



# SEX WORK AND HIV/AIDS: RESEARCH, PREVENTION, AND TREATMENT

*Presented by Island Health and PEERS Victoria*

November 28, 2014, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

The Bedford Regency Hotel, 1140 Government St, Victoria, BC



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MORNING PANEL (10am-11am Presentations/11am-12pm discussion)

**Opening Remarks – Sophie Bannar-Martin, STOP HIV Project Coordinator, Island Health**

**Chris Atchison and Cecilia Benoit, University of Victoria**

***Negotiating Safe Sex: Experiences of Sex Workers & Clients in the Canadian Sex Industry***

In our study, sex workers and clients reported that most of their interactions are characterized by relatively symmetrical dynamics of control and power and are relatively free of disputes about safe sex. Still, the environment in which commercial sexual exchanges take place and the amount of time that workers and clients spend communicating have a significant impact on the likelihood of tension and conflict surrounding the use of condoms and other sexual safety practices.

**Vicky Bungay, University of British Columbia**

***Community-Academic Partnerships for HIV Prevention in Indoor Sex Venues - Lessons Learned***

To help address a gap in services for women working in indoor sex venues, we formed a community-academic partnership and developed a Community Health Worker HIV Prevention and Health Promotion Program. The aims of this program were to provide health education, primary care referrals, STI testing, and point-of-care HIV screening. We combined research with the outreach services in order to learn about women's perspectives on the program and to assess the programs' effectiveness. In this presentation we highlight the outcomes of this work and our key learning for future partnerships in this field.

**Charlotte Reading, University of Victoria**

***Visioning Health: Arts-Informed Research with HIV-Positive Aboriginal Women***

The Visioning Health Project represents Indigenous, participatory, culturally-grounded, arts-informed research with HIV-Positive Aboriginal women (PAW). VH responded to the community-identified need for research that focused on PAW's health rather than illness; on strengths and assets rather than deficits. While six key themes emerged from the original VH research, perhaps the most significant and unexpected finding was that the process of participating in this project was itself, health enhancing.

**Chrissy Taylor, BC Centre for Excellence HIV/AIDS**

***Sex Work Policy & HIV Prevention: Overview of Research at the Gender & Sexual Health Initiative***

The GSHI conducts research on gender and social inequities, sexual health, and HIV/AIDS among marginalized populations. Our research has identified a number of structural gaps and barriers to HIV prevention and care for sex workers. Our overall aim is to inform evidence-based policy and practice in gender, sexual health and HIV/AIDS and reduce health inequities among marginalized populations.

**\*\*Lunch provided by Charellis Cheese Shop 12pm-12:45**



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AFTERNOON PANEL (12:45pm-1:45pm presentations; 1:45pm-3pm discussion)

**Alison Clancey, SWAN**

***Preventing HIV: Outreaching Im/Migrant Women Who Do Indoor Sex Work in Greater Vancouver***

SWAN Vancouver Society provides outreach to im/migrant women who do indoor sex work in Vancouver. I will outline SWAN's strategies to connect with this population in order to reduce the spread of HIV, and highlight the challenges we face to continue this work given the current legal context.

**Laura Dilley, PACE**

***Sex Workers Speak Out On Housing: Findings from a Community-Based Research Project***

I will discuss findings from a PACE Society research project examining housing needs of low-income Sex Workers. We found that housing instability negatively impacts Sex Workers' safety by undermining their ability to negotiate safety when exchanging sex. Recommendations arising from our research will be presented.

**Anne Drost, Cool Aid Community Health Centre**

***Local HIV Care***

I will discuss HIV care in greater Victoria, and specifically at the Cool Aid Community Health Centre. I will also cover local HIV Collaborative initiatives, local studies, and basic trends in treatment.

**Sherri Pooyak, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network**

***CAAN & the AHA Centre: Setting the Context of HIV & AIDS within the Aboriginal Community***

My presentation will highlight the extent to which HIV and AIDS is affecting Aboriginal people and how CAAN and the AHA Centre are working towards decreasing current HIV rates.

**Billy Taylor, HUSTLE**

***HUSTLE: How U Survive This Life Everyday***

I will provide an overview of the HUSTLE program at HIM, which provides outreach and support for self-identified men in the sex industry, and identifies the needs of experiential youth in Vancouver.

**Michael Yoder, Vancouver Island Person with AIDS Society**

***Vancouver Island Persons with AIDS Society Programs & Community Values***

I will provide an overview of the VPWAS programs and services and highlight the principles of "Greater Involvement of People with AIDS" (GIPA) and "Meaningful Involvement of People with AIDS" (MIPA). I will also discuss the danger of "silo" thinking, and the importance of peer involvement in all aspects of life/work issues.

**Closing Remarks – Peers Victoria, Rachel Phillips, Executive Director**