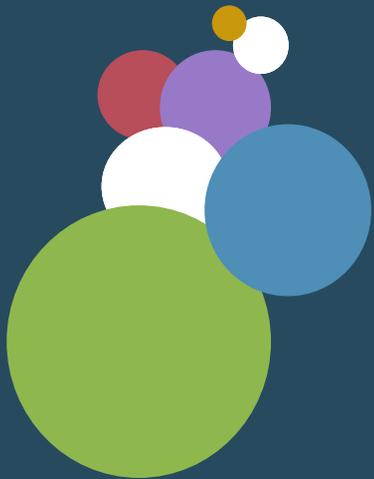


ANNUAL REPORT

2011-2012



LEADING
CARING
CHANGING
TOGETHER

Message from the Board Chair, Al McNutt

This past year has been one of excitement, growth and change. I first want to express my appreciation to my fellow board members and the staff at the AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia (ACNS) for their support and encouragement. It takes teamwork within an organization to provide high quality programs and services and the team at ACNS is phenomenal.

The ACNS takes great value in supporting the Greater More Meaningful Involvement of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (GIPA) and encourages PHA engagement at all levels. The organization strives to ensure that the Board composition is 51% of persons living with HIV (PHA).

The past year has been one of hard work and perseverance for both the Board and the Staff team. The strategic directions of the organization were reviewed and updated with the assistance of the input from various community stakeholders as the organization revisited our Vision, Mission, Directions and Guiding principles.

The organization offered a series of skills development sessions to the Board in relation to legal responsibilities, insurance as well as voting and the meaning of consensus.

The committees within the structure of the Board of ACNS are Executive, Finance, Policy and any ad-hoc committee as defined by the Board of Directors as a result of our recent By-Law changes. The Board has worked diligently on the review of the Terms of Reference for each committee. These committees and their members continue to work diligently on the review of the Terms of Reference for each committee, By-Law Changes and Board/Membership Recruitment.

The organization conducted a broad Board Recruitment Campaign with huge success. It was encouraging to see the level of interest in what ACNS stands for and the expressed desire of others to support us in our work. The process was opened to all members as well as any individuals expressing interest in becoming involved with the organization. Upon completion of the necessary and required forms, candidates were invited to meet with the present Board of Directors as an opportunity to get to know potential candidates before finalizing the slate for the Annual General Meeting.

The Board reviewed and approved a new evaluation tool to better able the organization to conduct a performance evaluation for the Executive Director as well as a Self Evaluation for Board members.

Once again I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my fellow Board members, Maria Mac Intosh the Executive Director and the complete staff team for a dynamic and productive year.

4. ACNS addresses HIV/AIDS related Stigma and Discrimination.
 - ⇒ ACNS offers programs and information that addresses misinformation about HIV/AIDS.
 - ⇒ ACNS informs the public, partners and key stakeholders about the impact of HIV stigma and discrimination.
 - ⇒ ACNS offers programs to people living with HIV that assist in providing resources and tools in supporting a response to discrimination.

5. Enhanced mechanisms for PHA involvement, input and mentorship in all ACNS activities and priorities.
 - ⇒ Enhanced mechanisms for PHA involvement (mentorship/GIPA)
 - ⇒ Enhanced mechanisms for PHAs to inform ACNS activities/priorities (stories)

6. ACNS will strive to actively involve community partners and stakeholders in HIV/AIDS work.
 - ⇒ ACNS will enhance existing partnership and develop new partnerships in HIV/AIDS work
 - ⇒ ACNS will develop new partnerships in HIV/AIDS work.
 - ⇒ By working collaboratively, ACNS will increase and enhance HIV engagement across Nova Scotia.



Our Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan is a management tool used to improve the performance of the organization. It acts as a guideline for making decisions regarding the allocation of resources. It's a process that ACNS undertakes to build commitment among its key stakeholders to the agreed upon direction and priorities. Our plan covers the period of 2012 - 2015.

Vision:

Life without HIV/AIDS

Mission:

We strive to create an environment in which people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS feel empowered and supported. Our aim is to end stigma and discrimination, and reduce new cases of HIV.

Strategic Directions:

1. ACNS secures diversified, sustainable funding.
 - ⇒ Influence public policy towards adequate funding
 - ⇒ Explore capacity for new fundraising events and opportunities for enhancing existing events/sources.
 - ⇒ Gain increased support from the corporate community
 - ⇒ Explore options for more 'passive funding' such as planned giving campaigns and foundations, etc.

2. ACNS increases capacity, provides opportunities for professional development, and creates a supportive working environment for the board, staff and volunteers.
 - ⇒ ACNS takes an active role in training and educating board, staff and volunteers
 - ⇒ Recruit skilled and committed board members, staff and volunteers.
 - ⇒ Enhance the capacity of the board members, staff and volunteers to fulfill their roles and responsibilities.
 - ⇒ Identify staff, board and volunteer needs for support and mechanisms for addressing those needs.

