



ONTARIO AIDS NETWORK

A TIME OF
CHANGE AND
GROWTH

ANNUAL REPORT
2004 - 2005

Co-Chairs' Message

A time of change and growth

The theme of last year's Annual Report was "Moving Forward". It highlighted the commitment the Board of Directors made to working together with the membership to take the Ontario AIDS Network (OAN) into the future.

As we looked forward, our starting point was to acknowledge that Ontario faces an epidemic markedly different from the early days of AIDS that led to the formation of community-based AIDS Service Organizations and the OAN. In the third decade of AIDS the challenges have changed and the OAN's responses must change in order to retain and enhance our relevance, credibility and effectiveness.

Change and growth are essential in creating an effective organizational response to HIV/AIDS. To help identify opportunities for evolution and investment in our future, the OAN embarked on a process of reflection and consultation, which led to the creation of a new vision, mission and strategic plan.

Our vision is to be a collective force shaping the immediate and future response to HIV/AIDS for people infected, affected or at risk throughout Ontario.

Our response to the epidemic is based on partnerships. The OAN, a network of people with HIV/AIDS, AIDS Service Organizations and AIDS Service Programs will work collectively to advance social justice for people infected, affected or at risk of HIV/AIDS and to improve their health and quality of life. A divided approach that silos People with HIV/AIDS, AIDS Service Organizations and programs, allied community organizations and institutions into *separate* areas of endeavour is *not* part of our future plans.

The OAN's mission statement demonstrates our commitment to the principals of inclusion and social justice. AIDS affects everyone in Ontario. It is not merely a medical condition, but also the result of complex social, cultural and economic factors. Over the next four years our advocacy efforts will look to the health system and beyond to influence the full range of factors that affect health and well-being.

Social justice, communications, skills building, knowledge brokering and in-reach are the five priority areas in which the OAN will grow to provide both service and leadership. In identifying these areas of growth and opportunity we acknowledge that we need to adapt our activities and work in new ways. It is an ambitious plan that ensures the OAN will continue to assess and pro-actively respond to the needs of member organizations, people with HIV/AIDS and affected and at-risk populations. Our strategic directions will make a significant and measurable contribution to the fight against HIV in Ontario and in Canada.

We have yet to accomplish all that we set out to achieve, but our work in the fulfillment of strategic priorities has advanced greatly during the past year. The Board's commitment to change and supporting the growth of our Network has been demonstrated in the re-drafting of the OAN by-laws to provide even greater opportunities for PHA inclusion, both at the members meetings and in governance, as well as a commitment to dedicate significant resources to support individual capacity building through the creation of a PHA led leadership forum. Our work on social justice issues has been supported through

Our Mission

The Ontario AIDS Network is a network of people with HIV/AIDS, AIDS Service Organizations and AIDS Service Programs that works collectively to advance social justice for people infected, affected or at risk of HIV/AIDS and improve their health and quality of life.

the newly created position of Director of Policy Development. The result has culminated in a more active approach to participation, influencing public policy to promote and protect the rights of people with HIV/AIDS. The Board has also invested in the acquisition and development of new technologies, which will enable us to more effectively share our work, collaborate with others and reach into both rural and urban Ontario to reduce the isolation experienced by people who confront the challenges of HIV/AIDS. All of our efforts continue to support the excellence of Ontario AIDS Service Organizations by providing mentoring, peer support, skills development opportunities and a commitment to the advancement of social justice initiatives.

We are proud of all that has been achieved in our historically rich past, but refuse to be bound by what limits us in our desire to achieve even greater things for the benefit of all. We will continue to think and act anew.

*“To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly.”
- Henry Bergson*

Ron Lirette and Karen Vance Wallace
Co-Chairs, Board of Directors

Executive Director’s Report

This past year has been a time of development and growth for the OAN. We have added new programs and staff to take our work forward and support our new strategic directions.

An exciting development has been the work of our PHA leadership in identifying future directions for PHA inclusion within the OAN. To support the work of Caucus, the OAN Staff assisted with the provision of community-based research and the coordination of a provincial Think Tank that included leaders in the PHA movement from throughout Ontario. The Future Directions Think Tank was made possible through the assistance of the AIDS Community Action Program (ACAP) of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

The OAN has also been pleased to act as a Co-Champion in the provincial community planning initiative that seeks to identify and support new ways of providing a more effective and coordinated response to the challenges of HIV by provincial agencies. Although this work is still in progress we are convinced that it will result in improved service delivery.

