



CAAN **Communities,** **Alliances &** **Networks**

Annual Report **2023 - 2024**



CAAN has been a member-driven organization for over 27 years, and we would like to acknowledge those who have come before us, who have shaped CAAN into who we are today.

The Annual Report serves as a reflection of the dedication from our membership, of those who have worked tirelessly to fight for Indigenous solutions across the land. We thank you, and we will continue to be a member-driven organization as we drive our mandate forward for future generations.

Mission

CAAN provides a National forum for Indigenous Peoples to wholistically address HIV and AIDS, HCV, STBBIs, TB, Mental Health, aging and related co-morbidity issues; promotes a Social Determinants of Health Framework through advocacy; and provides accurate and up to date resources on these issues in a culturally relevant manner for Indigenous Peoples wherever they reside.

Spirit & Vision

CAAN is a national Indigenous organization and as such is committed to addressing the issues of HIV within a Indigenous context. Although the beliefs of Indigenous people vary widely from region to region and from person to person, the agency has made a commitment to conduct its activities in a spirit of Indigenous wholeness and healing. This disease can only be overcome by respecting our differences and accentuating our unity of spirit and strength.

Philosophy

All Indigenous people deserve the right to protect ourselves against infectious disease. Education and prevention is focused on empowerment as Indigenous people are encouraged to learn about the risks of HIV and AIDS and protect ourselves accordingly. To provide Indigenous people with accurate and up-to-date information about the nature of the disease, the risks of contracting it, and the issues of care/treatment and support for those infected is the challenge that CAAN employees and leadership face each day of their involvement with the agency.



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2023 - 2024

CAAN Board of Directors

CAAN's Board of Directors come from all across this land, each bringing a unique combination of lived experience, wisdom, traditions, and passion to our work.



Matt Fluery
Chair of the Board



Gayle Pruden
Vice-Chair of the Board



Patti Tait
Secretary



Jared Bigcanoe
Treasurer



Danita Wahpoosewyan
Board Member



Edward Wilson
Board Member

A Message from CAAN's okimâw & Board of Directors

Dear Members, Elders, and Partners,

Welcome to the Annual General Meeting of CAAN Communities, Alliances & Networks. It is a great honor to address you today as we gather virtually on the traditional lands of the First Peoples.

This year has been one of remarkable progress and profound resilience. Our collective efforts have strengthened our community, advanced our causes, and upheld our traditions. Your unwavering commitment to our mission has been the driving force behind every success we've achieved.

As we come together to reflect on our journey, I am filled with immense pride in what we have accomplished. From advocating for our rights to preserving our heritage, each milestone reached is a testament to our unity and determination.

Today, we celebrate our achievements, discuss our challenges, and vision for the future. It is a time for us to listen, share, and envision the path forward. Your voices and perspectives are invaluable, and I look forward to engaging in meaningful dialogue that will guide our organization in the coming year.

Thank you for your dedication, passion, and support. Together, we will continue to build a stronger, more vibrant community for future generations.

With gratitude and respect,

Margaret Kîsikâw Pîyesîs ᐱᐱᐱᐱ
okimâw ᐅᐱᐱᐱ



Indigenous Peoples Conference - HIV and Hepatitis Health Equity July 2023



CAAN and PHAC hosted the STBBI Action Plan consultation on July 6 & 7, 2023



2-Spirit Stories Re:Membering Documentary Cast



Circle of Harmony Conference, and the National Native HIV Network (NNHN) - April 2023



First Q&A Panel at Ottawa 2-Spirit Documentary Premiere



Visioning Project Leadership Council



Overdose Awareness Day August 30, 2023 Winnipeg, Manitoba



Indian Residential School Healing Gathering November 2023



Margaret speaking opening statements during AGM September 2023



Jared Bigcanoe singing during CAAN's AGM - Sept 9, 2023



Sandra Laframboise speaking on an amendment during CAAN's AGM - Sept 9, 2023



Global Fund Executive Director Peter Sands, Results Canada with MP Bonita Zarillo, MP Valerie Bradford and MP Ziad Aboutaif to talk about solutions towards #endingtb



Gayle Pruden, Patrick Brownlee and Sandra Laframboise at the Vision Gathering February 2024



Margaret speaking at the Vision Gathering February 2024



CAAN Leadership on Parliament Hill on December 1, 2023



Trevor Stratton spotted on a billboard in London, Ontario

Patrick Brownlee, Programs Manager



The 2023-2024 year was a busy one within the Programs team. We had two Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) Grants. One was titled Gender Based Violence (GBV) and cultural responsiveness: A GBA+ approach to building a cross-organizational framework and action-plan, the second was titled Re:Membering: 2-Spirits Stories of the Indigenous HIV Movement in Canada (with the latter ending this fiscal year).

We also had two Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) grants. One grant was a partnership with the Dr. Peter Centre focussing on harm reduction called The Canoe, and the other grant titled Keeping our Fires Project which aims to work with partner organizations to co-create resources. Some of the resources that were created this year were A Sexual Wellness Guide with Prince Albert Metis Women Association, a project summery with Native Friendship Centre Montreal, a testing banner with Interlake Reserves Tribal Council in Manitoba and a Community Asset Map with the Labrador Friendship Centre.

On the partnered project with the Dr. Peter Centre, CAAN focused on a Substance Use and Additions Program (SUAP) called Culture is Harm Reduction. This project created five medicine bundle resources on harm reduction. These resources were used across the country to do share backs and create spaces that feel safe to share and learn in. Additionally, CAAN partnered with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and REACH Nexus on an Indigenous HIV Self Testing project called I'm Indigenous, I'm Ready! aiming to bring HIV self testing to Indigenous organizations as well as rural communities.

