



February 13, 2011

Dear HIV/HCV Outcomes for BC Working Group Members:

I hope this note finds you all well and settling into the New Year! For those of you that I haven't met before my name is Jennifer Evin Jones and I am the Executive Director of the Pacific AIDS Network (PAN) (www.pacificaidnetwork.org). PAN has been contracted by the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) to provide administrative support and project management for the HIV/HCV Outcomes for BC Working Group (Outcomes WG) from now until December 2011. PAN is excited to be providing assistance for the Outcomes WG and looks forward to working with all of you to continue the evolving direction of the group.

The Outcomes WG Terms of Reference (TOR) and other information are posted on the PAN website where we have created a page specific to the Outcomes WG. Please click this link to take you directly to the page: <http://pacificaidnetwork.org/provincial-working-groups-2/outcomes-for-bc/>. This page will be updated as the latest information and documents become available.

As you all know representatives from the Outcomes WG, and other community based organizations, had the opportunity to meet in-person to provide feedback regarding the Output Indicators Evaluation Tool that had been developed last September 23rd in Vancouver. As was mentioned then, Janice Duddy, Manager of the HIV/AIDS Program at the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA,) was soon to be departing on a maternity leave. It was also mentioned that in July, Sean Nixon, Program Coordinator for PHSA's HIV/AIDS Program, who had been hired to coordinate and provide logistical and administrative support to the Outcomes WG, left his position at PHSA to pursue studies in medicine at UBC. So it has been a period of transition and change as regards some of the key leadership for the Outcomes WG.

The face-to-face meeting provided an ideal opportunity to introduce Janice's maternity leave replacement, Susann Richter. Susann will be serving as Acting Manager until Janice returns.

By following the same link, <http://pacificaidnetwork.org/provincial-working-groups-2/outcomes-for-bc/>, you will be able to find notes from the September 23rd feedback session for your review. The notes provide a snapshot of the day's proceedings as well as a summary of the feedback that was provided by attendees on the Output Indicators Reporting Tool. PAN, along with the assistance of Susann Richter, will be reviewing and assessing the feedback gathered from the session to further refine the tool for future iterations. One of the key pieces of where this work goes next is the extent to which there is interest / "buy in" from the health authorities to explore further use and application of the tool.

The September gathering also featured a presentation by Irene Day, Director of Operations at the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS, on the STOP HIV/AIDS initiatives evaluation plans. A copy of Irene's presentation in PDF was previously circulated to you on September 27th and is available on the PAN website.

A lively discussion followed the presentation about potential synergies between the work of the Outcomes WG and the STOP project, and these conversations have since then continued at various tables with key stakeholders both within public health and with community organizations. The STOP project has already had significant ramifications for many PAN member organizations that provide services within the pilot regions. A number of ASO's have been contracted to provide services related to STOP; and as the STOP initiative continues to roll out, and more people engage in the process of testing and treatment in both pilot regions, it is likely that ASOs will be increasingly impacted by an increased demand for services from newly diagnosed, including support services and counseling services). Given the realities of migration of people across geographic boundaries, the impact of STOP will also be felt by PAN member and allied organizations outside of the pilot regions.

Furthermore, the STOP HIV/AIDS initiative represents the first new HIV/AIDS funding from the province in over 13 years; and at \$48 million, the investment is not inconsiderable. And while the future may not be predicted, there is a strong possibility that in the event these pilots are successful, that STOP will be expanded to cover the entire province. It therefore seems strategic at this point, for the Outcomes WG to assess how to best align our resources and work, to address the realities of STOP in BC. The present evaluation model for STOP relies almost exclusively on medical/clinical indicators – the members of the Outcomes WG could play a key role in advocating for an evaluation model that takes into account the social determinants of health as well as the role community-based organizations have in supporting the success of the pilots. Another idea that has been brought forward by members of the Outcomes WG is the pooling of budgeted evaluation dollars. This is an innovative and novel idea that bears further discussion, not only with the Outcomes WG but with funders as well. The premise of the idea is that by pooling the dollars that organizations and agencies set aside for evaluation an evaluation consultant could be contracted to provide comprehensive evaluation and support to participating agencies, including the design of evaluation tools and the review and analysis of collected data. In our informal discussions with a number of funders to date, they have indicated that the idea had merit, and warrants further discussion.

PAN very much looks forward to helping facilitate a process whereby these questions and possibilities may be explored and addressed, and of course others that are brought to the table. Towards that end, we are presently working in concert with Susann Richter of the PHSA, to identify a key strategic "mini-working group" to meet in early March, including representatives from each of the health authorities.

Some of you may recall that Sean Nixon prior to his exiting his position, embarked on an ambitious process of creating a series of sub-committees for the Outcomes WG. The mini-working group will be re-evaluating this approach, and we will be looking at ways to streamline the work and structure of the Outcomes WG. The emphasis will be on trying to identify items or

deliverables, that are achievable within the time-frame of our contract with the PHSA and also where the Outcomes WG can realize tangible success in advancing the priority items. Following the “mini-working group” meeting in March, we will be in touch with all members of the Outcomes WG to provide an update on outcomes from that meeting, minutes and also our thoughts regarding next steps.

PAN looks forward to working with all of you and continuing the work of the group. If you have questions or comments, I invite you to contact me at evin@pacificaidnetwork.org. We look forward to working with all of you over the next year.

Sincerely,

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