This year, to support people who are HIV positive who are experiencing an emergency or financial crisis, the OAN raised over \$75,000 from the private industry to support the OAN **Positive Action Fund**. The proceeds are distributed directly to people in need in communities throughout Ontario thanks to the direction and support of our membership.

The OAN’s new strategic directions have provided a platform on which to build useful policy positions and advocate for the rights and dignity of people with HIV. This year as part of the consultation process on the Ontario Budget, the OAN urged the government to dedicate funding to support a coordinated provincial HIV prevention campaign. The OAN has also created position statements on the need for housing, income support and increased funding for AIDS Service Organizations. This year the OAN also became involved in areas of policy development such as disability rights. To ensure that our workplace is supportive and accessible, the OAN held a series of consultations with member agencies to evaluate employee benefits. As a result the OAN has been able to identify employee benefits programs that will assist member agencies in obtaining access to improved health and disability benefits packages.

Skills development for the staff of AIDS Service Organizations continues to be a core activity of the OAN, thanks to the support of the AIDS Bureau of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. This past year the OAN identified the need to support enhanced and diverse skill building opportunities that address a broader range of issues linked to Ontario's strategy on HIV/AIDS. Working in partnership with other organizations, the OAN is developing the skills and technological capacity to manage and support a "virtual" network that gives diverse populations and organizations the opportunity to exchange knowledge on-line. The OAN will continue to develop face-to-face learning opportunities and on-line educational sessions to enable continuous learning and to respond to new areas of concern in the HIV epidemic.

To help sustain our future development, the OAN also embarked on a new Ontario-wide fundraising campaign in LCBO stores made possible by the generous commitment of the LCBO stores and staff. The future development of the **Positive Action Fund** and other fundraising activities at the OAN is now being supported through the work of our new Director of Resource Development.



New program initiatives this year include the "Making Connections" project which seeks to employ technology and interactive learning experiences to increase the exchange of knowledge among people who are HIV positive and reduce their sense of isolation. This innovative project employs e-learning tools to increase participation within the OAN, as well as enhance awareness about mental health issues. Our thanks to the Public Health Agency of Canada's AIDS Community Action Program.

The OAN is also pleased to partner with the Inner City Health Research Unit of St. Michael's Hospital and the National Office of the Canadian Mental Health Association in Phase 2 of the Adding Life to Years Project. This new national initiative seeks to increase awareness of the underlying issues related to HIV and depression. The project's goal is to increase mental health literacy and enable front line workers in mental health and HIV agencies to provide more effective and coordinated support for clients.

Advocating for supportive services for people who are at risk and difficult to reach continues to be an important part of our work. This past year the OAN worked in partnership with the Prisoners AIDS Support Network (PASAN) the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN) the AIDS Bureau of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and North Network to explore the potential of telemedicine to help deliver services for people with HIV. A pilot program in prison will start in the fall of 2005.

This has been a year of achievement, but it has also been a year of loss. Many deaths occurred this past year. We mourn each loss and celebrate what their lives contributed to the fight against AIDS. In particular, I remember Mark Bulbrook, an Ontario AIDS Network Honour Roll Recipient and a past Executive Director of the Ontario AIDS Network.

As we continue to grow in a climate of challenge and change, I would like to express my appreciation to the Board of Directors for their leadership, vision and support and to the OAN Staff whose commitment converted dreams into a reality. Above all, thanks to the OAN's members, donors and funders, without you, none of our work would be possible.

In closing I recall the words of Mark Bulbrook.

"To each and every one of you, never understate your purpose, nor underestimate your impact."

Rick Kennedy
Executive Director

Ontario AIDS Network Positive Action Fund

AIDS affects everyone.

In Ontario, an average of four people per day learn that they are HIV positive. The epidemic is far from over.

Although the fatality rate of AIDS has declined, the number of people living with the challenges of HIV has risen.

It is in this climate that the **Positive Action Fund** operates to provide emergency assistance for PHA's throughout Ontario.

The **Positive Action Fund's** resources are distributed by designated member agencies. Funds support clients who are in greatest need of emergency financial assistance for necessities such as; food, medicine, shelter, transportation, optical and dental care.



