

Inaugural Edition

Canadian Journal of Aboriginal Community-Based HIV/AIDS Research

Volume 1, Summer 2006



Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network

THE CANADIAN ABORIGINAL AIDS NETWORK (CAAN)

OVERVIEW

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network is a national, not-for profit organization:

- Established in 1997
- Represents over 200 member organizations and individuals
- Governed by a National thirteen member Board of Directors
- A four-member Executive Board of Directors
- Provides a National forum for members to express needs and concerns
- Ensures access to HIV/AIDS-related services through advocacy
- Provides relevant, accurate and up-to-date HIV/AIDS information

Mission Statement

As a key national voice of a collection of individuals, organizations and provincial/territorial associations, CAAN provides leadership, support and advocacy for Aboriginal people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. CAAN faces the challenges created by HIV/AIDS in a spirit of wholeness and healing that promotes empowerment and inclusion, and honours the cultural traditions, uniqueness and diversity of all First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, regardless of where they reside.

Acknowledgements

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Canadian Journal of Aboriginal Community-based HIV/AIDS Research (CJACBR)
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Editorial Policies: Purpose and Audience

The CJACBR is an annual on-line and paper journal published by CAAN as a service to its members and anyone with an interest in Aboriginal Community-Based Research.

The CJACBR is a peer-reviewed journal which welcomes contributions for any author. Priority however, may be given to an author of Aboriginal ancestry/background, should manuscripts of comparable quality be available. First consideration will be given to innovative articles covering areas identified as HIV/AIDS research-intensive which demonstrates the use of Aboriginal Community-Based Research (ACBR) methods or philosophy.

Articles published in CJACBR are directed toward several audiences. The primary audience is Aboriginal HIV/AIDS service organizations and Aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS (APHAs). The CJACBR secondary audiences include community leaders, policy and decision-makers, and anyone with an interest in HIV/AIDS, particularly within Aboriginal populations and communities.

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Introduction

In November 2003, it had become clear that there were few opportunities specific to the Aboriginal HIV/AIDS community to implement the dissemination plans of the research process within which Aboriginal stakeholders had been involved. For this reason, based on a review of the literature and existing resources, the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) partnered with community stakeholders and applied for project funding. The overall goal of the project was to enhance dissemination of Aboriginal community-based HIV/AIDS research using a variety of methods.

CAAN recognized that in recent years there had been a notable increase in the scientific examination of the HIV epidemic as it impacts the Aboriginal community. However, while we knew much work was being done, there was not a notable or similar increase in the number of research studies presented in academic journals or at HIV/AIDS academic conferences that highlighted the work of Aboriginal community-based researchers. A review of the literature revealed that virtually no academic journals at this time provide a dedicated venue specific to Canadian Aboriginal community-based HIV/AIDS research.

Almost 3 years later, the inaugural issue of the Canadian Journal of Aboriginal Community-Based HIV/AIDS Research (CJACBR) is complete. The CJACBR has evolved from a desire to assist in the dissemination of research findings into a vehicle to promote and encourage Aboriginal community-based HIV/AIDS research. Great effort has been put into the development of policies to guide journal submissions and peer review processes. Authors from around the world submitted manuscripts and the Editorial Peer Review Board offered carefully considered feedback for each article. The outcome is a journal that strives to balance academic excellence with community relevance in an interesting and engaging format.

The articles included in this inaugural issue cover a variety of topics. Research findings are presented from two studies that highlight the needs of two spirit youth and women living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. The emerging research concept of Knowledge Translation is explored and presented in the context of Aboriginal HIV/AIDS research. The Principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) are linked with research ethics in a practical discussion about academic and community partnerships. The importance of negotiating partnerships is further outlined in the final article which draws on lessons learned to demonstrate the importance of clearly agreeing upon the boundaries of the research process before the work begins.

This is a new medium for sharing insights regarding research processes within the Aboriginal HIV/AIDS movement and a proactive step forward. The publication of this journal fills a significant void and has created opportunities to highlight excellent community-based research. This journal is a foundation to continue sharing ideas, enhance, support and complement research initiatives in all regions and sectors so that Aboriginal people can continue to find innovative ways of taking control of a disease that has taken too much from us.

Kevin Barlow
Executive Director
Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network