
PAN 2009
Spring
Skills
Building
Conference
Evaluation
Report

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PAN 2009 Spring Skills Building Conference

Evaluation Report

Introduction

The Pacific AIDS Network (PAN) is a member-driven network of community-based AIDS organizations and programs from across British Columbia. PAN provides communication, capacity building opportunities, technical and mutual support among the groups, and facilitates collective action on HIV issues across the region. In February 2009 PAN hosted a Skills Building Conference for representatives of its 37 member organizations. A total of 90 people attended the conference overall, with 26 persons attending the PHA Leadership Stream. See Appendix A for the detailed Conference agenda.

A significant feature of the conference was the dynamic two-day, PHA Leadership Stream that allowed for an in-depth exploration of the Ontario AIDS Network's model of leadership training and examined the possible benefits of introducing such a program in BC.

This report is based on data collected at the Conference. Seven data-collecting forms were used; ten face-to-face interviews were conducted; and the evaluator attended the entire Conference. Evaluation information from each individual session has already been made available to conference organizers, and this could be helpful in organizing future events. Consequently, this report will focus on an analysis of the PHA Leadership Stream and on the effectiveness of the Conference as a whole.

Summary

PAN is the only provincial organization in British Columbia that represents AIDS Service Organizations (ASOs). Since 1995 PAN has been bringing groups and individuals together to address issues that face organizations and individuals dealing with HIV/AIDS.

During the past year, PAN has evolved in a number of positive ways; it has attracted a strong Board of Directors, hired a respected individual as the Executive Director and developed a clear strategy reflecting PAN's *Strategic Plan 2007-2012* for how to best serve its membership. The reinvigoration of PAN was noted and applauded in the data collected; support for PAN's current direction was clearly voiced by the membership.

Overall, the Conference was a tremendous success. All the sessions of the Conference (including the Opening and Closing Plenary and programs on Priority Setting, PHA Leadership, Grief and Loss and Self-Care) were scored as highly satisfactory and relevant. All the evaluative information collected clearly indicates that the delegates were highly satisfied with their Conference experience. See Appendix B for the roll up document on the Priority Setting Executive Director Session; Appendix C for the Priority Setting PHA Session; Appendix D for the Opening Plenary; Appendix E for the Overall Conference Evaluation.

Most significantly for the future of the HIV/AIDS movement in B.C. (and therefore for the future of PAN) delegates voiced overwhelming support for the establishment of a PHA leadership program in BC.

PHA Leadership Stream: Feedback

As the PHA Leadership Stream was a unique feature of this Conference, I collected information specific to that program through an evaluation form distributed at the end of the two-day session. A total of 21 out of a possible 26 completed the evaluation form. Participants were asked to rate their agreement (on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 indicating least agreement, and 5 indicating most agreement) with the following statements:

1. As a result of attending this session, my understanding of the importance of PHA leadership to the BC HIV/AIDS movement has increased. *Score: 4.6*
2. As a result of attending this session, I support PAN in exploring the development of a PHA leadership program in BC. *Score: 4.9*
3. As a result of attending this session, I am inspired to develop my own leadership skills. *Score: 4.3*
4. As a result of attending this session, I am motivated to participate in a PAN PHA leadership program if one is developed. *Score: 4.3*
5. As a result of attending this session, I would support other PHAs to participate in a PAN PHA leadership program if one is developed. *Score: 4.9*
(One participant added the comment that "It is crucial that they do! We need to encourage ASOs to help mobilize all PHAs.")
6. I would rate my satisfaction with the facilitation of this session as.... *Score: 4.7*

In light of the scores given to the statements, it is obvious that there is strong support for the development of a PHA leadership program in BC.

Face-to Face Interviews

Eleven registrants were randomly selected from the registration list for face-to-face interviews, as a means of collecting detailed commentaries, thoughts and ideas on the effectiveness of the Conference as a whole. Ultimately, ten people were interviewed

The following selection of their comments offers an overview of their responses to the Conference:

1. What are your thoughts about this meeting? Was it successful? Was it relevant?
 - Absolutely, insightful and relevant.

