



National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS

Terms of Reference

Current to September 6, 2012

1. Background

Aboriginal Youth: refers to First Nations, Inuit and Métis people under thirty living in Canada. In Aboriginal cultures, youth hold a special and sacred role in carrying culture and traditions and learning valuable lessons to improve the health and wellness of our future generations.

Higher HIV and AIDS infection:

- Aboriginal peoples experience an HIV infection rate that is 2.8 times higher than non-Aboriginal people in Canada. (PHAC 26)
- Aboriginal youth, in particular, are a fast growing population within Canada representing nearly half, 48%, of the entire Aboriginal population. (PHAC 16)
- First Nations youth aged 0-29 account for 20.6% of reported AIDS cases among First Nations. Further, Inuit and Métis youth account for 31.8% of reported AIDS cases. (PHAC 33)ⁱ

Youth peer-to-peer education:

- Because the voices of Aboriginal youth must be involved in the design and development of HIV prevention messages; peer education strategies are effective; and, Aboriginal youth need to be trusted to deliver HIV prevention messages, the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) announced the launch of the National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS (NAYCHA) in December 2009.
- NAYCHA is a place for Aboriginal youth to guide strategic planning for Aboriginal youth HIV and AIDS.

2. Vision

Aboriginal youth across Canada will enjoy wholistic lives unified in action to eliminate the risk of HIV infection and the negative effects of HIV for all Aboriginal youth living with and affected by HIV and AIDS.

3. Philosophy

Aboriginal youth deserve the right to protect ourselves against communicable disease. Aboriginal youth are encouraged to learn about the risks of HIV and AIDS and protect ourselves accordingly. NAYCHA seeks to motivate Aboriginal youth to empower themselves with accurate and up-to-date information about the nature of HIV and AIDS, the risks of contracting it, the issues of care, treatment and support for those infected.



National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS

Terms of Reference

4. Goals

To guide and strategize: To guide CAAN and its partners in the development of a 5 year strategic plan on HIV and AIDS for Aboriginal youth.

To represent and promote: To become informed leaders in the HIV and AIDS movement in Aboriginal communities by encouraging and supporting others to be leaders in this challenge.

To network: To work towards establishing partnerships in individual, regional, national and international networks.

To advocate: To raise awareness that Aboriginal youth have an indigenous right to receive education about HIV and AIDS; and, to lower stigma and discrimination that people living with HIV and AIDS face.

To educate: To increase access to care by participating in creating youth targeted messaging for Aboriginal youth, regardless of residence, that prevents, educates and informs about activities leading to HIV and AIDS, and treatment/care/support for HIV and AIDS.

5. Principles

Active Youth Involvement: Aboriginal Youth's voices and strategies have an important role in guiding the HIV and AIDS movement. NAYCHA believes this role is best brought forward in a framework that is anti-oppressive i.e. the voices of all Aboriginal youth will be included (regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, age or any other characteristic).

Right to Education and Information: Aboriginal youth have a right to all levels and forms of education in Canada; free of discrimination i.e. this includes access to education about safer sex & sexual health (Article 14.2 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).

Right to Improvement of Health: Aboriginal youth have a right to improve their economic and social conditions, free of discrimination, including, inter alia, their health i.e. accessing proper prevention, care, treatment and support for HIV and AIDS (Article 21.1 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples).

Effective partnership & public engagement: Aboriginal youth benefit from establishing strong partnerships at all levels: Individual; Community; Provincial & Territorial; Organizational; and, Other Youth Councils.

Cultural Sensitivity: Every Aboriginal youth is from a different background and experience lending NAYCHA valid and unique skills, abilities and gifts to contribute to a youth strategy in the HIV and AIDS movement.

Flexibility: In fulfilling the responsibilities set out in this Terms of Reference, NAYCHA youth recognize the importance of listening and considering other points of view in order to improve youth strategies and the lives of Aboriginal youth living with and affected by HIV and AIDS.



National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS Terms of Reference

6. Resources and Budget

NAYCHA is

- Funded through the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN).
- Guided and coordinated through a National Aboriginal Youth Coordinator position that is funded by CAAN.
- May seek other funding and grants to fulfill its mandate, vision, goals & strategic objectives.
- Aims to hold several face-to-face (in person) meetings and will also be supported through tele-conferencing and social networking technologies (Face book Google Groups etc).
- Consists of members that are also involved on other networks, committees, organizations and councils; and will be enhanced by their participation, information and partnership. However, when representing NAYCHA and CAAN, the members will be guided by this Terms of Reference and respect the values and principles of CAAN.

7. Accountability

NAYCHA has a unique role in that it is a national, cross-cultural Council. The youth members are accountable to:

- The members of the NAYCHA according to the Terms of Reference;
- Aboriginal communities;
- Youth Coordinator established by CAAN; and,
- CAAN and its partners.

8. Governance

The initial setup and development of the National Aboriginal Youth Council will be the responsibility of CAAN.

It is recognized that in some cases facilitation and mentoring by more experienced members of CAAN and its partners will be helpful in balancing the contribution of the NAYCHA members and ensuring that the perspectives of youth are heard i.e a Board representative.

Decisions of NAYCHA will be made according to the Terms of Reference and reflected in records of meeting minutes.



National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS Terms of Reference

Decisions will be made by consensus. On certain matters, NAYCHA may decide that a vote will be conducted for a particular decision i.e. election of Executive members.

9. Reporting

The executive members of NAYCHA will ensure that reporting is consistent with the Terms of Reference.

