



# Positive Vibes

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## AIDS PEI moves on up!

AIDS PEI officially moved to its new location on May 1 to the Midtown Plaza at 375 University Avenue. The space was formerly occupied by the Quality Tourism Services bureau (now located at 16 Maypoint Rd).

The new space is located in a newly constructed professional building and is the ideal spot for the new AIDS PEI.

“We are launching a new website in the coming weeks and other new services and programs. We feel that this is a time of extreme change for our organization and one that was needed for some-time.” said Mark Hanlon,

executive director. “The new location is fresh and we know that some very good



work is going to flow from our office.”

On May 17, AIDS PEI and the Abegweit Rainbow Collective held an open house to coincide with the International Day Against Homophobia. ARC sublets an office from AIDS PEI. The plan is for

both organizations to launch a drop-in centre for youth and other at-risk populations in the coming months.

The new location can be found directly behind the Source for Sports location on University Avenue. It is conveniently located behind a Dairy Queen, next to a bakery and Thai food restaurant—and a Weight Watchers!

Plans for a community drop-in centre will be announced in October 2009. Individuals interested in taking part or helping with programming can call AIDS PEI at 800-314-2437 or e-mail [info@aidspei.com](mailto:info@aidspei.com)

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## Recycle your cell phone—and give back!

In December, AIDS PEI announced that a new partnership with the Shelter Alliance out of the United States will allow islander to donate their used or broken cell phones to AIDS PEI. The phones are either recycled, broken down and precious metals and harmful materials removed,

or sold to developing nations with emerging mobile markets. Phones can be donated to AIDS PEI at their new location at 375 University Avenue or at any Telus Mobility authorized dealer, the Habitat for Humanity on Mount Edward Road and the Riverside Country Market on

Riverside drive.

To date, over 250 phones have been donated. Final total dollars donated has not been determined pending review from the Shelter Alliance. Call 800-314-2437 to arrange a pickup or drop off of your phones.

Positive Vibes

## AIDS PEI takes on legal issues surrounding HIV/AIDS.

By Gina Rahman

Perceiving people with HIV/AIDS as human beings is a humane perspective that focuses on finding solutions. We are publishing a law booklet as a first publication from AIDS PEI. In writing it I thought of how rights and responsibilities of people aren't recognized in everyday life and imagined how difficult it could be for people living with HIV/AIDS. People in general have many more rights and responsibilities than are recognized.

The area of information protection is one area where people might not realize how accountable the institutions, organizations, and agencies have to be under the law. It is possible to have all your questions an-

swered as to the who, what, when, where, why of your personal information. Something people might not realize is that under the Protection of Information and Electronic Documents Act the private organization must supply you with a product or service even when you refuse the collection, use or disclosure of the information. People living with HIV/AIDS and their advocates wanting to begin a support group independently should see both the sections in the booklet citing the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Human Rights Commission section on Diversity

Programs. Health care directives are another important area where people living with HIV/AIDS can be involved in their own welfare. Your health care directive has to be known by doctors and proxy before it is needed.

There are more resources than you would expect but still more are necessary to help people living with HIV/AIDS.

Our booklet will be available in September in print and online at [www.aidspei.com](http://www.aidspei.com).

People in general have many more rights and responsibilities than are recognized.

People with HIV/AIDS still have rights and responsibilities.

## AIDS PEI to spearhead new sexual health portal

AIDS PEI presented to the Union of Public Sector Employees in March to seek funding support for a new project that AIDS PEI will undertake over the summer of 2009.

AIDS PEI, with the financial support of UPSE will launch the Island Sexual Health Network in September. The network will be an online portal with relevant information on sexual and reproductive health information. It will bring together resources from

across the province in the area of sexual health.

"We aim to ensure that as many islanders as possible have access to sexual health information. This new medium allows us to do just that."

AIDS PEI has sought the input of various groups including the Cana-

dian Federation for Sexual Health.

Topics for the new portal will include sexually transmitted infections, information for youth, educators and parents, information on testing for STI's, and information specific to women, men, LGBT folks and aboriginal persons.

Parties interested in participating in the portal committee should contact AIDS PEI at 800



September 20, 2009

[www.peiwalkforlife.com](http://www.peiwalkforlife.com)

## Specialist leaves St. John's; ACNL worried.

Patients are suffering because Newfoundland and Labrador still does not have an infectious diseases specialist, advocates working with HIV/AIDS patients say.