- Exciting, sense that a foundation has changed, more stability, sense the past has ended, moving forward. Skill building is progressive.
- I think it is very progressive, a turnabout. The previous format, the Forum, wasn't working. It is like starting over. Very enlightening. Encouraged to see new people.
- Definitely successful, more than I was expecting. PHA leadership was very good for me, both personally and for my organization. Definitely relevant.
- I see an emerging cohesion, very affirming.
- I would have liked to hear more about where PAN is going from the Board of Directors.
- Interested in who is not here at the meeting-like VANDU and other user groups. Distressed about this lack. There is work to be done there.
- The meeting was successful – positive renewal, optimistic and purposeful- allowed me to reconnect with old colleagues.
- The topics were relevant -- Grief and loss and Self Care were linked, they are applicable and demonstrated thought from the organizers.

2. Which part of the meeting was most useful to you?

- Knowing the bigger picture. Priorities. Learned lots, insightful about what I need to do for myself. I have confidence in PAN doing something.
- Grief and Loss because it is so relevant to the work we do. The issue is sometimes swept under the carpet. It was wonderful.
- Discussion around Julio's initiative. Would have liked more time for dialogue about it.
- Presentation that Marc and Kath brought forward -- saw how others want to help their brothers and sisters.

3. Which part of the meeting did you think was not useful to you? (Note: Most(9 of 10) respondents could not think of anything that wasn't useful to them)

- Thursday a.m. – there was too much information. Found the Wednesday Plenary intense.

4. What did you think of the way the meeting was structured?

- Liked the structure. Great because PHAs are honoured and regarded.
- Division between ED and PHA has lessened.
- Would like mutual sharing at the end of the day.
- Excellent.
- In the PHA leadership - really liked the way Francisco and Sheena worked together.
- Needed more linkages between the two streams.
- Liked it for the most part but felt a distance. Would have liked more overlap
- As a first time participant, absolutely effective having the streaming-didn't feel overwhelmed - got to know a small group from all walks of life.
- Kind of unnatural to separate us. I see some wisdom in it but it feels a bit like almost setting us up/feeling divided.

5. What are your thoughts about the future direction of PAN?

- Future-optimistic. It's going to move forward. There is a PHA sense of excitement, there is a structure around the PHA leadership-there will be follow-up.
- I think that PAN needs to support/lead/organize the PHA leadership program.
- I think there is a building energy and momentum. PAN needs to be mindful of who is not present.
- The foundations have been laid-continue to build partnerships in an inclusive way.
- Very excited, wonderful. Wonderful partnership with CATIE, thrilled with the ED, there is a strong Board of Directors. The PHA leadership which is very important is going well which will wind up with new leaders.
- PAN must continue to support the PHA leadership.
- I think PAN is in wonderful hands - trust the people who are guiding PAN.

Overall Conference Feedback

All Conference participants were asked to respond to a series of questions presented in a General Conference Evaluation form. There were several parts to the Evaluation form:

1. Individual change and satisfaction

Individuals were asked about why they attended the Conference, whether their expectations had been fulfilled and what had changed for them as a result of having attended the Conference.

Responses: The primary reason individuals came to the PAN Conference was to learn new skills in order to make themselves more effective in their work. A very high number of the participants expressed high satisfaction in this area, because their objective for coming to the meeting had been met. The score was 4.4 out of 5. Participants noted the following outcomes of having attended the Conference:

- Seven participants increased their knowledge about HIV/AIDS and related issues
- Twenty-seven participants made meaningful connections with their peers
- Nineteen participants plan to try new approaches learned at this conference in their own lives
- Twenty participants plan to try new approaches learned at this conference in their own organizations
- Thirteen participants plan to try new approaches learned at this conference in their communities
- Eleven participants plan to be more active in PAN

2. PAN as an organization

Individuals were asked to rate (on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being least satisfied. 5 being most satisfied) two statements about PAN as an organization.

The first statement was:

- "PAN is becoming a more effective organization for our members" and it was rated 4.4.

The second statement was

- "PAN is heading in the right direction" and it was rated 4.5.

One participant added the comment, "*I cannot express how amazing and energizing/exciting that PAN is now.*"

3. Overall satisfaction level

The overall satisfaction level with the Conference was also extremely high at 4.6 out of 5. These results indicate success at assessing the needs of the participants, good planning and excellent implementation of the Conference agenda.

Conclusions

The February 25-28 2009 Conference was very successful, and created a palpable atmosphere of hope and excitement. Having participated in several PAN conferences in the past, I can attest to a new sense of cooperation and progress that is also evident in the interviews and written feedback from the delegates.

In planning for the next Conference several elements need attention in order to address the small number of problems identified by participants at this year's Conference. For example:

- A unifying process/exercise should be provided for delegates participating in separate sessions. This would help to create a greater sense of cohesion among the delegates.
- The visible inclusion in future Conferences of organizations of IDUs was seen as an important goal for PAN conference organizers.
- Sessions for EDs need to be focused on their specific challenges and providing support and capacity building opportunities to them as professionals, not solely on general topics affecting service for members/clients.
- Most significantly, there is one outstanding recommendation coming from delegates: *PAN must move ahead with the PHA Leadership program*. I encourage PAN to continue its work with the OAN and develop a similar program for BC.

Appendix A

Conference Agenda

Wednesday, February 25th

8:00am	Registration desk opens, 2 nd level main foyer
8:00 – 9:00am	Breakfast - Ballroom
9:00 – 9:30am	Opening Plenary - Ballroom
9:30 – 11:30am	PHA Leadership Stream – Whistler room Executive Director's Meeting – Grouse room
11:30 – 1:30pm	General PAN Business Meeting – Grouse/Seymour/Whistler
1:30 – 2:00pm	Break
2:00 – 4:30pm	Skills Building Opening Plenary – Ballroom
4:30 – 5:30pm	Healing Circle for PHA Delegates (optional) – Whistler room

Thursday, February 26th

8:00am	Registration desk opens, 2 nd level main foyer
8:00 – 9:00am	Breakfast - Ballroom
9:00 – 12:00pm	PHA Leadership Stream – Whistler room Grief & Loss Workshop – Cypress/Grouse room
12:00 – 1:00pm	Lunch - Ballroom
1:00 – 4:30pm	PHA Leadership Stream, continued – Whistler room Grief & Loss Workshop, continued – Cypress/Grouse room
4:30 – 5:30pm	Healing Circle for PHA Delegates (optional) – Whistler Room

Friday, February 27th

8:00am	Registration desk opens, 2 nd level main foyer
8:00 – 9:00am	Breakfast - Ballroom
9:00 – 12:00pm	PHA Leadership Stream – Whistler room Self Care workshop – Cypress/Grouse room
12:00 – 1:00pm	Lunch - Ballroom

- 1:00 – 4:00pm Closing Plenary – Ballroom
4:00 – 5:00pm Healing Circle for PHA Delegates (optional) – Whistler Room

Saturday, February 28th

CATIE & Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network Satellite Session

- 9:00am Registration desk opens, 2nd level main foyer
9:00 – 10:00am Light Breakfast - Ballroom
10:00 – 1:00pm Learning about the criminal law and HIV disclosure in Canada –
Ballroom
1:00 – 2:00pm Lunch - Ballroom

Appendix B

Priority Setting - ED session

Total responses 22 out of a possible 25

Ratings for questions are out of a possible high score of 5.

1. How satisfied were you with the Priority setting session?

Score 4.0

2. How satisfied were you with the facilitation of the session?

Score 4.3

3. How satisfied were you with the priorities that were put forward?

Score 4.0 *Additional written comments: Priority's OK, route? Briefing notes not usually effective; Worried about varying views on "treatment as prevention" & Julio's work.*

4. In your opinion, will these priorities help to take the HIV/AIDS movement in BC where it needs to go?

Score 4.2 *Additional written comments: 4 was circled with a maybe printed underneath it; Comm. between ministries for sure will move us forward, I'm new here so can't really put forth a valid opinion.*