3. ACNS offers relevant and responsive programming.
 - ⇒ ACNS regularly evaluates and responds to emerging trends in the community and identifies program needs
 - ⇒ Provide supportive services to enhance the wellness of people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS
 - ⇒ Provide prevention programs and resources that help to change HIV risk behaviours

Message from the Executive Director, Maria Mac Intosh

This past year has been both challenging and rewarding as we strived forward in the face of funding challenges and ongoing organizational transition. ACNS has focused keenly on organizational leadership, program priorities, revisited our Mission, Vision and Directives.

We began our year by launching the RBC Amazing Challenge for AIDS and held other events throughout the year such as the Scotia Bank AIDS Walk for Life, Tour Tech East Post XMAS Party and the BMO Financial Group Bid for Life! Dinner & Auction. Our events are entirely dependent on volunteers who, without them we would not be so successful. I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to the many volunteers that give their time, effort and dedication each year. Our events and programs are also dependant on the many organizations, groups and businesses that support our work each day by offering sponsorship, shared expertise and in-kind donations.

We continue to provide programming for women at risk, gay men, people who come from countries where HIV is endemic, sex workers and street involved youth across Nova Scotia. We have also worked with community partners and organizations to provide training and policy development support. In a year we provide hundreds of support sessions, referrals and many health promotion programs for people living with HIV/AIDS. This year we welcomed Liz McCarville into to the Support Services position, formally in the Program Coordinator position, and Michelle Evans to the position of Program Coordinator.

I would like say that ACNS continues to benefit from having a dynamic, highly skilled, dedicated team of individuals who not only excel in their positions and work well as a team. Thank you for all that you do and the support you provide me as the director. At last year's AGM, we honored Ned MacInnis for his longstanding dedication; he was involved in HIV/AIDS work before ACNS was formed in 1995. It's important for us to recognize those who have offered their time and the depth of commitment to the work and the organization - thank you Ned.

In closing, I would like to thank the board of directors for their support and leadership over the past year, specifically Al McNutt. I am often humbled by the hours of service that each of our directors give to us, to make a difference for others. Thank you. As I approach my ten year mark at ACNS I am still encouraged and excited to be involved in HIV/AIDS work, a part of what ACNS represents and honored to play a role in our greater accomplishments.

Programming Highlights

Volunteers

"To the world you may be one person but to one person you may be the world."

You give of yourself and bring with you your life experiences, skills, abilities, compassion, intellect and humour and ask for nothing in return yet you receive friendship, appreciation and satisfaction. You volunteer for many different reasons but for whatever reason you volunteer, you provide support, skills, talents and abilities to give someone hope and strength and the courage to face another day. You do not ask for accolades. You give of yourself and your time generously, without any expectation of reward. Please know that we genuinely appreciate and value your commitment of time and energy volunteering with ACNS and for this, we thank you.

Fund Development

ACNS hosted three major fundraisers this past year, the 2nd Annual RBC Amazing Challenge for AIDS which involves teams of five launching over the downtown area competing in various challenges; the Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life where we bring awareness to the cause by walking and raise funds; and our BMO Financial Group Bid for Life! Dinner & Auction. We also participate heavily in providing event management for a 3rd party fundraiser, the Tour Tech Post Xmas Party. The success of these events ensures the financial support of our programs and services.

Prevention Education

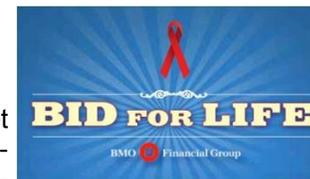
This past year we were able to offer training sessions in the Yarmouth area targeting health professionals and organizations working with priority populations covering the topic of women and HIV as well as gay men's health and HIV prevention.

Gay Men's Health

We launched an online outreach program for gay men / MSM to gain information about HIV, risk and to learn where to access supports. This program has proved to be very successful in the three months it has been up we were able to reach 44 individuals directly which allowed us to provide referrals for health services and testing. The main draw being that our model of delivery allows for anonymity.

Support Services

One area of support that stands out this past year was our work with one of our members who was in the hospital for his final days. We worked closely with the team at the hospital and assisting in reconnecting his family so that he was surrounded by family when as he passed away. Our support services program provided 1489 support sessions over the past year, 13 new members signed up for programs. ACNS serves more than 200 persons living with HIV/AIDS each year.



Who We Are

Staff Team

Chris Aucoin, Gay Men's Health Coordinator
Michelle Evans, Program Coordinator
Maria Mac Intosh, Executive Director
Ned MacInnis, Program Support
Liz McCarville, Support Services Coordinator
Laura Toole, Fund Development Coordinator

Board of Directors

Al McNutt, Chairperson
Mike Sangster, Vice-Chairperson
Russell Westhaver, Treasurer
Ed Savage, Secretary
Donna Garden
Margaret Lapointe
Michelle Liddell
Ray Ethier
Rene Corbett