living with HIV and HIV co-infections in Canada. We are grateful for the support we’ve been afforded by so many of you; we look forward to working in earnest to continue to gain the confidence of all of you from here. Thank you.

Brittany Cameron and Kathleen Bird
Co-Chairs




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