CAAN attended many events across the land. We hosted a meeting with Dr. Peter Centre and their staff at CAAN's office in Fort Qu'Appelle where we made canoes out of red willow for The Canoe project as well as had some informative conversations. We also attended the Truth and Reconciliation event for residential school survivors in Winnipeg, MB, as well as participated in Winnipeg's Overdose Awareness Day. In September, CAAN hosted its AGM in Vancouver, BC, then hosted IAAW kick off events in Ottawa which initiated other IAAW events across the land throughout the remainder of the week.

We are looking forward to this fiscal's exciting events and partnerships, as well as supporting our members and their events!!!

I'm Indigenous and I'm Ready Project (Programs):



My name is Sianna Bulman, and I am the Indigenous Research Project Coordinator for the I'm Indigenous and I'm Ready! INSTI HIV Self-test Project. My role involves connecting communities, organizing logistics, and supporting project goals. I am of Métis and Mennonite descent on my mother's side and have Irish settler lineage from my father's side. I identify as queer and gender non-conforming, currently living in Treaty 6, Edmonton, Ab, and I am proud to be a member of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

I'm Indigenous and I'm Ready! is a partnership between CAAN, REACH NEXUS, and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to support Indigenous leaders and communities (First Nations, Metis, and Inuit) in response to the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the HIV epidemic, hepatitis C (HCV), sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBI), tuberculosis (TB), and related co-morbidities. Funded by the ISC and REACH NEXUS, the project aligns with Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations, aiming to create culturally safe pathways for Indigenous communities to implement INSTI HIV self-test technology.

During the early development of the project, we first engaged with an Advising Elder and established an Indigenous Guiding Council (IGC). We moved forward by connecting with agencies to identify the best community sites for engagement. We also worked with our Advising Elder and IGC to develop culturally relevant training for Community Champions to facilitate HIV self-testing and integrate feedback from communities on the best ways to move forward with training and resource development. Once communities were established, our process included meeting communities where they are at and mapping relevant resources and service providers to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the HIV epidemic.

One of the challenges we have encountered is that Indigenous front-line organizations face the strain of funding cuts and a lack of resources (staff, funding, time, etc.) which creates pressure on the communities they serve. We have had to find ways to work around these constraints, which included requesting an extension in the project timeline to better work with our partnered agencies and communities. The feedback we received during every phase of the project has been integrated and mobilized with great success, as we see that the communities are benefitting from the adaptation and personalization of the project to meet their specific needs and contexts.

We are excited for what this level of community engagement has brought to the project and how it has informed the way that we collaborate with government and funding bodies to better reflect community priorities and lived experiences. We carry this learning and relationships forward to better serve Indigenous populations, not only in HIV Self-Testing but also in how we engage with community in future projects and processes.



I'm Indigenous and I'm Ready Project (Research):

As the Indigenous Data Coordinator for the "I'm Indigenous and I'm Ready" project, I oversee the data management process, emphasizing strengths-based analysis. I am proud to identify as Anishinaabe and am from Nipissing First Nations. I currently live and work in Treaty 2 in the territory of Bkejwanong, and I acknowledge these lands and respect the Treaties made on these territories. My journey with CAAN Communities, Alliances, and Networks began in May 2023. Since then, I have been committed to creating and leading a process for our team to engage in data management effectively.

This Indigenous-led project aimed to investigate gaps and barriers in HIV testing and healthcare in Indigenous communities across Turtle Island. It was a one-year preliminary program in four Indigenous communities collaborating with the above mentioned organizations. The objective was to gain a deeper understanding of how INSTI HIV self-testing kits could be effectively delivered and implemented to cater to each community's needs. I used a Two-Eyed Seeing approach to examine the strengths of Indigenous ways of knowing in combination with the strengths of Western knowledge. We built on Indigenous traditions and brought people together to learn about HIV. In each community, we held a sharing circle where knowledge could be gathered. We aimed to honour local traditions and seek advice from local Elders and knowledge sharers. During the session, individuals were given the opportunity to openly share their personal experiences and any concerns related to HIV, with the assurance that they would not be interrupted or judged.

Our project has identified significant challenges faced by Indigenous people when implementing HIV INSTI self-test kits. To improve the health and well-being of these communities, we must first address the deep-rooted problems created by colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism. The issues we uncovered are systemic and beyond the scope of our resources. Building strong relationships with communities was challenging due to the one-year timeline, but we found that traditional ceremonies and spiritual connections played an essential role in relationship building. We continue to visit communities and collect data, even though we are nearing the completion of the project. Therefore, we recommend allocating an additional six months to this initiative. While this project identified gaps in care, it could not resolve any significant issues. Nevertheless, our final report will help advocate for the community's needs and meet the people where they are.