5. What ideas can you suggest that will help PAN achieve these priorities?

- Regular networking sessions, supporting other organizations, more funding to be able to carry out these initiatives, more conference showcasing updates and success stories
- Collaboration with other agencies/Ministries that interface with our clients
- Have PAN (1) co-ordinate assembly of research and argument and (2) co-ordinate meetings(logistics and attendance) with targeted Health sector "players"
- Give the ED power to incorporate
- Don't lose sight of the goal knowing it is a long term process
- Stay focused! Let the ED's Board keep the members directed & focused!
- Statements channeled into main stream media. Any effort to find opportunities to dialogue with decision makers
- From what PAN has done over the past months is more than I have experienced the past few years. I think PAN is already on the way by having an ED, networking & partnering etc... Keep doing what you're doing!!!
- Tenacity! Diligence! Give each member group a little task to keep them involved (in the loop)
- Utilize the board for fanning out the "briefing summary". Initiate the web site- to have a question PHA/ED-corner specifically on leadership/programs. Answers to come from members. Good job!
- Board members who have a passion & the time to focus on concentrating on upper level Ministry of Health getting on board with our cause.
- Keep the heat on. Appreciate staff was mentioned with PHA "leadership" session.

- Northern Rural Community Networking: PAN needs to recognize the increase in HIV/AIDS infections in northern Aboriginal communities is staggering. Along with HCV&STDS (e.g.: of the 56 STDs in the NW of BC-26 are in Hazelton (population 9000). Smithers is working w/Prince George but as a PAN member we need to increase support and networking w/Lower Mainland.
- Maybe need to get out of the box a bit more. More emergence models, viral (education) campaigns (pardon the pun, not intended). Need to make the cause sexier that leads to better services, information exchange, funding from gov't & the private sector. PAN on U Tube or Twitter
- Active working group to assist the board members who are each over extended in their own roles. Need to ensure that creation of an Executive Director does not lead people /agencies to abdicate responsibility to the work. Evin and board can't do it all.

Appendix C

Priority Setting -PHA Session

Total responses 18 out of a possible 26

Ratings for questions are out of a possible high score of 5.

2. How satisfied were you with the Priority setting session?

Score 4.4 *Additional written comments- Logistics-Time could have been adjusted-more for priority setting instead of long lunch break.*

3. How satisfied were you with the facilitation of the session?

Score 4.6 *Additional written comments-I love Sheena!!!*

4. How satisfied were you with the priorities that were put forward?

Score 4.5 *Additional written comments-Need to focus on PHA leadership and mobilization*

5. In your opinion, will these priorities help to take the HIV/AIDS movement in BC where it needs to go?

Score 4 .4

6. What ideas can you suggest that will help PAN achieve these priorities?

- Structured and clearly defined
- Leadership Leadership Leadership Keep those skills going forward! Empowerment of the individual creates empowerment of the collective.
- Glad to hear “new” website is up: specifically involving NGO Partnerships, CATIE, CTAC, Can Legal Society/Network
- Focus and communication on medical situation with both newly diagnosed and active HIV. Access with PAN members for information if needed by HIV + person to get help and funding.
- Focusing on community organizations networking. More inclusive hands on training. Training more trainers to expand access & availability of training materials
- Seize the leadership.....it’s there for your taking....there’s no one else in BC who both will or who is better suited for it... go for it!
- More communication in and with the wider HIV community
- Delivery of more skill building resources/sessions across all member agencies
- Skills building with individuals to prep them for ASO operation.
- Partnerships
- Bring on leadership training and skills.
- Spirituality-inner light-faith.

Appendix D

Opening Plenary Feedback

Total number of responses was **61** out of approximately **70** possible responses.

Ratings for questions are out of a possible high score of 5.

1. After hearing Stephen Smith's presentation, my understanding of BC HIV/AIDS statistics has not increased or greatly increased.

Score **3.9**

2. After hearing Stephen Smith's presentation, my understanding of how the HIV/AIDS epidemic is effecting all of BC has not increased or greatly increased.

Score **3.9**

3. After hearing Dr. Julio Montaner's presentation, my understanding of expanded HAART has not increased or greatly increased.

Score **4.0**

4. After hearing the discussion about HAART, my understanding of the implications of expanded HAART has not increased or greatly increased.

