

March 25, 2010

Honourable Ida Chong
Minister of Healthy Living and Sport
PO Box 9067
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Chong:

I am writing to thank you for our recent meeting in Vancouver on February 24th. Marcie Summers (PAN Board Chair), Darren Lauscher (PAN Board Vice-Chair) and I deeply appreciated the opportunity to meet with you to discuss items of mutual interest. We were gratified to have a level of dialogue that we experienced as meaningful and relevant. We also hope that you found the meeting to be mutually beneficial.

We appreciated the opportunity to share with you PAN's concern with regards to the recent cuts in funding that community-based AIDS organizations have experienced in some health regions. We understand that ultimately these were budgetary decisions made by the health authorities. At the same time, as we discussed, it is essential that the important work, successes and innovations realized here in BC in combating the epidemic are in no way undermined.

We were gladdened to hear of your commitment to ensuring that Seek and Treat is carried out in a manner that is as efficient and effective as possible - and that you see community groups and organizations as essential and valuable partners in the roll out of the pilot projects.

In terms of our "next steps", PAN will be endeavoring to connect with the leads within each of the applicable health authorities, to discuss how PAN and our members might support the roll-out of Seek and Treat. Based on the information gleaned from such meetings, we will then work with our member agencies and organizations to craft a tangible proposal as to how PAN and community will support this important initiative. We look forward to sharing that document with you and your colleague the Hon. Kevin Falcon when it is completed.

Minister, thank you again for taking the time to meet with us and sharing your valuable insights and perspective on these important issues. It was a true pleasure and we look forward to continuing to work together with you and the MOHLS in the future.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Evin Jones
Executive Director
Pacific AIDS Network

cc. Honourable Kevin Falcon, Minister of Health

Warren O'Briain, Executive Director, Communicable Disease and Addictions
Prevention, Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport

Ciro Panessa, Manager, Harm Reduction and Blood Borne Pathogens, Ministry
of Healthy Living and Sport