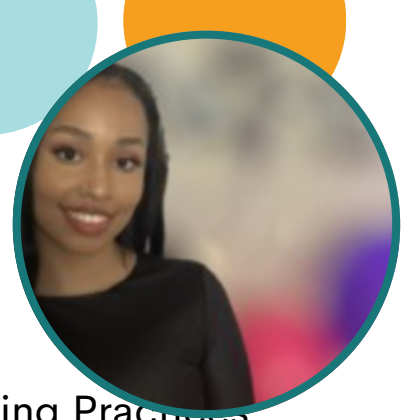


Guiding Our Spirits Project:

The Gender-Based Violence Framework has been named the Guiding Our Spirits project. The project has gone through many changes over the past few months. The training is a T4T – train the trainer. Organizations, communities, etc., once having completed the training, are given the materials to take back to their own, adapt (as these are wise practices) the materials to what their communities/organizations need with regards to gender-based violence and gender-based inequality. The framework revolves around the growth of a tree and based around the idea that we are all continuously learning and growing – even if we fall of that tree, we can rejoin when we are ready by travelling up the roots.

What started as a two-day training has expanded – it is now a three-day training with three online modules. We tried having it at five days but after much discussion, to ask organizations to take that time, seemed like a large ask. We are in the processes of finalizing those in person days and the modules. As well, knowledge bundles are being created to go along with those trainings. These will include full manuals for the training, blank manuals for those doing the training to adapt them to their work, PowerPoint access and medicines to help them through the training.

Keeping Our Fires Project:



My name is Tashanae "Tash" Dingwell, I am CAAN's Promising Practices Coordinator. I currently live and play in London, Ontario; the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron. I was born and raised in Tkaronto and lived in Tiohtià:ke for two years between 2022 and 2024. I am multi-racial with a unique and diverse ancestral lineage but closely identify with my Euro-Canadian and Caribbean cultural heritage. I have had the opportunity in my life to meet and build rapport with many folks of all racial/ethnic backgrounds, participate in unique cultural traditions, foster my knowledge of the diverse cultures across the land, and grow personally and professionally. I have an educational background in Social Work and have always been passionate about social justice and advocacy. I have always focused on the importance of (w)holistic health and well-being and the incorporation of cultural traditions, values, and language throughout my years of practice. I have the privilege of being able to continue this work with CAAN. This past fiscal year, I have been working on CAAN's Keeping Our Fires Project, which was inspired by CAAN's 2017-2020 Homefires Project. I worked collaboratively with four other Indigenous-led to co-create resources focusing on strengthening the capacity to provide both culturally safe and stigma-free STBBI prevention, testing, treatment, and care. I started the year by performing a baseline assessment with our staff members to identify wise and promising practices. I even connected with our national HIV and HCV knowledge brokering partners (e.g. Dr Peter Centre, Canadian AIDS Society, Reach Nexus, and CanHepC Network) to compile additional resources that respond to Indigenous health determinants. Our participants performed a baseline assessment survey to use as a starting point to document their current capacity, programs, policies, and evidence-based knowledge.



All the participants attend our two-day workshop training on how to perform an environmental scan using the Community Readiness Model to determine their community's level of readiness to create stage-appropriate work plan strategies to address existing gaps and barriers to STBBI service accessibility in their communities. Throughout our journey in the project, our participants filled out and carried their Knowledge Bundles that reflect their community's priorities and needs, their organization, process, relationships, spirit, and their Ways of Knowing and Doing. We hosted two ceremonies/gatherings with our participants throughout our project. One was hosted in person in Vancouver, British Columbia and another virtually where we shared wise promising practices, case studies, next steps, and stalked about service accessibility and stigma.

Based on our final evaluation scores, our participants reported they now can provide culturally responsive and safe prevention and testing services (over 80%), treatment (60%), and ongoing care and support (33%). The rest of our participants reported they are at somewhat capacity due to limitations with staff shortages/changes, funding cuts, or the need to continuously work at improving those areas. Over 50% reported they are now able to provide stigma-free prevention, testing, and treatment. Similarly, 50% of staff members reported to have implemented a practice change to improve their professional practice to provide culturally safe and stigma-free services.

85% reported they now have increased knowledge of evidence-based prevention measures and another 85% of participants reported to have increased their uptake of evidence-based harm reduction strategies (such as vaccinations, condoms/physical barriers, PrEP/PEP, safer injection supplies, safer smoking supplies, etc.). Lastly, their average knowledge score around the community readiness model went from an average score of 3.8 to 8.7, and their feedback shows the workshops and material highly prepared them to conduct their assessments.



Although our reports reflect the great success of our project, there were a few challenges with external influences. Ongoing funding cuts, staff shortages, and other demanding priorities within communities and organizations have affected efforts to address HIV, HCV, and STBBIs. This made it difficult to stay on our proposed timeline and cut into our time for action implementation in community, resource development, and ongoing survey participation. However, our project team will be envisioning how to overcome these challenges and make our proposed timeline more flexible/accommodating in the future.



2 - Spirit Stories Re:Membering Documentary Project

The 2-Spirit Remembering project, spearheaded by Communities, Alliances, and Networks (CAAN), was a significant initiative aimed at illuminating the HIV/AIDS epidemic through the distinct perspectives of 2-spirit and Indigenous organizers. This project delved into the experiences of individuals who lived through the late 80s and early 90s, providing insights into their stories, challenges, and resilience.

The genesis of this project can be attributed to a number of individuals. Margaret Kisikaw Piyesis took this project to ceremony, the proposal was written and WAGE generously funded it. 2 coordinators were hired, and then emerged a shared commitment to amplifying voices often marginalized in mainstream discussions, with a strong emphasis on inclusivity and cultural sensitivity.

A pivotal aspect of the project involved conducting comprehensive interviews with 14 individuals across Canada. These interviews yielded profound insights into the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic within 2-Spirit and Indigenous communities, highlighting themes of strength, cultural identity, and community solidarity.

