



Strategic Planning for HIV/AIDS

**Report of the
Provincial Health Services Authority
Strategic Planning Forum on HIV/AIDS**

March 31, 2004



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An Invitation to Shape the Future

On March 31, 2004 the Provincial Health Services Authority held a forum, bringing together more than 40 representatives from a cross-section of provincially-focused HIV/AIDS service organizations. The aim was to listen to stakeholders as PHSA develops its response to two key documents: the provincial Medical Health Officer's plan, *Priorities for Action in Managing the Epidemics – HIV/AIDS in British Columbia 2003-2007*, and the PHSA-led plan, *Strategy for Improving HIV Care for Women and Children*.

PHSA's mission is to promote and deliver accessible quality health services for all British Columbians through an integrated health system. Part of this role is to plan for and provide specialized services, including the surveillance, prevention, health promotion and treatment of acute and chronic illness. As the provincial funding agent for a number of organizations that provide HIV/AIDS services, PHSA recognizes the need to work with stakeholders and other Health Authorities (HA) who provide direct care and treatment, to establish a strategic and coordinated response to the provincial plans.

The intent of the forum was to engage stakeholders in shaping future province-wide efforts to address the issues that relate to HIV/AIDS. It provided an opportunity to:

- Build a perspective on HIV/AIDS issues that included the viewpoint of stakeholder groups;
- Share views about potential collaborative responses to the two plans;
- Identify perceived gaps, issues and concerns;
- Identify priority areas requiring early response;
- Develop an outline of options for next steps.

This document outlines the common themes and suggestions which arose from the small group and plenary discussions regarding future directions for coordinating and supporting HIV/AIDS work in British Columbia.



Major Concerns

PHSA's Forum provided an opportunity for people to identify issues that should shape future priorities. Several issues were raised by forum participants as being of particular concern regarding the role of the two strategic plans in the coordination and delivery of HIV/AIDS services in the province.

1. Improving the reach of HIV/AIDS programs
 - a. Addressing the needs of vulnerable, high-priority populations, especially aboriginal people and youth, and those with concurrent substance misuse problems.
 - b. Improving geographical equity in service provision in partnership with the regional Health Authorities.
 - c. Supporting health care practitioners as they establish transparent shared care models.
2. Improving program efficiency and effectiveness among service and support providers.
 - a. Working to reduce gaps in service provision.
 - b. Coordinating and clarifying roles, priorities, performance expectations and evaluation.
 - c. Increasing accountability for meeting better practice benchmarks.
3. Building a "common understanding" of the strategy and Best Practices to achieve this.
 - a. Involving people living with HIV/AIDS in strategic planning, decision-making, service provision and evaluation initiatives.
 - b. Empowering the community by providing direction and support in the dissemination of Best Practices.
 - c. Developing an inter-sectoral approach to planning, prevention, surveillance and treatment.
 - d. Creating opportunities for service providers and Health Authorities to work collaboratively to coordinate and support HIV/AIDS work in B.C.
 - e. Improving the utilization, coordination and dissemination of data and information to increase knowledge of HIV/AIDS issues to care providers and the public, especially those known to be in high risk populations.

Table 1 provides an overview of discussions in the Forum breakout groups, the strategies that participants highlighted, and organizations that might provide leadership around specific priorities.



Table 1: Priorities highlighted by Forum participants

Group	<i>Priorities for Action Goal</i>	Actions highlighted by participants	Potential leadership
1. Information Systems, Data Development and Knowledge Sharing	To enhance the province's capacity for monitoring the HIV epidemic during the next five years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commence an inventory of HIV/AIDS IT systems and initiatives in B.C. to improve access and reduce duplication. 	PAN
2. Public Education, Prevention and Promotion	To reduce the incidence of HIV infection by 50% over the next five years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Catalogue organizational activities and best practices around prevention, evaluation & monitoring. ▪ Develop collaborative prevention strategies, with a specific focus on youth. ▪ Establish provincial framework to utilize rapid testing. 	BCCDC
3. Access to High Quality Care, Treatment and Support	To increase the proportion of HIV+ individuals who are linked to appropriate care, treatment and support services by 25% over the next five years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop, in cooperation with the geographically based Health Authorities, a coordinated strategy for the education, training and recruitment of health care providers. ▪ Link to other strategic initiatives in primary care and chronic illness care. ▪ Collaboratively address the care, treatment and support needs of vulnerable populations, especially aboriginal people. ▪ Standardize care and referrals by examining development of a patient/physician information kit. This could be available on-line or in printed form. 	BCCE MoH BCCE MoH BCPWA
4. Communication and Collaboration	To create and sustain broad-based support for <i>Priorities for</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Standardize a template for program funding contracts and evaluation processes. This 	Health Canada



