

Evaluation Report:

**Prevention Education Workers'
Training and Networking Sessions**

March 1 and 2, 2011

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Prevention Education Workers' Training and Networking Session

Summary

Participants reported that a two-day Education Training and Networking session for 46 HIV educators in British Columbia was extremely relevant and successful. In particular, the collaboration between Renewing Our Response and PAN in jointly organizing the second-day session (which examined issues affecting Aboriginal communities) was praised by the participants. Many of the educators indicated that they hoped future training sessions were being contemplated, and suggested that practical workshops focussed on techniques and tools would be especially useful. The educators expressed a desire for concrete techniques and thought they would benefit from the sharing of teaching tools and demonstrations of specific workshops.

Background

The Pacific AIDS Network (PAN) is a provincial association whose members – 50 community-based organizations and allied agencies – are devoted to addressing the care, treatment, support and prevention-education needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS and persons co-infected with HCV, and at-risk for infection. PAN supports its member organizations by providing training to their staff members and volunteers.

On March 1 and 2, 2011, PAN offered a two-day session, designed for Prevention Education workers, to participants from across British Columbia. Sessions on Day 1 were attended by 30 workers and volunteers, while 46 individuals attended on Day 2. The second session was jointly run by PAN and Renewing Our Response;¹ approximately 15 educators from Renewing Our Response, as well as people from PAN member organizations, attended the joint session.

Topics presented over the two-day session included:

- HIV-related Prevention Interventions in BC
Presented by Terry Howard, BC HIV/AIDS Community Based Research Facilitator
- Queer in the Sticks: Having an impact on Homophobia and Transphobia in Rural Communities
Presented by Captain Snowdon and Leeann Cunningham, AIDS Vancouver Island
- Navigating a Positive Life
Presented by Glen Bradford and Chuck Osborne, British Columbia Persons With AIDS
- Bringing Culture to the Classroom
Presented by Melanie Rivers and Sarah Callahan, Chee Mamuk Aboriginal Program, BCCDC
- Aboriginal Youth Program – Peer Education,

¹ Renewing Our Response- Renewing Our Response is a provincial HIV/AIDS advisory consisting of APHAs (Aboriginal People Living with HIV/AIDS) and Aboriginal organizations representing community voices.

During the two-day session, ample un-programmed time was allowed for educators to network and discuss issues of importance for them.

This evaluation report is based on information gathered from the participants as well as from personal observations during the sessions. The data includes:

- Responses from eight face to face interviews with participants who were asked a series of standardized questions. These interviews provide a wealth of feedback for session organizers. One on one conversation offers the opportunity to explain ideas/thoughts and to provide a greater depth of analysis. The interviewees are chosen at random from the session registration list. The interviews last from 15 to 45 minutes ; and
- Responses from 21 participants who filled in evaluation forms.

What the Educators Said

Why they came?

- According to the PAN evaluation forms, two reasons were utmost in motivating individuals to attend this session. The two most noted reasons were networking/meeting new people and learning new skills.

What was the result of coming to this session?

- All the participants (100%) agreed that their knowledge about HIV/AIDS, HIV/HCV co-infection and related issues increased.
- All the participants (100%) agreed that they made meaningful connections with their peers.
- All the participants (100%) agreed that they will use what they learned at this conference in their paid/volunteer work.
- All the participants (100%) agreed that they plan to use what they learned from this conference in their everyday lives.

Were they satisfied with the organization of the session?

- 95% of the respondents were satisfied with how the agenda/meeting was structured
- 100% of the respondents were satisfied with the atmosphere of the meeting

How did the educators rate this PAN session?

- 100% of the respondents gave the conference a high rating with 65% of the respondents giving the conference the highest rating possible

Three comments from participants illustrate the general response to the sessions:

“Very inclusive, all relevant, able to relate to a lot of it, very informative.”

“Enjoying the new format (focus of skill development for specific groups). Like the smaller more specific groups. This is [my] 4th meeting and this is the one [I am] getting the most out of.”

“Great to connect with other educators, hope to do more of that in the future.”

What other topics/subjects would you as an educator like to see covered at future PAN sessions?

There were several pages of future topics suggested attendees at this session; PAN session/conference planners have been sent the complete list for future planning. Below is a sampling of the suggestions:

- Workshop HIV 101: analyzing different approaches, sharing updated info, seeing actual workshop modules presented and then analyzed
- Discussion on how to present two critical messages: first, about protecting yourself/prevention; and second, how to reduce stigma
- Discussion on the meaning of low, medium high risk behaviours
- More skills and resources for those who work off-reserve in urban centres; greater understanding of the context of on- or off-reserve and other relevant topics
- How to work with straight men and educate them about HIV
- Facilitation Training
- How to disseminate information: what is the best method of sharing what is learned at PAN with colleagues
- Demonstration - tips on how to be culturally safe
- A hands-on sharing of handouts, experiences, etc. around education techniques and practices

- HIV specialist to talk about new drugs and treatments
- How to know who to talk to in order to provide prevention education in schools and to the general public
- Development of a tools repository – a ‘toolbox’ -- of best practices
- Sharing and exchange of teaching tools
- More exercises, such as role play, which would not only engage the group but to would enlighten participants by putting them in others’ shoes
- Presentations about sex- models and demos of workshops and different tools for teaching about HIV
- How to collaborate meaningfully with my partner ASOs-examples from organizations that have worked together. Practical points on how it has been done.

These suggestions all indicate how hungry educators are for practical hands-on training, and how clearly they understand what working skills they need.

Other comments/ideas you would like to tell us?

“Poz people, [we need to have] their voices at the table, this is important, good to have them at an educators skills building [workshop]”

“The networking was great – it’s nice to segregate Education/Prevention people so we can relate and share relevant information.”

“Awesome. Relevant. Rural presence is strong”

Conclusion:

The Prevention Education Workers’ session was successful. It provided a dynamic and supportive learning environment where individuals met their personal networking and learning goals. The PAN strategy of targeted training was highly regarded by the participants as it allowed for in- depth examination of issues and detailed discussions on topics relevant to them. By providing the necessary leadership and organization for the development of this session, PAN achieved its organizational goal of providing relevant training for workers/volunteers in BC ASOs.