Last year nearly 3500 people with HIV/AIDS received assistance from the **Positive Action Fund**.

We would like to express our gratitude to all our donors, without whom the work of the **Positive Action Fund** would not have been possible and to urge you to support the **Positive Action Fund**.



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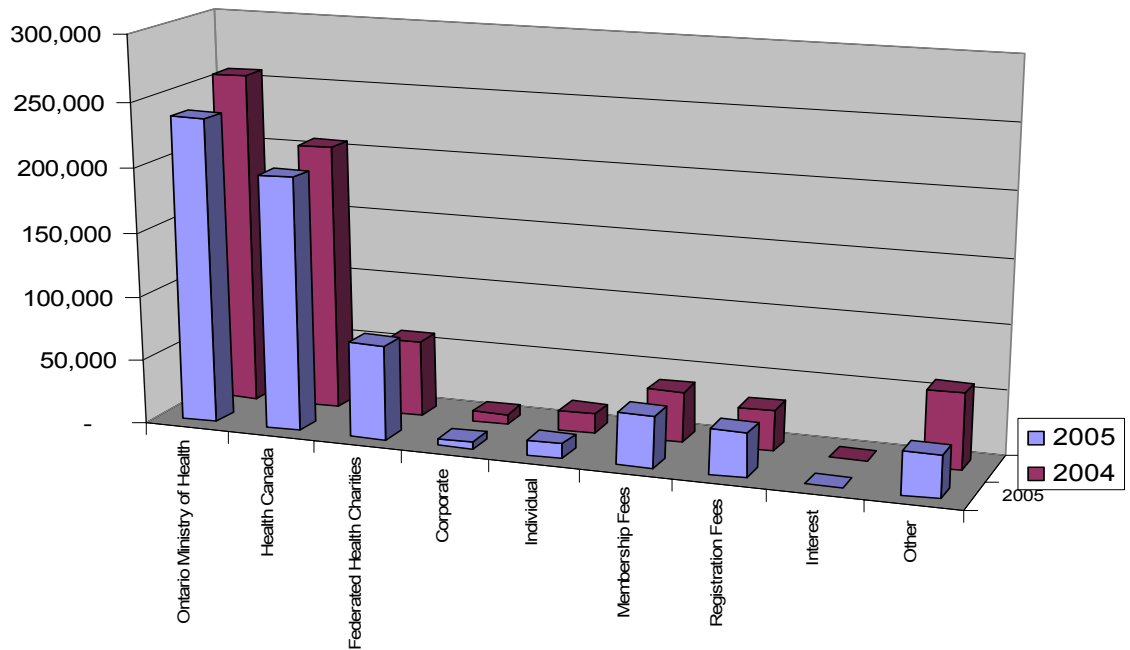


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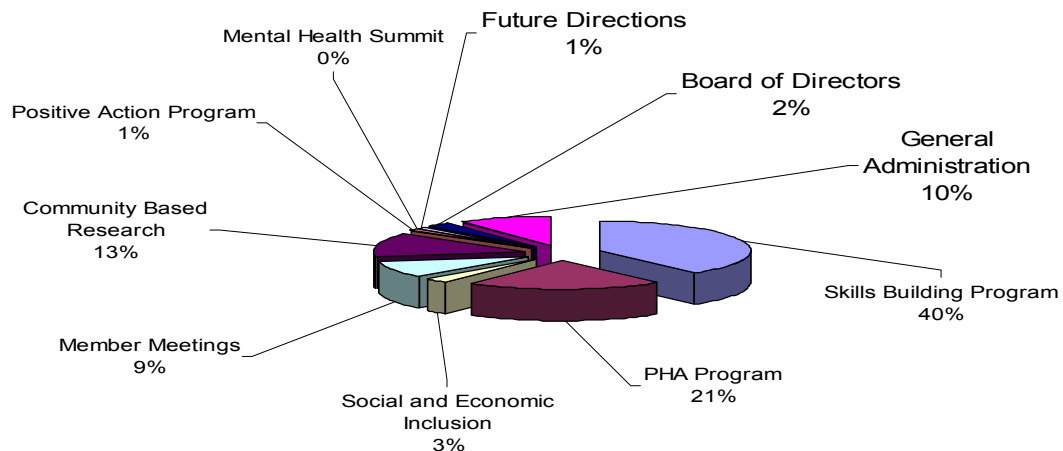
OAN Financial Report For 2004 – 2005

