

(via email)
Ref: 217748

J. Evin Jones, Executive Director
Pacific AIDS Network (PAN)
evin@paninbc.ca

Dear J. Evin Jones:

Thank you for your email and attached letter of April 8, 2022, regarding funding challenges experienced by non-profit community-based organizations providing supports to British Columbians with substance use challenges.

I first want to commend PAN and its member organizations for your dedication to supporting some of our province's most vulnerable citizens through quality relational care and harm reduction services. Your work improves British Columbian's quality of life and saves lives.

I appreciate you writing to raise your concerns about staffing issues, short-term health authority contracts, and the lack of core funding which are limiting PAN member organizations' ability to support long-term and sustained responses to the overdose crisis. I encourage you to continue working with health authorities, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions on core funding and contract issues faced by PAN member organizations.

Further, I want to confirm that PAN member organizations who have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and are in need of funding to adapt and modernize may be able to access the new Recovery and Resiliency Fund. This could include capacity building opportunities, improving systems and digital infrastructure, and staff training and retention. The Fund's official launch is coming up in June 2022. I encourage PAN and its members to sign up to receive updates about the Fund, including when and how to apply, which you can do online at: <https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/grants/recovery-and-resiliency-fund>.

PAN member organizations may also want to explore employer supports available through WorkBC at: <https://www.workbc.ca/employer-resources.aspx>. These supports include free job posting services as well as funding and skills training programs and resources, such as the Employer Training Grant. More information on this grant is available at: <https://www.workbc.ca/Employer-Resources/BC-Employer-Training-Grant.aspx>.

Along with employer supports, The Community and Employer Partnerships Fund (CEP) supports opportunities and community-based initiatives to help individuals and the broader community. Funding can be provided for project specific costs, such as wages, professional fees, materials and supplies, administration costs, and capital assets. Project participant wages and/or training expenses are provided by local WorkBC Centres. If you are interested in learning more about CEP, please go to: <https://www.WorkBC.ca/CEP>. Once you have had an opportunity to review information about this fund, you can reach out with any questions directly to the CEP team at: CEPTeam@gov.bc.ca.

I hope this information is helpful to you and your member organizations. I would be happy to meet with you and will have my administrative assistant reach out to you to find a time and date that works.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

Niki Sharma
Parliamentary Secretary for Community Development and Non-Profits
Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

cc: Honourable Adrian Dix, Minister of Health and Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs
Honourable Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions