



BUILDING EVIDENCE FOR STRONGER HIV & HOUSING SERVICES AND POLICIES IN BC

Positive Living, Positive Homes (PLPH) is a community-based research study born out of the community's identification of housing as a critical health determinant for people living with, or at risk of, HIV/AIDS. The study is housed at the Pacific AIDS Network, led by Evin Jones, Executive Director, and Dr. Cathy Worthington from the University of Victoria's School of Public Health and Social Policy. The study team includes over 25 representatives from community-based organizations, housing and policy sectors and people living with HIV/AIDS.

About the Study: Housing is a key determinant of health for people living with HIV/AIDS. Yet in British Columbia, little is known about the effectiveness, availability and appropriateness of various housing options for people living with HIV/AIDS, or of their lived experience as they navigate a complex landscape of housing policies and programs. The purpose of this study is to investigate how housing policies and services interact with and impact people living with HIV/AIDS' abilities to manage their health and wellbeing, documenting policies and programs that can be used as models across BC and beyond.

The study uses comparative case-study methodology, interviewing 100 people living with HIV/AIDS at two time points as well as 50 service providers and decision-makers from three communities in BC – Greater Vancouver, Kamloops and Prince George. Guided by community-based research principles, the research team is committed to integrating community participation and knowledge translation activities throughout the process. It is hoped and anticipated that this study will impact housing programs and policies in BC, promoting greater access to suitable, affordable and culturally appropriate housing services.

Study Update, Oct 2017: Research Coordinators in Greater Vancouver, Prince George and Kamloops have completed data collection. The spring and summer of 2017 was dedicated to visiting the three sites with interview findings, presenting our preliminary analysis and getting guidance on next steps from our community advisors. This feedback has been important to moving the research into meaningful action, and we invite individuals and groups to connect with our team members if they are interested in giving input on community needs.

We are looking forward to presenting more information about PLPH and getting feedback from PAN membership at the PAN 2017 Fall Conference.

**Please join us for knowledge-to-action sessions on Thursday, Oct 26!
Your input will guide the use of this data in strengthening our communities.**



THE B.C. PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV STIGMA INDEX

ADDRESSING HIV-RELATED STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION IN BC COMMUNITIES

Currently, a small body of contextually-grounded research exists on HIV-related stigma in North America. People living with HIV in Canada and the organizations that serve them report that HIV-related stigma is pervasive, complex, and related to other forms of discrimination and marginalization. *The BC People Living with HIV Stigma Index* project is a community-based research study by and for people living with HIV. Housed at Pacific AIDS Network and assisted by a diverse team of stakeholders, the project has been guided and carried out by people with lived experience of HIV. At its core, the Stigma Index is about tackling the underlying causes of stigma – fear and ignorance – in order to empower and create connections between people living with HIV.

About the Study: *The Stigma Index for People Living with HIV* is an in-depth, survey-based interview that is completed collaboratively between a participant and a peer researcher. This mode of data collection helps to build rapport and trust, and increases the number and quality of personal connections on both sides. The Index was first developed in 2005 by a collaborative team from several organizations, and has since been implemented in more than 50 countries around the world. Implementation of *The BC People Living with HIV Stigma Index Project* marked the first time that the HIV Stigma Index was carried out in Canada.

Study Update, Oct 2017: Our passionate team of peer researchers completed data collection with 181 participants between November 2016 and March 2017. Our efforts over the summer focused on readying the data for analysis and beginning a thorough review of the research process. Our analysis and knowledge translation (AKT) working group has been meeting to plan and guide the analysis process with an eye to using the data for effective community action against HIV-related stigma and discrimination across BC.

We are looking forward to presenting more information about The BC Stigma Index and getting feedback from PAN membership at the PAN 2017 Fall Conference. Please join us for knowledge-to-action sessions on Thursday, Oct 26! Your input will guide the use of this data in strengthening our communities.