Additionally, the project encompassed the organization of four screenings held in key locations across Canada, including Ottawa, Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Halifax. These screenings provided a platform for sharing the collected narratives with broader audiences, fostering dialogue, and promoting greater awareness of intersectional issues related to HIV/AIDS.



Despite encountering challenges such as the unexpected resignation of the main coordinator, the project persevered through collaborative efforts and adaptability. These challenges were met with resilience, ensuring the project's continuity and success in achieving its primary objective of raising awareness.

The insights learned from the interviews and screenings revealed compelling narratives of resilience, cultural pride, and community resilience. Participants shared experiences of navigating stigma, advocating for healthcare access, and fostering supportive networks within their communities.

The project's impact extended beyond awareness-raising, contributing to broader discussions on cultural competence, community engagement, and the essential role of storytelling in public health advocacy. By centering the voices of 2-Spirit and Indigenous organizers, the project facilitated meaningful dialogue, challenged stereotypes, and empowered communities to advocate for inclusive healthcare practices.

The 2-Spirit Remembering project serves as a testament to the power of storytelling, community engagement, and collaborative efforts in addressing complex health issues. As we reflect on the past year, the project's achievements underscore the importance of centering diverse voices and experiences in creating positive change within our communities and beyond.





Logistics and Campaigns

My name is Brandi Bilodeau, and I hold the position of Campaign and Logistics Coordinator at CAAN. As a Métis woman and a mother, I am deeply committed to advocating for Indigenous communities and marginalized individuals who may lack the means or ability to voice their concerns. Residing in Brantford, Ontario, I bring over four years of dedicated experience in advocacy, community engagement, and proactive measures aimed at effecting positive change in people's lives.

My journey with CAAN stems from a shared vision and commitment to the betterment of Indigenous communities. Over the past year, I've assumed various roles within the organization, with a primary focus on campaigns and logistics coordination. In my capacity as Campaign Coordinator, I have been involved in orchestrating the planning, execution, and coordination of numerous events, including Indigenous AIDS Awareness Week, Indian Residential School Healing Gatherings, The Visioning Gathering, and Leadership Retreats. Collaborating closely with partner agencies, I've facilitated logistics, overseeing aspects such as flights, accommodations, catering, and other essential details to ensure the success of these initiatives.

I have also undertaken the role of Assistant Coordinator for the 2-Spirit Re:Membering film documentary project. This involved coordinating screenings across four provinces in Canada and orchestrating a closing ceremony for the project. Coordinating logistics, I've handled travel arrangements, accommodations, per diems, and honorariums and working closely with contractors to ensure smooth execution of all aspects, including catering and meeting space arrangements.



With my recent transition to the role of Campaign and Logistics Coordinator, my responsibilities now encompass overseeing all logistical arrangements, including flights and accommodations, not only for CAAN staff but also for the agencies and individuals we serve who are attending our events.

I eagerly anticipate the upcoming events and campaigns this year and am genuinely excited to witness the continued growth and development of CAAN alongside our dedicated team.

Kris Kelly, Research Manager



CAAN is a domestic and international leader in Indigenous Community Based Research (CBR) with an explicit focus on HIV and AIDS and expanded support in hepatitis C (HCV), sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBIs), and co-morbidities including TB, mental health, aging and other related issues. For over twenty years CAAN has supported Indigenous communities through capacity building, programming, advocacy, mentorship, and research. CAAN has developed a robust Research portfolio through partnerships and strong community engagement emphasizing the Greater Involvement/Meaningful Engagement of People living with HIV/AIDS (GIPA/MEPA). CAAN has led more than 53 funded research projects, 43 research projects have been supported by CIHR. CAAN-led and partnered research has resulted in more than 19 publications, 230+ presentations and more than 26 reports and community fact sheets.

CAAN engages those with lived/living experience in all aspects of our work. Through ceremonies, our Indigenous community engagement, our Elders in Residence program, and the actualization of Indigenous ways of knowing and doing woven into the fabric of the organization.

It has been a time of deep reflection, visioning, and transition for CAAN. The research portfolio has been steadily developing a new research infrastructure that is grounded in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing, and will guide us in our work moving forward.

Future direction of research at CAAN

As a direct response to the continued lack of Indigenous based wrap around care, cultural support, and healing methodologies for Indigenous communities who have experienced violence, trauma, displacement, stigma- CAAN is scaling up our support across all social determinants of health, including an Indigenous youth focus on early intervention and prevention stream. Utilizing Indigenous Community Based Research to explore the intersectionality and inequity across macro-economic architectures and the continued impact it has on Indigenous people's micro-economic decision making, health, health equity, wellbeing, and culture. "Our ancestors are walking alongside us" and the research we do together creates 'spaces' that are safe enough for a person to share their stories. We believe storytelling is one of the greatest agents of change, and that 'promising and best practices' unfold through storytelling. Recommendations for creating culturally informed spaces of healing in Canada for Indigenous communities was brought forward by the Calls for Justice 2.5, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 7.1 to 7.7, 18.18, and 18.19 in the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Call to Action 21 by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) through Article 21, 23, 24, and 29. CAAN has provided culturally informed spaces which promote healing and well-being for over 20 years, our work is shaped by these calls and frameworks.