Score **4.0**

5. I think Stephen Smith's presentation was highly relevant for the PAN membership.
DisagreeAgree

Score **4.4**

6. I think Dr. Julio Montaner's presentation was highly relevant for the PAN membership.
DisagreeAgree

Score **4.4**

Additional written comments:

- *Because of my job, I was already almost wholly familiar with the material presented. This is no good comment, then, on the quality of the session, which were excellent.*
- *Need handouts for PPTs or a link to download through*

- For Smith's presentation-*not boring-gave answers to questions we have at the community level.*
- For Montaner's presentation –*For community presentations vs. researchers 1) Could have slides previewed by PAN which ones to remove2) Could limit # of slides and complexity by giving the headings of some of the complex data without the details-not needed.*
- *I love Sheena!!!*
- *PS Where are the red ribbons?*
- *Would like to know how this will be done(HAART)*
- *I saw the same presentation (Montaner's) in PG just a few months ago. Was a great refresher!*

Appendix E

PAN Spring 2009 Conference Feedback

There were 37 returned forms.

This feedback form covers the overall conference. Particular sessions including PHA Leadership, Grief and Loss, Beyond the Bubble Bath and Learning about the Criminal Law and HIV disclosure in Canada, have separate feedback methods.

1. What was your **key** reason /objective for attending the meeting?(Please circle one)

- Gaining knowledge about HIV/ AIDS & related issues 1
- Learning new skills to make myself more effective 14
- Contact with other PHAS 1
- Contact with colleagues/volunteers 1
- Supporting /reinvigorating PAN 3
- Networking/meeting new people 3
- Part of my professional or volunteer responsibilities 5
- Activism
- Advocacy
- Other (Please tell us)

Work on leadership program; Add spirituality BRO & sisters

Note: There were 7 forms with multiple answers. Of note are 1 check for activism and 2 checks for advocacy.

2. To what extent did the meeting meet your key reason or/objective for attending this conference

Score 4.4

3. As a result of your attending this conference

- My knowledge about HIV/AIDS & related issues increased 7
- I made meaningful connections with my peers 27
- I plan to try new approaches learned at this conference in my life 19
- I plan to try new approaches learned at this conference in my organization 20

- I plan to try new approaches learned at this conference in my community 13
- I plan to be more active in PAN 11
- Other, please specify

Plan to join leadership stream; share the conference to the ones that never heard there is hope.

Thank you PAN.

4. *(This question is for those who have attended other PAN Conferences).* As a result of attending this conference, I think that:

PAN is becoming a more effective organization for our member agencies

Score 4.45

5. As a result of attending this conference , I think that:

PAN is heading in the right direction

Score 4.5

6. How satisfied were you with the following closing plenary items?

Report on priority setting Score 3.8

Report on PHA Leadership Stream Score 4.1

Sharing Program Updates Score` 4.5

Positively Incorrect, Too! Score 4.5

Francisco's segment was extremely powerful, amazing, talented and touching.

7. How satisfied were you with the following?

Conference administration Score 4.5

How the meeting was structured Score 4.5

Atmosphere of the meeting Score 4.5

8. Overall, how would you rate this PAN conference?

Score 4.6

9. What suggestions could you offer to make your conference experience better in the future?
- So much food and so much waste-do the leftovers go for distribution? I believe this can be constructed and arranged; Leadership and activism/social justice? Hold in a more central location-downtown Vancouver - So where are the user groups-like VANDU? Given that IDUs are around 35% of the new =s, it is vital that PAN makes these connections/partnerships.
 - Cell phones turned off; temperature too cold!!!
 - I cannot express how amazing and energizing /exciting that PAN is now. Great work; remember at beginning of each event /workshop to turn off cell phones.
 - Self care-party good times, dance; respect your inner self; Spirituality is the light/deep in oneself
 - I'm looking forward to seeing how the PHA leadership program forms.
 - A bit more overlap between streams
 - Perhaps a few more "hands on" interactive workshops
 - Awesome closing. Thanks so much.
 - Not really comfortable "praying" in a specific way; online networking before/after conference would be useful; overall it was awesome.
 - Have a proper prayer from a Priest instead of native culture. I think that the conference was very well done.
 - Thank you Francisco!!!
 - An increase in the Heart Circle for grounding the groups. More Shaman (?) Sharing(?), bringing First Nation beliefs and knowledge
 - Additional handouts; additional learning from PHAs; handout on upcoming events for program updates; list of attendees/agencies/contacts
 - As a service provider, who is here for the first time, I felt a little lost because so many attendees have known each other for years.
 - I think non-professional PWAs struggle to stay engaged/understand the sessions and may feel really overwhelmed