Sources of Revenue



	Ontario Ministry of Health	Health Canada	Federated Health Charities	Corporate	Individual	Membership Fees	Registration Fees	Interest	Other
2005	236,577	197,000	73,561	5,484	11,299	39,966	34,789	203	32,205
2004	257,775	206,800	58,790	7,395	15,447	39,184	31,783	293	59,195

**Ontario AIDS Network
2005
Expenditure by Program Area**



PHA Caucus Co-Chairs Report

"Change is hard because people overestimate the value of what they have - and underestimate the value of what they may gain by giving that up."

James Belasco and Ralph Stayer, Flight of the Buffalo

The past year has required the Ontario AIDS Network (OAN) PHA Caucus (Caucus) "to estimate the value of what we have". We've had to self-reflect to determine our strengths, admit our weaknesses, and discover new opportunities.

At the AGM in 2004, as part of the OAN strategic planning process, The Future Directions Project was undertaken to address the purpose of the Caucus, its linkages to the OAN, and greater participation and inclusion of people with HIV/AIDS (PHAs) in the OAN and its' member agencies.

The Future Directions Project began with a research component that included; a mail out survey to 256 PHAs on the Caucus mailing list, nine focus groups representing PHAs from diverse communities, and an electronic survey of Executive Director's of member agencies.

The research showed that the case for change was a strong one. While many considered a provincial PHA forum to be important, there was no question among participants that change must happen. Caucus' lack of a clear mission and lack of clarity in terms of its role and relationship to the OAN and member agencies were common themes. Through the research it became clear that PHAs felt that "Caucus has to actually do something." Across the focus groups and in the surveys we heard a strong sense of frustration with Caucus' inability to move forward and fulfill its' mission and achieve its' vision:

"to establish educational programs, provide advocacy and ensure that PHAs are actively and effectively participating in all decision-making processes of the Ontario AIDS Network (OAN) and its member agencies."

"to build partnerships, individual skills and knowledge, enabling PHAs to take on decision making roles for themselves and their communities."

In June 2005, "Future Directions Project: A Report of the Findings of the Research Component" was then presented to a Think Tank of PHAs. The purpose of the Think Tank was to review the results of

A Summary of the Report on the OAN Future Directions Think Tank

Presented by Joseph van Veen
OAN PHA Caucus Meeting
July 29, 2005
Toronto, ON

the research and use the data to make recommendations for a new model of PHA participation in the OAN. The Think Tank reflected on the current Caucus model and looked at other successful organizational models. The recommendations from the Think Tank outlined a process, which would 'dissolve' Caucus as it currently exists and establish a PHA Leadership Forum that will "enable people with HIV/AIDS to realize their potential as community leaders".

Today we are being asked to give up the current model of PHA engagement. Will that be easy ... absolutely not! Not unless we can estimate the value of what we have to gain? Through a leadership forum we will build the capacity of PHAs to become more involved in the OAN, its' member agencies and their own communities. The Leadership Forum will empower PHAs to effect change by providing them with the information and skills they


need to be active participants or leaders in the community. The OAN Board has committed to the success of a leadership forum, with resources and by proposing bylaw changes so that PHAs will have increased opportunities to be engaged in the decision making process.

The landscape of HIV/AIDS has changed and we must change too. The PHAs of Ontario aren't losing anything. In fact, they are gaining something. Something that has been needed for a long time ... a future.

Steve Harris and Joseph van Veen
PHA Caucus Co-Chairs, Board of Directors

Community-Based Research Capacity Building Program

The Ontario AIDS Network (OAN) Community Based Capacity Building (CBR) Program supports member organizations, other HIV service providers and people who are HIV positive (PHAs) to develop the skills necessary to access, design and conduct research relevant to communities and community-based organizations.



**OAN Future Directions Project:
summary of the research report**

Presented by Lea Narciso
OAN Board Retreat
September 2005
Toronto, ON

In 2004-2005, the CBR Program provided training and coaching, facilitated linkages between community-based and academic researchers, enabled dissemination of research results to ensure high accessibility, and supported grant-seeking and evaluation activities. Lea Narciso, Director of Community Based Research and Consultant Catherine Maule, conducted a CBR project called 'Future Directions'. The aim of this project was to review the role of OAN's PHA Caucus. A main outcome of this research is a planned shift to a leadership development model for PHAs.

