

Renewing Our Response Update – January 2011

Renewing Our Response (RoR) met on January 13th & 14th. Once again, Seek and Treat for Optimal Prevention of HIV (STOP), previously mentioned in the last update, was a focal point for our discussion. While it appears as though movement in STOP is slow, there is progress being made – both Vancouver Native Health Society (VNHS) and Positive Living North (PLN), members of RoR, as well as other community organizations, have received positions through STOP to help with its implementation in Prince George and Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. RoR has also just received the Aboriginal Community Engagement Report, completed by Dr. Denielle Elliott and funded by the Provincial Health Services Authority, which has been submitted to PHSA and will be taken to the STOP Leadership Committee for its use in guiding STOP activities to ensure the needs of Aboriginal people are met. RoR agrees that is important to continue to voice the need for community involvement in the rolling out of STOP initiatives, a feeling echoed by community organizations throughout the province. RoR will be meeting on February 11th to strategize their Plan of Action based on Dr. Elliott's report.

Mark Gilbert and Travis Hottes from the BCCDC presented a new sexual health initiative being developed by the BCCDC – BC Online Sexual Health Services. This initiative is still in its early stages of development; please visit their website for more information and updates: <http://bclovebytes.wordpress.com/>.

RoR has agreed to collaborate with the research team on a CIHR funded Program of Research entitled *Migration, Mobility, Health and Health Equity: Addressing the Disparities in HIV Prevention, Treatment, and Care Experienced by Aboriginal People in Canada*. The theory behind this research is that migration and mobility affect the health outcomes of Aboriginal people in relation to HIV. The program will be conducted in cities in BC, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick, and hopefully the Northwest Territories. This will be a fantastic research program and we are very happy to be able to contribute to the work that will be done in any way we can.

Two events that RoR will be hosting in the short term are the Educator's Forum, being done in partnership with Pacific AIDS Network on March 1st & 2nd, and the 1st Annual APHA Forum on March 28th and 29th. Registration and Scholarships for Aboriginal People Living with HIV/AIDS (APHAs) to the APHA forum are open until February 28th. Please visit our website for more details.

The Community Needs Assessment Report mentioned in the previous update has been delayed in being uploaded onto the website. The document has been reviewed by RoR and will be edited and the final version will be available in late January or early February. Thank you for your patience.

For more information on RoR, please visit our website (renewingourresponse.ca) or contact Heidi Standeven at hstandeven@red-road.org.