Wahkohtowin (Kinship beyond the immediate family) Community-based models of care to reach and support Indigenous and racialized women of reproductive age and pregnant women in Canada for the prevention of congenital syphilis

Grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing and doing, this project seeks to center Indigenous women in the response to the outbreaks of infectious and congenital syphilis disproportionately impacting Indigenous communities. Using community-based research methodology with land and arts-based methods, Indigenous women will be engaged in the creation of a national action-oriented early intervention and prevention campaign for of infectious and congenital syphilis. Firstly, a series of land-based workshops will be held in Nipissing, Ontario and Prince George, British Columbia, bringing together young Indigenous women of childbearing ages, with Knowledge Keepers, Elders and experts in the field exploring what early intervention and prevention for infectious and congenital syphilis could look like using culturally relevant participatory arts-based methods. These workshops will form a national multi-pronged and multi-media action oriented early intervention and prevention syphilis campaign using the artwork and messaging from the land-based workshops. This campaign will have the potential to reach Indigenous communities across country via social media as well as posters and infographics distributed through CAAN and the research teams' Indigenous and STBBI focused networks. By going beyond the conventional responses to health outbreaks, this project will contribute to the body of Indigenous health scholarship highlighting by documenting how [w]holistic and culturally grounded responses can improve Indigenous health outcomes.

The research team will work collaboratively across disciplines and expertise to respond to the syphilis outbreak among Indigenous women in non-conventional ways, including through the meaningful engagement of Indigenous women throughout the project and the use of land and arts-based methods to co-create an early intervention and prevention campaign for syphilis aimed at young Indigenous women.

As such, the objectives of this project are: 1) Engage young Indigenous women of childbearing age (15-24) in identifying root causes of infectious and congenital syphilis outbreaks impacting their peers and community. 2) Engage young Indigenous women of childbearing age in identifying early intervention and prevention strategies for infectious and congenital syphilis with other young Indigenous women. 3) Engage young Indigenous women of childbearing age using land and arts-based approaches to develop an infectious and congenital syphilis early intervention and prevention campaign aimed at other young Indigenous women. 4) Evaluate the pilot project of engaging young Indigenous women of childbearing age in the early intervention and prevention of infectious and congenital syphilis.

Mobilizing Indigenous Community-led STBBI Research to Increase Impact and Advance New Knowledge

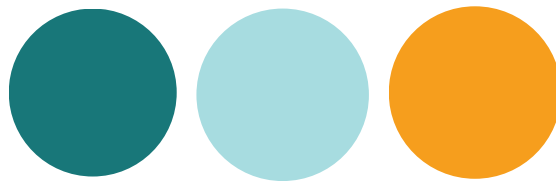
CIHR funded, we are currently 'mobilizing STBBI research' through a project focused on the collective inventory of CAAN's projects, products, and knowledge translation contributions. We are considering the collection as one data set for analysis to distill the major themes across the various nuanced topics and issues across the scope of work to date. Our analysis is highlighting poor social determinants of health in Indigenous communities are still as prevalent and our recommendations still as relevant as they were over a decade ago. Revision of our data analysis plan included an informal rapid literature review of grey and peer reviewed resources by leading First Nation, Inuit, and Métis researchers[i] to gather guidance on creating and advancing Indigenous data collection, stewardship, and governance processes across Canada. In alignment with CAAN's mandate, vision, and positioning as a national Indigenous HIV/STBBI research organization, we are responsible for refining and articulating our research and administrative infrastructure. This project will facilitate CAAN being able to re-introduce and build upon the work of our previous Youth Council, as we work to re-establish and co-construct CAAN's new Youth Council Vision.

The Aboriginal HIV and AIDS Community-Based Research Collaborative Centre (AHA Centre)

The 'AHA Centre' is a national, Indigenous-led collaborative research centre funded by CIHR since 2012. The AHA Centre supports Indigenous HIV and AIDS CBR conducted in and with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities across Canada. CBR is an approach to research where the needs and well-being of a community are at the core. CBR is engaged with the intention to partner with community members to gain a full scope perspective of an issue with the goal of providing results that will help a community to make decisions and implement change. For the AHA Centre, CBR is an approach to research that ensures culturally responsive, community-based HIV and determinants of health research; strong foundations for community leadership, research projects that are relevant to our communities; meaningful engagement of people living with HIV and Indigenous communities; and research findings that inform action. With a leadership team of highly respected Indigenous (and allied) community members, researchers, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, the AHA Centre has an exceptional track record of working in a good way with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, and demonstrating integrity that is expected by both community and academia. We have partnered with and supported many research projects and teams and contributed to regional, national and international HIV conferences and gatherings. AHA Centre has developed a youth focused webinar series that focuses on knowledge mobilization, to share the resources produced through CAAN and AHA with youth. These webinars are interactive and arts-based, designed to engage youth in Indigenous community-based research.

Indigenous Led Responses to Intersecting Pandemics

'Intersecting Pandemics' project is an ongoing project here at CAAN. We know that Pandemic experiences are not new to Indigenous Peoples of North America; introducing and spreading infectious disease was a strategy of colonizing nations to claim lands and resources without resistance. CAAN are leaders in responding to HIV and AIDS in Indigenous communities in Canada with a mandate to lead and support research relevant to Indigenous organizations and communities impacted by HIV, Hepatitis C (HCV), tuberculosis (TB) and other co-infections. We witness Indigenous Peoples navigating ongoing and layered syndemics every day. For this reason, CAAN's research mandate is strengths-based, culturally safe, and grounded in Indigenous knowledges and solutions. CAAN's research with Indigenous-led front-line service organizations responding to HIV, HCV, and TB lays a foundation to sustain a response to the continually evolving COVID-19 situation and its consequences for intersecting pandemics. This research is working to support identifying, implementing, and sharing culturally safe, Indigenous community-led solutions to address the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences by addressing the research areas of culturally safe COVID-19 prevention, preparedness, response (and recovery) for Indigenous peoples. Our research is supported by Indigenous-led front-line organizations in Halifax, Toronto, Thunder Bay, Regina, and Red Deer. Given the national scope of this project and direct engagement with front-line service organizations we believe the learnings from this project will generate valuable insight into pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. This work will also provide an opportunity to engage Indigenous youth in mobilizing this knowledge through future research, and through CAAN's next iteration of our Youth Council.



