CANAC Strategic Planning Session

Summary Report

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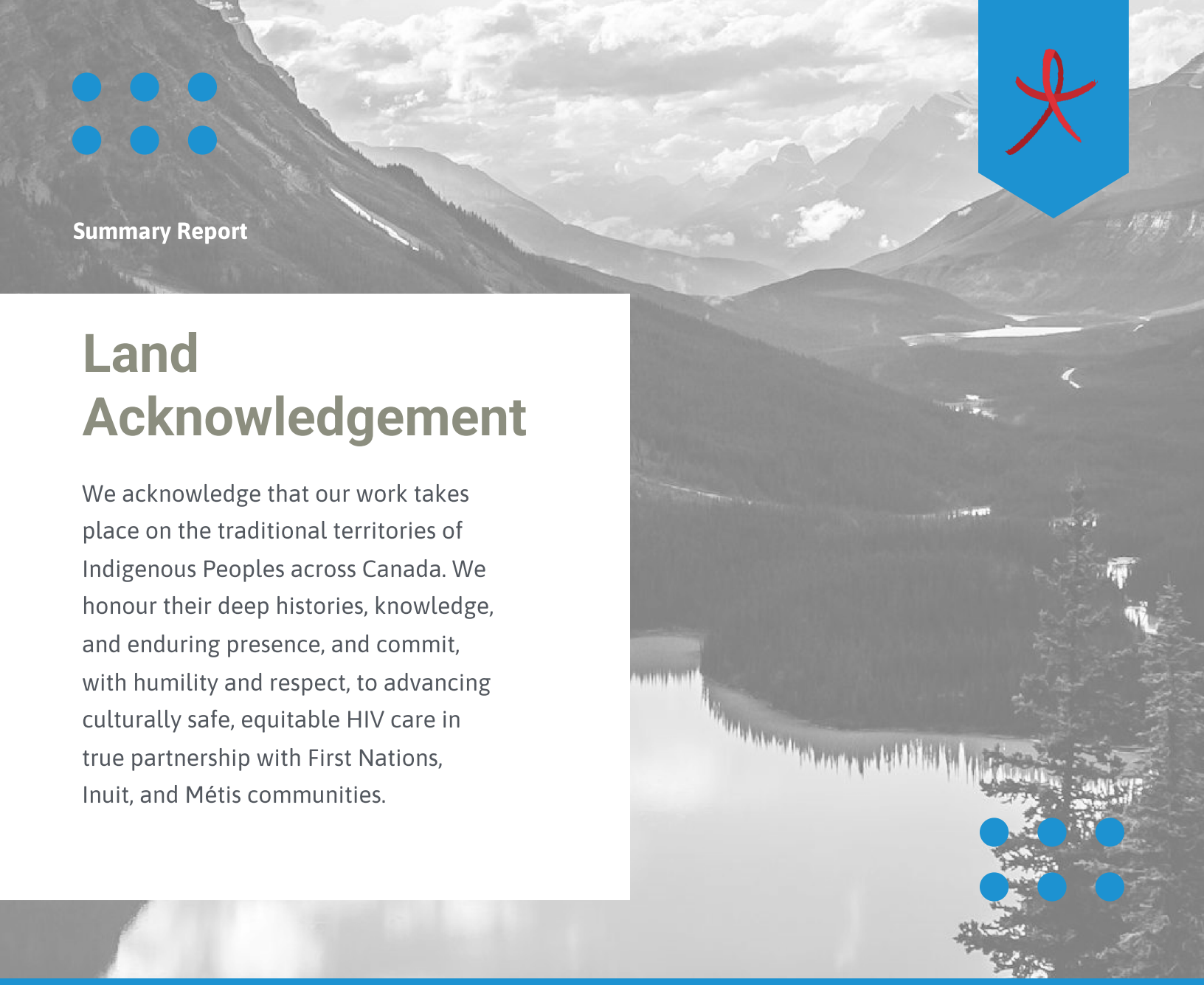

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that our work takes place on the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples across Canada. We honour their deep histories, knowledge, and enduring presence, and commit, with humility and respect, to advancing culturally safe, equitable HIV care in true partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

On May 14, 2025, CANAC convened a strategic planning session to reflect on its legacy, evaluate the relevance of its existing strategic priorities, and determine a path forward amidst changes in HIV care, nursing practice, and organizational capacity. The session reaffirmed CANAC's role in fostering mentorship, advocacy, and connection within the HIV nursing community, while acknowledging the challenges of volunteer-led operations and the shifting professional identities of nurses.

Participants expressed deep respect for the organization's history and impact but emphasized a need to hone in on CANAC's identity, streamline its efforts, and renew its strategic direction to ensure future sustainability. The meeting included both current and former board members and volunteers, and written feedback was also invited from those unable to attend.