- An agenda will be prepared for all meetings and be attached to the record of meeting minutes.
- Minutes of all meeting and proceedings will be recorded and distributed to NAYCHA and the Youth Coordinator.
 - The minutes will be available to CAAN Leadership and other stakeholders for publication on the CAAN website and to satisfy reporting requirements.
 - The minutes will reflect decisions that have reached consensus.
 - A list of attendees will be included within the record of meeting minutes.
- NAYCHA will seek to provide a updates to the Youth Coordinator on activity by:
 - Brief updates on his/her region at each monthly meeting, when necessary;
 - Information to input into CAAN newsletters; and,
 - Annual reports that may follow a template attached to this Terms of Reference.

If possible, publications and updates will be translated into appropriate indigenous language of the communities that NAYCHA represents. This is to ensure our elders and others are informed of our activities and to honour our proud heritages.

10. Membership

Term:

- Youth Council members will be appointed for a 3 year term from CAAN AGM to CAAN AGM.
- Youth Council members in good standing may be appointed for back-to-back terms.
- Youth Council members will be appointed for 3 year terms unless a representative ages out (turns 29 years old) before the term is finished.

Regular Meetings:

- Members will meet monthly by teleconference; and,
- Face-to-face (in person) at CAAN Annual General Meetings (AGM) and during Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week.



National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS Terms of Reference

Notice & Reasonable Cause:

- A member may miss a meeting, or be late for a meeting, with notice and reasonable cause.
 - Reasonable cause includes illness, or financial difficulty in accessing the meeting.
 - Notice is considered 24-hours notice.
- If a member misses 3 consecutive meetings without notice or reasonable cause, then they must resign from NAYCHA.
- If a member is over 10 minutes late to a meeting, without giving notice and reasonable cause, then the member will be considered to have 1 missed meeting.
- The Executive members will keep a record of NAYCHA members' attendance; and notify the Youth Coordinator and Chair of members' who have missed meetings without notice or reasonable cause.

Regular Communication:

- Members, especially Executive members on behalf of the other members, will maintain regular and consistent communication with the Youth Coordinator and Chair, and respond to requests for feedback within deadlines discussed.
- Members will maintain contact with each other and the Youth Coordinator through social networking technologies (Facebook, Skype, Google Groups), email and telephone.

Good Standing:

- A member of the NAYCHA will be in good standing if the member is:
 - Aboriginal (First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis);
 - 18-29 years old; or 17 with parent's consent;
 - Attends regular meetings as defined by this Terms of Reference;
 - Maintains regular communication as defined by this Terms of Reference;
 - Is within his/her term.

Aboriginal Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (APHAs):

- Efforts will be made to ensure that there are "Honoured members" on NAYCHA who are Aboriginal youth living with HIV and AIDS.
- The voices of youth APHA's will be prioritized and supported consistently within the NAYCHA.

Regions:



National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS

Terms of Reference

- NAYCHA will make best efforts to maintain representation for every Canadian province and territory.

Executive Members:

- There will be 3 executive members appointed to NAYCHA annually at the CAAN AGM. The Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.
 - The executive members of the NAYCHA will be members of good standing.

11. Decision-Making

Voting Rights:

- Occasionally, NAYCHA may decide by consensus that a subject will be voted on by all NAYCHA members. In this case,
 - Every region is entitled to 1 vote.
 - Each region will reach consensus to exercise their vote.
 - A deadline may be set for participation; votes not received by the deadline will not be considered.

Process:

- All NAYCHA members will be given opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.
- Decisions will be made during NAYCHA meetings, and the members that attend and participate will be responsible for achieving consensus.
- All members will be given notice of scheduled meetings, and be provided with an agenda beforehand.
- Decisions may also be made in written form over group email/social networking site, and a deadline will be set for discussion and reaching consensus.

Consensus:

- *Discussion of the subject:*
 - NAYCHA will discuss the subject to identify opinions and information on the subject. The general direction of the group and any necessary actions will be identified.
- *Call for a decision:*
 - Based on the discussion, a decision that needs to be made will be presented to the group.
- *Call for consensus:*
 - The facilitator, or Chair, of the meeting will call for consensus on the decision.
 - Each participating member of NAYCHA must actively state their agreement with the proposal/ decision i.e. by saying “yes”.
- *Identification and addressing of concerns:*
 - If consensus is *not* achieved, each member in disagreement will be given opportunity to raise his/her concern(s), and there will be discussion in attempt to resolve the disagreement so that most participants agree with the decision.



National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS Terms of Reference

- Most participants is considered over half of the participants.
- Members in disagreement will attempt to raise solutions to resolve the concerns.
- *Modifying the decision:*
 - The decision will be modified in an attempt to address the concerns of the decision-makers. The process will return to another call for consensus and the process will be repeated until most participants agree with the decision i.e. consensus is reached.
- *Reporting of decision:*
 - The minute-taker will record, within the meeting minutes, that consensus has been reached on the decision.
- *Executive Decision-making:*
 - The members of the executive, the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary, may make an executive decision in order to promote the interests of the National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS.
 - An executive decision will involve full consensus among the members of the executive i.e. Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.
 - The Executive will notify the Youth Coordinator before making an executive decision.
 - An executive decision will override a decision of NAYCHA made on the same subject.

For more information about CAAN and the National Aboriginal Youth Council on HIV and AIDS contact:

Jessica Danforth
National Youth Coordinator, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN)
Executive Director, Native Youth Sexual Health Network
49 Nassau St, Toronto, ON M5T 9M3
(416) 419-6937
jessdanforth@gmail.com

OR

Carrie Robinson
National Youth Coordinator, CAAN
6520 Salish Drive,
Vancouver BC, V6N 2C7
Ph: (347) 320-4548
Fax: (604)266-7612
Leave a message, Toll Free: 1.888.285.2226
Email: carrie.robinson@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.caan.ca>



ⁱ Population Specific HIV/AIDS Status Report: Aboriginal People, Public Health Agency of Canada, 2009.