Three months have passed since the only remaining specialist, Dr. Mazen Bader, resigned his post in St. John's to accept an out-of-province job.

The Canadian Treatment Action Council and the AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador, which held a joint news conference on Tuesday to draw attention to

the problem, said without a dedicated specialist, patient care is being compromised.

Richard Baker, who was diagnosed with HIV more than 20 years ago, said medical support is key, and wonders if a person who recently died of AIDS could have benefited from better care.

"In my mind, if we had the specialist here to give this person proper care, then they would have had more proper care and they would probably be alive today," said Baker, who is secretary of the CTAC.

The groups said an offer was recently made to a candidate to fill the infectious diseases vacancy, but that it was turned down.

Meanwhile, Christopher Pickard, the executive director of the AIDS Committee, said progress is being made on another vacancy. A nurse-practitioner working with patients in the St. John's area had resigned short after Bader. Pickard said a replacement has been hired, and is expected to start in a few weeks.

*From CBC News: Here and Now*



**Needle exchange services are now located with the Department of Health.**

Facilities are located at the Sherwood Shopping Centre (Ellis Brothers) at 161 St. Peter's Road in Charlottetown.

Call: (877) 637-0333

Direct (local): 368-5707

## Leading Together 2010: March 4-7, 2010

The Leading Together 2010 Symposium will have 60 plus workshops, over 20 poster sessions and daily plenary presentations, all delivered in six different learning tracks. These sessions will feature models of practice and discussion on critical issues in HIV/AIDS work in Canada today. Following an evaluation of the 2005 event, 2010 will introduce a new

format, although many of the features will remain, including the workshops, poster sessions, and networking opportunities.

Leading Together: Canada Takes Action on HIV/AIDS (2005/2010) was launched in 2005. In March 2010 we will be

given the opportunity to reflect on that initiative and prepare for the future. Please visit [www.leadingtogether.ca](http://www.leadingtogether.ca) for more information on this initiative.

Individuals seeking a scholarship can download the application form online.

For more information about the Canadian AIDS Society, visit [www.cdnaids.ca](http://www.cdnaids.ca).



*"It creates this image of a person with HIV as a public-health menace"*

*Response by Richard Elliot, Executive Director of the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network on charges against a Toronto HIV+ person.*

## Toronto man charged with attempted murder

A Toronto man was charged Thursday with attempted murder after allegedly having unprotected sex despite being aware that he is HIV-positive.

The suspect became aware of his HIV status in March 2009, according to Toronto police.

"We're dealing with somebody's health," said Const. Wendy Drummond. "This could ultimately lead to somebody's demise, to their death."

However, Richard Elliott, executive director of the HIV/AIDS Legal Network in Toronto said notifications with charges and photos of suspects are unnecessary.

"Police say they're public safety notices," he said. "But it's a police tactic. They're using the releases as an investigative tool, to build a case against the accused.

What's worse, he said, is that

actions like this feed into the "very persistent stigma related to HIV and people with it. It creates this image of a person with HIV as a public-health menace.

Carlton Davis, 46, of Toronto, faces one count each of attempted murder, aggravated sexual assault, assault causing bodily harm and assault with a weapon.

*From the Canwest News Service.*

## Sticking to it: adhering to HIV meds

HIV has become a very manageable disease. With current highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) paving the way for positive individuals to live their normal life span, taking a few pills a day is no sweat. Right?

The reality is: medications have side effects and limitations and your personal or professional life might make things difficult.

Sticking to medications prescribed by your physician is important to viral suppression, which is the goal of HAART.

Taking them on time and manag-

ing side effects can be tricky, but can be accomplished.

Adhering to your medication schedule is key to long-term survival.

If you are having trouble adhering, talk to your doctor.

There are other meds available that might be more appropriate for you and your personal situation. Try these tips:



- If one or more of your meds requires food, carry snacks with you at all times.
- If you are worried about confidentiality at work or school, use a pill box and excuse yourself to visit the washroom to take your meds.
- Try a weekly “pill box”. These are available from your doctor or a pharmacy. As well, use a watch with an alarm to remind you to take your meds.

Visit [www.catie.ca](http://www.catie.ca) for more information about adherence and tips to help you!

Sticking to medications prescribed by your physician is important to viral suppression, which is the goal of HAART.

## Hot summer recipe—spiced rice

by Gina Rahman and Carole MacFarlane

Here's a great recipe for spiced rice—serve it with your favourite grilled meat (or tofu)!

What you'll need:

2/3 cup uncooked long grain rice

1 1/4 cups of water

3/4 cup chopped sweet onion

1 1/2 tsp olive oil

3/4 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth

1/4 cup golden raisins

1 tsp curry powder

1/4 tsp salt

1/4 tsp ground cumin

1/4 tsp ground cinnamon

1/4 cup chopped sweet red pepper

In a large saucepan, bring rice and water to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 14-16 minutes or until tender.

Meanwhile, in a small nonstick skillet, sauté an onion in oil for 1 minute. Stir in honey and cook 2 minutes longer. Stir in the broth, raisins, curry, salt, cumin and cinnamon.

Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer uncovered, for 5 minutes. Stir in red pepper and rice until well blended. Cook 2 minutes longer or until rice is heated through. Enjoy!

## A note about accountability

From Mark Hanlon, Executive Director

AIDS PEI has taken steps to ensure it is an organization that is responsible, accountable and transparent to its members, clients, donors and the general community.

We have changed our purchasing and other financial policies substantially to reflect the reality of modern emphasis on accountability.

We have committed to receiv-

ing an external audit on an annual basis to ensure our financial records are thoroughly scrutinized.

Most importantly, we have adopted standard practices that exist in most non-profit organizations including electronic record keeping for donor and financial records.

We will be adopting an umbrella privacy policy on how

personal information is kept in our office, both electronically and paper filing systems.

We are committed to being an organization that you can trust with your personal information if you become a member, a donor or a client receiving services.

That's our commitment to you and our community.



## AIDS PEI launches Island Men's Network

AIDS PEI has launched a new social networking site for men who have sex and relationships with other men in PEI.

The "Island Men's Network" has been soft-launched and will be promoted province-wide in late July and during Pride week 2009.

The site will bring together men from across the island for the purposes of socializing and outreach.

The site currently contains basic HIV/AIDS information and safer-sex information and

personal safety information, including information about cruising safely.

The network works much like Facebook. Users can sign up for a free NING account and add friends, chat, have discussions and post photos, videos and more.

"Gay, bisexual and other men who have sex and relationships with other men are still leading in new infections and we want to avoid or curb new infections in that population in this province. We hope this will be an effective way of getting infor-

mation out there" said executive director Mark Hanlon.

The site will allow users to sign up confidentially and will be a primary medium to get information to men in rural areas as well as those men requiring a little more discretion.

The site provides non-judgmental information and will help as many sub-factions of the group as possible.

Users can sign up at <http://islandmen.ning.com>.

For more information, contact AIDS PEI at [info@aidspei.com](mailto:info@aidspei.com).

### Board of Directors

Treena Smith  
Chairperson (on leave)

Alison MacDougall  
Interim-Chairperson

Pam O'Neill  
Vice-Chairperson

Treasurer (vacant)  
Secretary (vacant)

### Directors:

Evelyn Marshall  
George Clark-Dunning  
Elizabeth Drummond

### Awaiting election:

Robert Hainsworth  
Laura Mercer  
Maureen Kinder  
Tom Hilton

## News from the Abegweit Rainbow Collective

Pride 2009 is upon us and the Abegweit Rainbow Collective has put together a festival that truly celebrates the LBGT community in PEI.

2009 is an anniversary year for the LBGT community; it's the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York City which paved the way for the modern rights movement for LBGT persons; it is also the

40th anniversary of the decriminalization of homosexuality in Canada.

In conjunction with AIDS PEI, ARC has moved locations to the Midtown Plaza in the AIDS PEI office. The office is much more modern and functional and both organizations will work to launch a community room for youth and other vulnerable populations in the

Fall of 2009.

Stay tuned to the new brand new [www.arcpei.com](http://www.arcpei.com) for more information.

Don't miss the bi-weekly dances at the Confederation Centre for the Arts for the hottest dance parties on the island.



## AIDS PEI seeking parents for "the talk".

AIDS PEI is seeking 10 dedicated adults and parents to form a new peer-support group for parents.

The group, called The Talk Group, will be trained in the dreaded "talk" about sex that every parent or guardian should have with their teenager.

The education for parents will cover everything from sexual readiness to condom use and

abstinence.