Trevor Stratton, Indigenous Leadership Policy Manager



My work as Indigenous Leadership Policy Manager (ILPM) for CAAN over the past year has been a whirlwind of activity from government relations to community partnerships and from global engagement to national coordination and collaboration.

As ILPM, I worked on developing an online and in-person consultation with Indigenous Peoples on the renewal of the 5-year STBBI Action Plan and submitted recommendations to PHAC. I also helped CAAN plan and implement the Indian Residential School Healing Gathering in Saskatoon, SK, November 14 & 15, 2023. Both of these events were steeped in Indigenous culture and healing.

Over the year, CAAN's okimaw and I have been working with First Lake Solutions, a government lobbying firm, resulting in our submitting a Proposal for Government Relations Support Services and developed and submitted a pre-budget submission on behalf of CAAN and planning advocacy with Ministers' offices after the cabinet reshuffle.

CAAN partnered with Oahas, PASAN and the HIV Legal Networking to host an event in Toronto on December 4 for IAAW titled, "Honouring Our People" focusing on Indigenous Peoples, HIV and prison issues. My work also includes promoting the Greater Involvement of People living with HIV/AIDS (GIPA). In this capacity, I attended the U=U Community Consultation hosted by the Canadian AIDS Society (CAS) in Calgary, AB on March 12 & 13, 2024. At least 25 IPHAs were in attendance.

My work with CAAN requires me to become a working member of several committees, such as: the Stop TB Canada Steering Committee (STC), the Global Indigenous Stop TB Initiative (GISI), the National Advocacy Coalition for HIV/Hep C/ STBBIs/HR related concerns, the Canadian Network on Hepatitis C (CanHepC), Advisory Committee for the "Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U) Continuing Medical Education Course" project partnering with University of British Columbia and CATIE and the advisory committee for the Ending HIV in Ontario Campaign 2024 led by the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN).

On the Global Front

This year saw the development of a framework for Indigenous global engagement over the next 2-3 years and how that relates to work domestically in Canada, including lobbying and advocating with global and national leaders.

In April of 2023, CAAN sent a delegation to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues trying to get the UN to help coordinate a global response to STBBI and TB with Indigenous Peoples: drafted and delivered CAAN intervention and also designed and implemented a side event with co-hosts UNAIDS and PAHO. CAAN also engaged at the 16th Session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to be held in Geneva, Switzerland under the auspices of the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (UNHCR) from July 17 -21, 2023. This included a side event organized by CAAN, UNAIDS and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (The Global Fund).

In March of 2024, I helped to facilitate a visit by Global Fund's Executive Director, Peter Sands, on March 19, 2024, host a Parliamentary Breakfast, and meetings with Ahmed Hussen, Minister of International Development of Canada and the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (FAEE).

I participated in the Circle of Harmony HIV/AIDS Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico and delivered a 75-minute workshop on Multi-sectoral, interconnected leadership in April of 2023. I also attended in the Regional Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Coalition of Indigenous Peoples in Response to HIV AIDS in Latin America: EQUALITY NOW! on November 30 & December 1, 2023 in Santiago, Chile. I also attended and presented at the Indigenous Peoples Conference- HIV and Hepatitis Health Equity immediately preceding IAS 2023, the 12th IAS Conference on HIV Science, July 23-26, 2023 in Brisbane, Australia. I joined other PLHIV activists to storm the stage interrupting a plenary session on prevention to promote the new U=U theme: #SayZero!

The work never ends.

The Visioning Project, wapiwin akinê (seeing collectively)

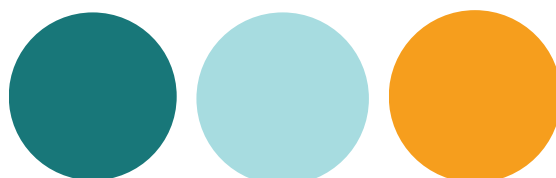
Wapiwin akine (seeing collectively) is CAAN's strategic visioning project. The project brought together CAAN leadership and members to practice wapiwin akine and integrate ongoing work (e.g., UNDRIP, gender-based violence, policy review) to inform a strategic vision for CAAN. This visioning project is funded by the Canadian Red Cross Society through the Government of Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund. There is a webpage on the CAAN website for this project noted as follows: [Wapiwin Akinê \(Seeing Collectively\): Strategic Visioning | CAAN](#)

A visioning project Leadership Council was established to guide the project and consists of the following 11 members:

1. Co-Chair Margaret Kisikaw Piyêsis
2. Elder Betty McKenna
3. Patrick Brownlee
4. Debbie Dalseg
5. Kris Kelly
6. Tawyna Crowshoe
7. Denise Lambert
8. Doris Peltier
9. Leona Quewezance
10. Trevor Stratton
11. Chris Walker

Two CAAN staff are dedicated to the visioning project and includes Visioning Director and Visioning Administrative Assistant.

A video to initially promote the visioning project was created and disseminated publicly: [Canmore Visioning Retreat 2023 Canmore Alberta - YouTube](#).



The visioning project was launched in Ottawa on December 1, 2023 during World's AIDS Day in Ottawa at the Parliamentary Breakfast hosted by Member of Parliament Jenica Atwin. Speakers at this event included CAAN okimaw Margaret Kisikaw Piyêsis, CAAN Visioning Director Dr. Earl Nowgesic and CAAN Elder in Residence Dr. Albert McLeod. Please see the quote from the Hon. Jenna Sudds, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development contained in the following website: [Canada Falling Behind on Slowing the Spread of HIV \(newswire.ca\)](https://www.newswire.ca)

CAAN Elder-in-residence Betty McKenna who is also a member of the Visioning Project Leadership Council conducted a shaking tent ceremony in Regina on January 25, 2024 in support of the project. Other members of the Visioning Project Leadership Council members who attended and witnessed this shaking tent ceremony were Co-Chair Margaret Kisikaw Piyêsis, Co-Chair Dr. Earl Nowgesic, Patrick Brownlee, and Debbie Dalseg.

On February 14-15, 2024 in Ottawa, over 75 delegates participated in CAAN-hosted Visioning Gathering, which was the initiation of a strategic planning process. This gathering was a ceremony involving singing, drumming and dancing, and where many of the delegates wore their traditional regalia. At this event, everyone took part in a strategic planning process, which included reviewing challenges and opportunities and brainstorming solutions to support CAAN in achieving its mandate. The CAAN mandate includes providing a national forum to address HIV and AIDS, HCV, STBBI, TB, mental health, aging and related co-morbidity issues in a culturally relevant manner for Indigenous Peoples.

Based on the deliberations of February 14-15, 2024 Visioning Gathering, a draft CAAN strategic plan was developed and reviewed by those who attend the gathering (e.g., CAAN membership, CAAN Board of Directors, CAAN staff, CAAN partners) and others who did not have a chance to attend the gathering (e.g., individuals and groups affiliated with CAAN's mandate). The next step is for the CAAN okimaw and CAAN Board of Directors Chair to meet to re-review the draft strategic plan and determine the process in finalizing the plan.

Annual General Meeting - September 9, 2023

Membership was invited in person and virtually to review CAAN's last year, and to see our vision going forward during CAAN's Annual General Meeting. Resolutions will be presented, and CAAN's Voting Members will have a chance to share their voice.



Healing Gathering (mâdawipayowin) for Residential School Survivors - November 14 & 15 2023

Community conversations will be woven throughout two days of culturally sensitive and culturally healing approaches, it will include the guidance of Elders, spiritual healers, land-based teachings, and creating art. The overall approach and methodology are to holistically support attending participants as they dialogue and heal.



Indigenous AIDS Awareness Day/Week

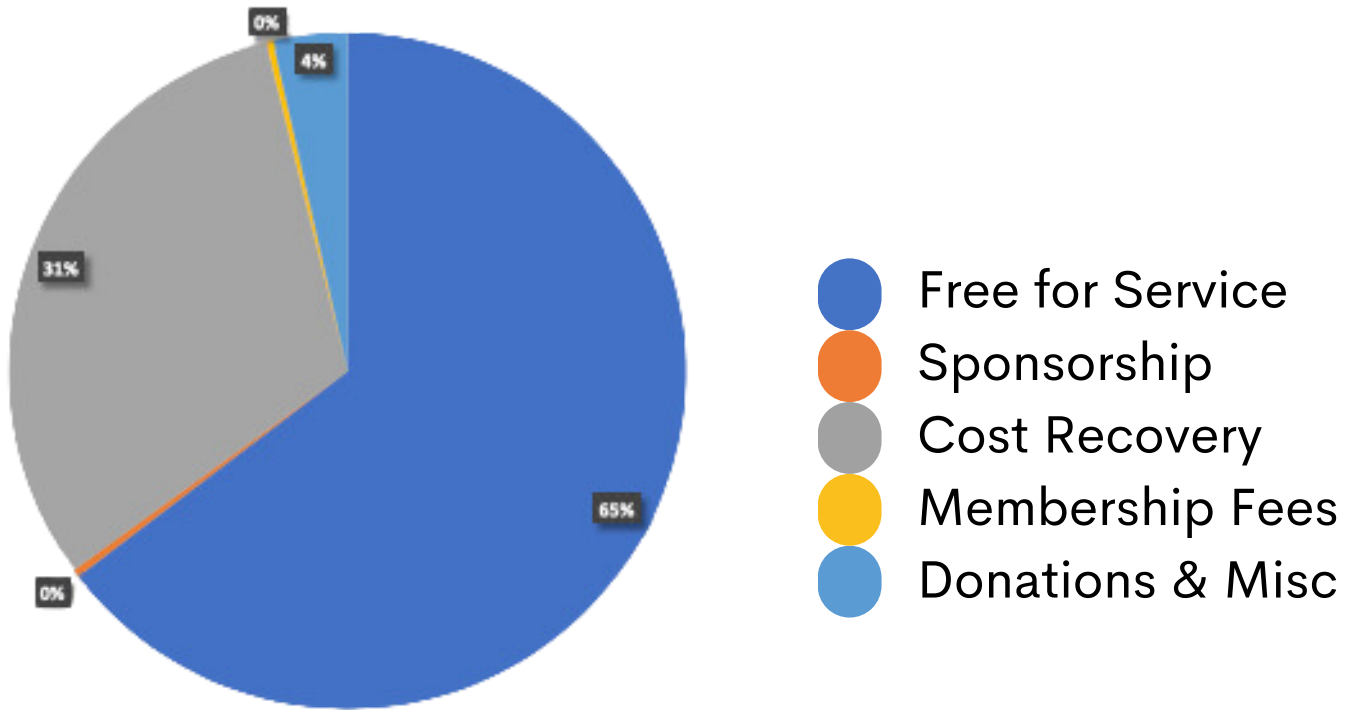
International AIDS Awareness Day (IAAD)
December 1, 2023