Discussion Questions

TOPICS

01

Strengths & Challenges

Reflection on what has CANAC done well and what has been difficult.

02

Key Priority Areas

Are the 3 key priority areas: Knowledge, Engagement & Action (Advocacy) still relevant?

03

Sustainability

Given the current financial situation, how can CANAC ensure future sustainability?

04

Partnerships

Are there others doing similar or complementary work that CANAC could work with?

05

Vision for the Short & Long Term

What does success look like in 1 year? What about in 5 years?

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

The following questions were raised and discussion held around each of these topics. Members were invited to send thoughts in advance of the session and following the session.

01

Strengths & Challenges

Reflections on what has CANAC done well and what has been difficult.
**Includes themes from discussion during the session & written feedback received by email.*

Strengths & Achievements

- **Conferences and Networking:** brought nurses together from across Canada, created opportunities to connect, share experiences, and support newer nurses through mentorship.
- **HIV Nursing Care Standards:** developed and shared national standards to guide practice.
- **Regional HIV Events:** created local opportunities for education and networking.
- **Position Statements:** provided leadership on important issues affecting HIV nursing
- **National Presence:** recognized by other organizations like CNA and asked to review PrEP guidelines.
- **Community Solidarity in Crisis:** came together during the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, when lives were being lost to provide support and create meaningful impact.
- **Professional Growth:** created opportunities for members to present at conferences, build skills and share knowledge.
- **Support & Connection:** created relationships with others working in HIV who faced similar challenges, helping each other feel understood and less isolated in their work.
- **Student involvement:** engaged students in research, projects and fostering the next generation of HIV nurses.

01 Strengths & Challenges

Reflections on what has CANAC done well and what has been difficult.
**Includes themes from discussion during the session & written feedback received by email.*

Challenges

- **Membership Growth:** increasing membership remains a challenge, especially post-COVID-19.
- **Fiscal Climate:** reliance on health organizations to pay membership fees, with budgets strained across the country.
- **Shifting Service Models:** more integrated health services mean fewer HIV-specific programs.
- **Evolving Public Health Priorities:** greater emphasis on the toxic drug crisis, with many former CANAC members now working in those areas (a good thing) but highlights the need for closer partnerships.
- **Funding Shifts:** resources also moving toward other public health crises.
- **Changing Client Needs:** many clients have well-managed HIV because of current treatment options, with other health concerns taking priority.
- **Post-Pandemic Recovery:** burnout among nurses and reduced engagement following COVID-19.
- **Conference Incentives:** lack of continuing education credits to encourage participation at conferences.
- **Vision and Identity:** need to clarify CANAC's role and direction for the future within our current context.
- **Grant and Funding Support:** limited capacity and support to pursue grants and other funding opportunities.
- **Partnership Engagement**: limited capacity to maintain regular engagement with national and international partners (ANAC, HRNA, CAHR etc).
- **Timely Response:** difficulty responding quickly to emerging issues.

02 Key Priority Areas

Are our 3 key priority areas: still relevant?

Are CANAC's 3 priority areas still relevant?

- **Advocacy**
  - Still relevant, especially given current global events (migration, immigration policies, access to care, legal issues)
  - Critical to continue action-oriented engagement

- **Education & Knowledge Sharing**
  - Topics like PrEP and PEP are easier to deliver but still have challenges
  - Online webinars well received according to survey

- **Mentorship**
  - Bridges all three areas (advocacy, education, knowledge sharing)
  - Could shift focus from educating members to highlighting the knowledge of members
  - Could establish more structured mentorship & communities of practice:
    - Address gaps for new nurses
    - Include broader topics beyond HIV treatment: harm reduction, anti-racism, anti-colonialism, caring for queer/LGBTQ2S populations
    - Promote equitable, flattened relationships (e.g., mentorship speed-dating, peer-to-peer exchanges)

- **Mentorship (continued)**
  - Barriers to this model could include capacity (e.g. getting time off work, childcare, and family responsibilities in order to participate)
  - Could potentially secure grants to support the next generation of HIV nurses

- **Overall Takeaways:**
  - The three pillars resonate but require clearer specific goals and actions
  - Need to consider what is the role of a nurse working in HIV in 2025?
  - Need to go in with a purpose for the next three years to avoid feeling “stuck”
  - Explore grants to build mentorship programming

03 Financial Summary

Annual Income

$3,500-$4,500 annually

Membership subscriptions

Annual Expenses

Expense	Amount
JANAC	$4,547
Webhosting	$611
Member 365	$1,958
Insurance	$1,100
Accounting services	$1,455
Total	**$9,671**

Operating Deficit:
approx. $5,671 annually

Discussion

CANAC's current account balance is approximately $78,000. Based on current operating deficits, funds are projected to be depleted in about 10 years. Conferences previously generated revenue, but rising costs have reduced their profitability. Operating expenses have also increased over time. Membership fees have remained unchanged, while many other associations have increased their rates.