Parents will receive 8 hours of training over a 2 month period and will create a parents panel that will present to other parents across the island. The group will help other parents approach the subject in an appropriate and effective way.



Parents will be able to register to attend a panel presentation by a group of parents in their area thanks to local volunteers.

Parents interested in being trained as a parent volunteer should contact Mark Hanlon, executive director, at [mhanlon@aidspei.com](mailto:mhanlon@aidspei.com) or by calling 800-314-2437.

### Be a member!

An AIDS PEI membership is just \$10.00. Members are allowed to vote in our annual general meeting and receive special information, free contraception and more!

Become a member online at [www.aidspei.com](http://www.aidspei.com).

**Memberships are free to people living with HIV/AIDS.**

# Good oral health vital for good overall health.

by Alison MacDougall

Many people have gingivitis and don't even know it. Nine out of ten Canadians will experience gingivitis at least once in their lives. Healthy gums are pink and firm in appearance and do not bleed after brushing and flossing.

Gingivitis is a painless form of gum disease that is caused from bacteria known as plaque. Plaque is a sticky material that is made up of bacteria, mucus and food particles. If plaque is not removed on a daily basis it can harden and become tartar. Plaque and tartar irritate our gums and cause them to swell and bleed when we brush and floss.

Common signs of gingivitis include

- Bleeding gums (blood on toothbrush even with gentle brushing of the teeth)
- Bright red or red-purple appearance to gums
- Gums that are tender when touched, but



otherwise painless

The following factors raise your risk developing gingivitis:

- General illness and autoimmune diseases such as HIV/AIDS
- Poor dental hygiene (not brushing and flossing daily)
- Pregnancy (hormonal changes increase the sensitivity of the gums)
- Uncontrolled diabetes

Crooked teeth, rough edges of fillings, and ill-fitting or unclean mouth appliances (such as braces, dentures, bridges, and crowns) can irritate the gums and increase the risk of gingivitis.

tis.

Medications such as phenytoin and birth control pills, and heavy metals such as lead and bismuth are also associated with gingivitis.

The good news!

Gingivitis is the most easily treatable form of gum disease.

Visit a dental professional such as a dentist or dental hygienist for an examination and professional tooth cleaning

Practice daily brushing and flossing

Use antibacterial rinses and other dental aids as directed by your dental professional

Have broken teeth and/or dental appliances repaired and/or replaced

**Remember the old dental saying “ if you kissed with your toes, would you clean in between?”**

## Modes of HIV Transmission Among Adult Canadians in 2006:

- Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) 39.6%
- Injection Drug Users (IDU) 17%
- Women 28%
- People from countries with high rates of HIV infection 8.3%

Women represent a growing proportion of positive HIV test reports in Canada. They accounted for about 28% of all HIV diagnoses in Canada in 2006. From 1985-1992 they accounted for only 8.9% of HIV infections.

Aboriginal Canadians make up an increasing proportion of HIV test reports in Canada.

**Source: AIDS Committee of Toronto, 2008**

## Notice of annual general meeting

AIDS PEI wishes to notify all members and community stakeholders that our annual general meeting on Saturday, October 3 at the AIDS PEI office.

All members with voting privileges are invited to attend.

The board of directors will present the financial statements for the 2009 fiscal year and introduce several resolutions for discussion including those

pertaining to the criminalization of HIV/AIDS, minimum sentences for drug offences and the current ban on MSM blood donors by Canadian Blood Services.

Those individuals wishing to become members should contact Mark Hanlon, executive director at 566-2437 or info@aidspei.com. Memberships are free for people living with HIV or AIDS and are just

\$10 for community members and \$40 for community organizations.

Special reduced rates are available for low-income or individuals from at-risk groups.

The annual general meeting will take place at 2:00PM and will be followed by a light reception for community members.

More info will be available soon.

## East or west—people can be the same!

Volume 1, Issue 1

By George Clark-Dunning

On a recent trip to Vancouver to visit an old friend, I re-opened my gay.com profile. Having no replies to my profile at home, I thought that in Vancouver, people would be more comfortable chatting with an openly HIV + man.

Soon after entering the Vancouver room, I began reading really harsh attacks on me as a positive person. People said things like “go home”, “don’t spread your plague in our city”. I was shocked!

Having done a stint on CTAC (Canadian Treatment Action Council) and visited Vancouver many times, I know that HIV is a huge issue in the gay community and the city as a whole. I expected that the gay community would be more accepting to talking to an HIV+ man, going for a coffee, whatever.

It didn’t happen.

I stood my ground that defended my rights to be in the room as everyone else. Especially the men looking for “bareback action” (intercourse with no condom) While I pissed off many of the people in the room, I was determined to defend my rights to be on line.

The next time I went on line, I was private messaged by a man,

his picture was hot, his profile said he was in good shape, 53 years old, into biking, walking and meeting new people. I allowed the conversation and after about 10 minutes of pleasant banter, he asked me if he could confide something to me (why do people always want to tell me their secrets? Good job I’m good with secrets!) I said sure. He told me how amazed he was that I had put my poz status right out there on my profile for the world to read. He said that he was positive and had been since the late 1980’s. The only people he ever told were his then lover, who promptly left him, his doctors and his late parents.

We began a week long chat session that would go on for about an hour every morning before he went to work. He was committed to being “alone” for the rest of his life, that he had cut himself out of all social activities and lived in self exile. I read the conversations and felt sad for him. I told him that I considered myself “single” not “alone” and that I still believe that somewhere out there is a man that will love me for all the right reasons, and that my HIV status was a small part of who I was as a person.

With an early Monday departure, we talked for the last time Sunday morning; I wished him the best in life and to never give up. If you do, the narrow minded bastards win.

The trip to Vancouver was wonderful: I spend a wonderful week with an old friend, we committed to not letting time zones and physical distances keep us from being the friends we once were. He spoiled me rotten and one morning as we went out for his morning jog, I realized how much I had missed him in my life for nearly a decade. We had a little cry. I spent a fortune on cloths at Holt’s and Harry Rosen’s. I also bought \$160.00 on underwear that only my doctors see.

I also realized that being an uneducated bastard is not an exclusively east coast thing, - it’s Canada wide!

Perhaps the other thing was that I gave a long term survivor of HIV an opportunity to re-evaluate his life.

As a person living with HIV since a confirmed diagnosis in 1991, I have had my share of pity parties, but in the end, I realize that I can never let some people’s opinions of me affect my life.

follow us on  
twitter

[twitter.com/aidspei](https://twitter.com/aidspei)

*...in the end, I  
realize that I can  
never let some  
people’s opinions  
of me affect my  
life*

More info?

[HIVstigma.com](http://HIVstigma.com)



## AIDS PEI Community Support Group Inc

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Fax: 902.626.3400

E-mail: info@aidspei.com

Prevention. Support.  
Community.

WE'RE ON THE WEB:

AIDSpei.com

**Our mission:** To create supportive environments for persons living with HIV/AIDS, to increase public understanding of the impact of HIV/AIDS, and to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS in Prince Edward Island.

We are guided by the principles of health promotion, population health and community development. We are committed to It is dedicated to developing new and innovative prevention/education initiatives for targeted populations including Youth, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered (GLBT) community, Women, Intravenous Drug Users and those in correctional institutions.

AIDS PEI is a non-judgmental, membership-driven organization which promotes diversified community involvement. Through the assistance of members, clients, staff, and volunteers, our organization makes consistent efforts to meet the needs of all citizens of PEI.

### AIDS PEI is a proud member of:



## Final Word

by Mark Hanlon, executive director

Summer on Prince Edward Island—is there anything else like it in Canada? The red sand stretches for miles along the coast and beach goers soak up hours of summer rays (using a good SPF sunscreen of course). Barbecue season is in full swing, the boardwalk at Victoria Park is a flurry of activity and our population suddenly doubles with thousands of tourists flocking to experience what we get to enjoy everyday.

When I reflect on my first year as Executive Director of AIDS PEI, I am very encouraged by my interactions with islanders. Our volunteers, our staff, our board and donors all make up this very unique organization of

people who have committed themselves to working on prevention and support initiatives.

It has certainly been a year of change. From our new location at the Midtown Plaza, the transition of our needle exchange program and tons of new projects, we've become an organization that is striving each day to become an admired community-based service provider

I can't help but become excited when I think about the amazing opportunities that lie just beyond the horizon.

It's also been a challenging year—but perhaps the most rewarding year of my life. I owe our successes to our staff,

our volunteers, our board of directors, our donors and other community members who take part in some way, no matter how big or small.

**Thank you!**

*Have a safe and fun-filled summer. See you in the fall!*