International AIDS Awareness Week (IAAW)
December 1 - 6, 2023

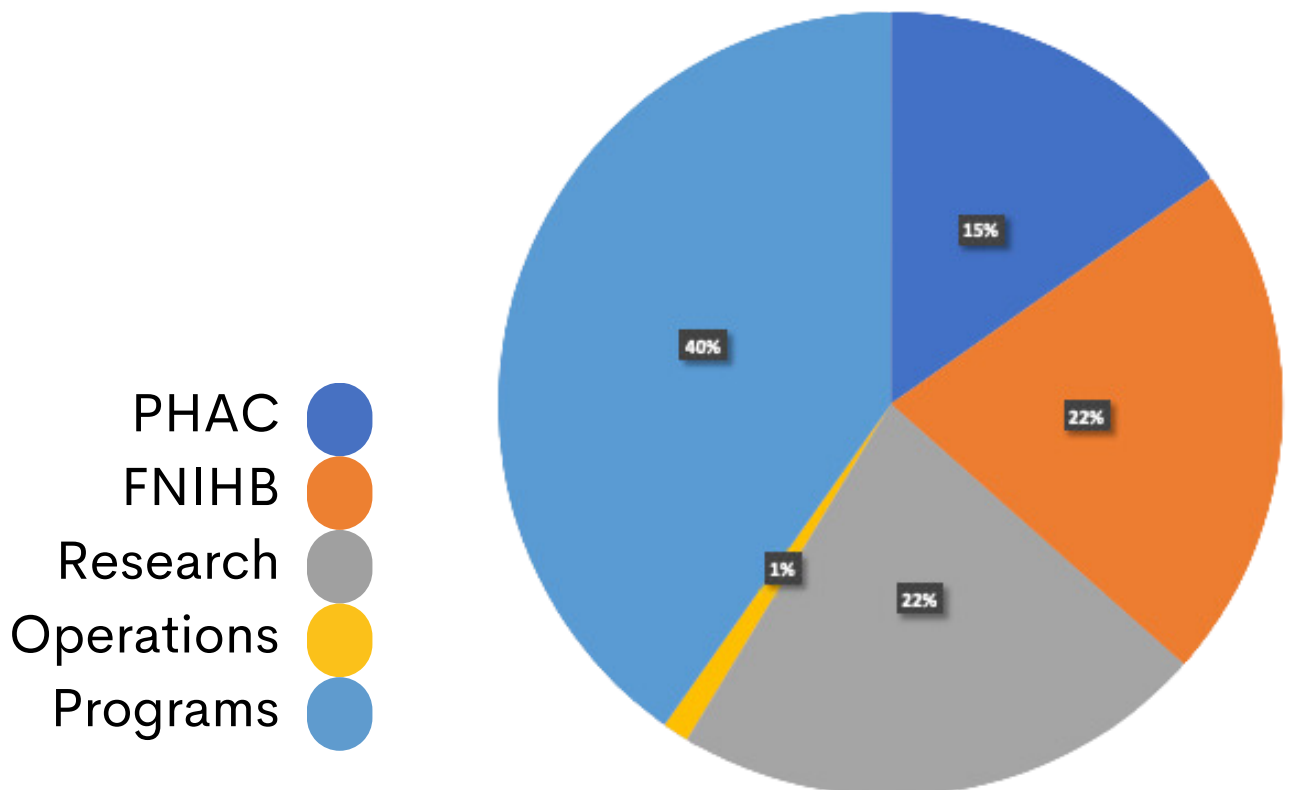
CAAN Staff on Parliament Hill in Ottawa to speak about CAAN's work in HIV/AIDS research and movement.



2023-2024 Operations



2023-2024 Total Revenue



Join CAAN's Membership!

Full Voting Membership is open to all Indigenous Persons living with HIV/AIDS or Hepatitis C and all Indigenous-led organizations or communities with a significant focus on HIV and AIDS, HCV, STBBIs, TB, Mental Health, aging and related co-morbidity issues.

Membership with CAAN allows you to:

- Attend events, trainings, and gatherings put on by CAAN and it's projects;
- Stay informed with the work, events, resources and initiatives of CAAN throughout the year; and
- Access to support and information from our amazing CAAN team

Becoming a Voting member also allows you to:

- Attend the CAAN Annual Meeting;
- Nominate members, or stand for election, to the CAAN Board of Directors; and
- Propose resolutions and help direct and inform the work of CAAN

Head to www.caan.ca and visit our Membership page, or give us a call to have a membership form mailed to you!

Thank you Funders!

A special thank you to our funders, granters, partners and supporters. Without your selfless dedication to the work of CAAN, our programs, research and membership resources would not be possible.

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POSITIVE CHANGE
FOR PEOPLE LIVING
WITH HIV AND OTHER
EPISODIC DISABILITIES



The Global Fund

To Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

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