Decisions to Consider:

- Determine whether the JANAC subscription provides sufficient value to continue as a core benefit, or transition to an optional "opt-in" model where CANAC covers costs only for members without access.
- Decide whether to raise membership rates, and establish the appropriate amount of increase.

03 Sustainability

Given the current financial situation, how can CANAC ensure future sustainability?

Themes

1. Memberships

- Adjust group membership thresholds (e.g. 5 instead of 10)
- Revisit membership fee structure and value, including JANAC subscription (potential opt-in model)

2. Conferences

- Explore higher fees, partnerships (e.g., HRA, CAHR), or nursing presence at external conferences
- Current model is resource-intensive and unsustainable with limited board capacity

3. CANAC's current model and identity

- Shift focus toward mentorship for new members
- Avoid duplicating work of other organizations (e.g. CATIE webinars)

4. Expenditures and Revenue Generation

- Review JANAC subscription costs to avoid duplication
- Expand fundraising, grant writing, networking, partnerships, and possible pharmaceutical support

5. Board Members

- Recognize workload challenges for board members, especially those in clinical roles
- Sustainability depends on both human resources and financial resources

6. Organizational Wind Down

- In the event of a decision to wind down, the bylaws include a dissolution clause.
- Any remaining funds would be donated to another nonprofit organization.

04 Partnerships

Are there others doing similar or complementary work that CANAC could work with?

Identified Opportunities

In addition to the Canadian HIV organizations presented in the materials below, the following organizations were also discussed as potential partners, with broad support for the board to further explore opportunities for collaboration:

- Canadian Association for HIV/AIDS Research (CAHR)
  - Work is focused on HIV research and collaboration.
  - CAHR hosts a yearly national conference.
  - https://www.cahr-acrv.ca/
- Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) - CAAN Communities, Alliances & Networks
  - National forum for First Nations, Metis and Inuit Peoples to holistically address HIV
  - Educational events, advocacy, research and resource development
  - https://www.caan.ca/
- Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE)
  - Knowledge broker for HIV, hepatitis C, sexual health and harm reduction, you can count on us for up-to-date and accurate information.
  - https://www.catie.ca/
- Canadian AIDS Society
  - Represents community-based HIV/AIDS organizations across Canada. Work includes: education and awareness, advocacy, sharing resources and supporting communities.
  - https://www.cdnaids.ca/
- Canadian Foundation for AIDS Research (CANFAR)
  - Supports research, builds awareness and cultivates partnerships. Invested over 26 million in HIV/AIDS research projects
  - https://canfar.com/about-us/

Additional Partnerships to Explore

HRNA (Harm Reduction Nurses Association) | *https://www.hrna-aiirm.ca/*
- Alignment exists between our organizations & values
- Maintain a strict policy of not accepting pharmaceutical funding

ANAC (Association of Nurses in AIDS Care) | *https://www.nursesinaidscare.org*
- American organization, could explore opportunities to partner

CATIE | *https://www.catie.ca/*
- Already have a strong and stable working relationship
- Represents a good starting point for exploring closer partnerships

Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) | *https://cna-aiic.ca/en/home*
- Broader mandate
- Opportunity to explore wider areas of partnership beyond HIV-specific work

HIV Legal Network | *https://www.hivlegalnetwork.ca/site/?lang=en*
- Expertise in HIV-related legal issues; strong advocacy focus
- Addresses challenges faced by undocumented migrants in accessing care

05 Short & Long Term Vision

What does success look like in 1 year? What about in 5 years?

During our discussion, we asked members to reflect on what success would look like for CANAC in one year from now. Although time was limited, several strong themes emerged and some participants who could not attend responded by email.

Short-Term (1 Year)

By this time next year we would accomplish the following:

- Confirmed CANAC's renewed vision and identity, ensuring the organization is distinct and not duplicating the work of others.
- Maintain current membership levels and fill vacant board positions, including recruitment of a president-elect.
- Strengthen board capacity recognizing that roles are volunteer-based and time is limited given other commitments (family, careers, etc.).
- Reach out to partners and explore opportunities for collaboration.
- Make a final decision on the JANAC subscription.
- Host regional events and conferences, while continuing to engage with pharmaceutical companies and other sponsors to support an annual conference.
- Pilot mentorship opportunities, such as mentorship mixers.

Long-Term (5 Year)

By 2030, we would like to see:

- Incremental growth in membership and a strong, sustainable board
- Part-time, stable support staff to help with administrative and fundraising efforts.
- Be an active contributor to ANAC's global committee.
- Provide ongoing educational opportunities for members and allied organizations.
- Engage in meaningful advocacy through policy briefs, videos, and calls to action.