Thanks to the support of the Canadian Institute of Health Research a full-time Director of Community-Based Research is part of the OAN. In October 2005, I was hired as the new Director of Community-Based Research to cover parental leave. I am in the early stages of identifying emerging research needs and partnership opportunities, and I am looking forward to an exciting year of enabling the community-based research needs of the OAN's associates.

Shelley Cleverly
Director of Community-Based Research

Skills Program Report 2004-2005

The Skills Program, funded by the AIDS Bureau, Ministry of Health and Long-Term-Care provides member agencies and community partners with educational opportunities to increase the capacity of AIDS Service Organizations to respond to the needs of their communities. Learning streams have been developed for Support Workers, Educators, Outreach Staff, Volunteer Coordinators, Fundraisers, Administrative Assistants, Executive Directors and Board Members.

In the coming year, the OAN will be developing new approaches to training. The ever changing nature of HIV requires continuous learning in order to stay ahead of the epidemic. The development of skills can no longer be a once a year experience. The high turnover rate among staff of AIDS Service Organizations has created an ongoing demand for basic training. To respond to this challenge, the OAN

is developing, in partnership with others, a core competencies program that will provide on-line learning opportunities on the fundamentals of HIV and the other core competencies needed for each particular area of skills development.

The creation of an on-line training program in core competency areas will enable the OAN to develop enhanced educational opportunities at our face-to-face sessions. Enhanced training sessions will provide greater depth in subject areas to engage, support and challenge more experienced staff. These sessions will focus on the priority areas identified in the provincial and federal strategies and will be informed by up to date research on where the epidemic is headed.

The “Making Connections” project, a pilot project funded through time limited funding by the AIDS Community Action program of the Public Health Agency of Canada has started the process of developing an inventory of presentations from past and current Skills sessions that can be accessed on line through the web.

This past year the OAN partnered with the Ontario Organizational Development Program (OODP) to present 4 workshops on maintaining appropriate boundaries in our work. The sessions were designed to help staff and volunteers to consider what boundaries are appropriate and how they should be maintained or changed.

New Policy Strategy Launched

This year the OAN launched a new Policy Strategy as part of its strategy to move forward with the priorities identified in “Stemming the Tide” and by the Board and membership at its spring meetings. This year the focus will be on improving income support programs, housing, the criminalization of HIV/AIDS and the funding crisis facing AIDS Service Organizations.

We are also building an urgent response capacity to respond when a policy initiative or legislation is announced that will impact on people with HIV/AIDS. By building relationships with other organizations and government officials we are improving our ability to influence these decisions. These relationships will also open the door to alliances not only with organizations dealing with HIV/AIDS but organizations of persons with other disabilities who have a common interest. A new section on the web site for public issues will provide up to date information about these and related issues, as well as other government initiatives. A new email list will be set up early in the year so that we can alert members and the community about new initiatives and suggested advocacy strategies.

Patti Bregman,
Director of Policy Development

Social Justice in HIV/AIDS



The history of the AIDS movement in Ontario has been marked by an ongoing commitment to social justice. To recognize in a special way the contributions that so many have made to create a just and effective response to HIV/AIDS, the Ontario AIDS Network is pleased to announce the creation of a new award to be known as the “Social Justice in HIV/AIDS” award. Ms. June Callwood, activist, author and founder of Casey House was the first recipient to be honoured with the Social Justice in HIV/AIDS Award.

The Honourable George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care presented Ms. June Callwood with the first Social Justice in HIV/AIDS Award.

OAN Honour Roll

2004 marked the 9th Anniversary of the Ontario AIDS (OAN) Network Honour Role of Excellence. The Honour Roll recognizes the outstanding achievements of individuals and their dedication to creating a just and effective response to HIV/AIDS in Ontario.



2004 Honour Roll Committee – Left to Right: Margaret Lover, Robert Alexander, Thomas Egdorf, Neil McGregor & Michael Sobota

Past Honour Roll Recipients

2004	2000	Dr. Anne Phillips	James Thatcher
Patrick Cupido	Sean Hosein	Kevin Orr	Clarence Crossman
Bob Leahy	Sam Conti	Michael Lynch	Camille Orridge
Raj Maharaj	Judith Tresidder	Stephen Manning	Andrew LaFontaine
Susan Secord-Paul	Tony Di Pede	Bernard Courte	1996
2003	Dr. Anita Rachlis	George Smith	David Kelley
Laurie Edmiston	Charles Roy	Molly Nakonyi	James Kreppner
David Linton	1999	Yvette Pereault	Darien Taylor
Shari Margolese	Alex Berry	Ed Jackson	Brian Farlinger
Danny Nashman	Rick Bebout	Dr. Greg Robinson	Maggie Atkinson
Ron Rosenes	Dionne A. Falconer	1997	Dr. Jay Browne
2002	Robert Trow	Mary Cerré	Dr. Rick Green
Yves Denis St. George	John Flannery	Paul Maingot	Dr. Philip Berger
Dr. Colin Kovacs	Dr. Don Kilby	Louise Binder	David Hoe
Devan Nambiar	Jane Strickland	Gail Flintoft	Dr. Ian Mackie
2001	Penelope Holeyton	Mark Bulbrook	Douglas Stewart
Jim Wakeford	1998	Michael Sobota	Joan Anderson
Joanne Lush	Frank McGee	Betty Anne Thomas	Wayne Fitton
Derek Thaczuk	Ann Matte	Dr. Alex Klein	
John MacTavish	Dr. Alan Li	Tim McCaskell	

Volunteer Appreciation

Much of the volunteer work at the OAN is “behind the scenes” – volunteers who participate on the Board of Directors, and various working Committees. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers who help to support the work of the OAN.

Ben Houghton	Judith Holmes	Paula Greenwood
BJ Caldwell	Judy Tracey	Patrick Kearns
Brett Basbaum	Kaddu Mukasa Justine	Raymond Murphy
Charlene Catchpole	Karen Vance-Wallace	Robb Travers
Chris McInnis	Kim Dolan	Robert Craig
Chuck Haskins	Lana Wright	Ron Lirette
Crystal Porteous	Les Bowman	Ruthann Tucker
Dawn Slykhuis	Luis W. Youngs	Saara Greene
Ed Argo	Margaret Lover	Saara Flicker
Gerry Croteau	Marilyn Weller	Seema Opal
Haran Vijayanathan	Mark Fisher	Selina Pink
Janet Mellor	Mary Katherine Keown	Sergio Martinez
Janet Rowe	Marco Theriault	Steve Harris
Jennifer Furtney	Michael Gleason	Tomson Taremwa
Jim Empey	Michael Sobota	Tom Hammond
John MacTavish	Murray Jose	Todd Fashion
Joseph Babcock	Neil McGregor	
Joseph Van Veen	Normand Lizotte	

Donors And Funders

The Ontario AIDS Network gratefully acknowledges the generous support of our donors and funders:

AIDS Bureau, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

AIDS Community Action Program (ACAP) – Public Health Agency of Canada

Canadian Institute of Health Research – HIV/AIDS Canadian Based Research Program

Federated Health Charities

Glaxo Smith Kline in partnership with Shire Biochem

Metro Credit Union

Thank you to the hundreds of individual donors throughout Ontario

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Michael Sobota	
Joseph van Veen	
Karen Vance-Wallace	<i>Co-Chair</i>

2004 - 2005 STAFF

Janice Arnoldi	<i>Web Designer</i>
Pamela Bowes	<i>Director of Skills Programs (until May 2005)</i>
Patti Bregman, LLB	<i>Director of Policy Development</i>
Shelley Cleverly, M.Sc.	<i>Director of Community Based Research</i>
Thomas Egdorf	<i>Director of PHA Programs</i>
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Lea Narciso	<i>Director of Community-Based Research (until Sep 2005)</i>



Left to Right: Rick Kennedy, Thomas Egdorf & Haimy Mekonnen

Charitable Registration Number: 14059 9531 RR0001



Ontario AIDS Network
25 Adelaide St. East, Suite 915
Toronto, Ontario M5C 3A1
Tel: 416-364-4555
1-800-839-0369
Fax: 416-364-1250
www.ontarioaidsnetwork.on.ca