Group	<i>Priorities for Action Goal</i>	Actions highlighted by participants	Potential leadership
	<i>Action.</i>	<p>would simplify the job especially for smaller organizations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create opportunities for service providers and Health Authorities to work collaboratively. ▪ Work with Providence Health Care to ensure their inclusion in the development of HIV/AIDS strategic agendas. 	

Developing the Leadership Group

The Forum participants strongly affirmed **the need for provincial leadership** in this area. One of the key roles the participants felt that PHSA could take would be to support and facilitate a provincial effort to coordinate an inter-sectoral approach to HIV/AIDS in British Columbia. To support province-wide efforts to address HIV/AIDS issues, we will need coalescence among a broad array of stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health Services, Federal Government service providers, HAs, first-line community organizations and most importantly, people living with HIV/AIDS. The purpose of this coalescence would be to establish an environment and cultivate mechanisms to pool HIV/AIDS stakeholder resources, ideas and action, working together to develop a structured, coordinated response to tackling HIV/AIDS issues in the future. Forum participants noted that a natural meeting place for these stakeholders could be at the Pacific AIDS Network’s twice-annual meetings. It was felt that regular meetings in this kind of broader organizational forum would assist in developing better lines of communication between organizations and create better understanding around organizational needs.

Recommendation 1

There is a need to bring together representatives from the provincial government, HAs, individual HIV/AIDS service organizations and people living with HIV/AIDS through forums such as the Pacific AIDS Network’s twice-annual meetings to work together to develop a coordinated response to tackling HIV/AIDS issues.



Ideas for Action

Forum participants came to a consensus on **three main approaches** arising from the day's discussions.

1. Establish a provincial approach to **focus on the four *Priorities for Action* goals** or topic areas. For instance, working groups with membership representing a broad range of organizations, could work towards providing guidance on the provincial strategy around its specific goal. The challenge for each working group will be to determine how to make the *Priorities for Action* goals meaningful and how to evaluate their impact.

Recommendation 2

PHSA will clarify with MoH and other Health Authorities ways to move this work forward.

2. There is a need to **coordinate HA representation in discussions around strategic planning** for HIV/AIDS in British Columbia. This could occur through a meeting with representatives of the HAs to share their strategic HIV/AIDS plans and to identify ways to support one another with the implementation of their plans.

Recommendation 3

The HAs and MoH should participate in a “plan to plan” session to share their strategic HIV/AIDS plans.

3. A consistent and integrated strategy is necessary to make progress with any major initiative. Stakeholders at this meeting expressed their concern that **clarifying and aligning roles should be a priority** if we are to identify gaps in service provision and make gains with the *Priorities for Action* goals. PHSA and its agencies already work closely with the Ministry of Health Communicable Disease and Addiction Prevention Branch, the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS, Oak Tree Centre and eight third-party organizations funded through PHSA. With feedback from this workshop, further work will be required to clarify and align roles and expectations as part of the performance agreement process.



Recommendation 4

There is a need to engage with all major stakeholders in the field to clarify “who does what”, identify gaps in service provision and define roles and responsibilities for each priority deliverable in the plans.

Recommendation 5

Funding agencies should clarify expectations in their contracts with third-party provider organizations and in performance agreements with subsidiary organizations. This means explicitly linking detailed workplan activities with specific provincial goals, based on the core competencies of organizations.

Moving Forward

PHSA is committed to advancing initiatives in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment and has established a solid agenda over the next five years to address the issues. The goal of the forum was to gain input from stakeholders around how best move forward with a provincial approach and vision so that the benchmarks and targets established in the two plans, *Priorities for Action* and *Strategy for Improving HIV Care for Women and Children*, can become a reality.

PHSA looks forward to working with stakeholders to continue to garner their input in the identification of priority actions and the development of a framework for collaboration that will move the strategic planning process into the future.