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Send in  
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1. Introduction:

This report is a result of numerous meetings and work by the Transition Committee to incorporate the multiple interests of the stakeholders in a provincial response to AIDS/HIV. It contains the initial results of the ongoing discussion among stakeholders concerning the mission, goals, objectives, governing principles and organization of the new coalition in the form of a proposed constitution.

2. Name of organization: AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia

3. Mission:

To promote the health and well-being of persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, and to reduce the spread of HIV in Nova Scotia.

4 Goals:

1. To coordinate and promote the community-based response to HIV/AIDS in Nova Scotia.
2. To advocate with and on behalf of persons infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS.
3. To focus education/ prevention initiatives in Nova Scotia.
4. To raise sufficient funds to meet the goals of the AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia.

## 5 Objectives :

- Goal 1.
- a) To act as a resource to assist member groups and communities in the administration of service delivery and resource development
  - b) To assist in the development of quality assurance programs with member groups and communities
  - c) To encourage and support the growth of community based responses.
  - d) To act as a resource accessing available funds
- Goal 2.
- a) To promote the involvement of persons living with HIV/AIDS on local, provincial, and national Boards and committees dealing with HIV/AIDS.
  - b) To establish on-going liaisons with governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in HIV/AIDS programs and policies.
  - ~~a~~ c) To ensure the development and adoption of progressive, non-discriminatory HIV/AIDS policies and legislation.
- Goal 3.
- a) To provide PHA health promotion initiatives (including treatment information)
  - b) To provide guidelines and information to outside agencies in the development of their HIV/AIDS education and prevention initiatives.
  - ~~a~~ c) To coordinate targetted education and prevention initiatives.
- Goal 4.
- a) To coordinate and support HIV/AIDS fundraising initiatives.
  - b) To secure funds from government and non-government sources.

c) To ensure an equitable distribution of funds to meet the objectives of ACNS.

6. Governing Principles:

As governing principles all board members, staff, volunteers, and members must agree with and abide by these principles.

★ 1. PHA-CENTRED

The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia is based on the fundamental principle that those infected with HIV/AIDS are the experts on their own lives, and as such, they guide all decision-making and activities of the organization.

2. EMPOWERMENT

The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia recognizes the necessity of personal choice and control in managing health, and therefore is dedicated to nurturing the self-help capabilities of people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, as well as to removing obstacles to personal power and participation.

3. MUTUAL-HELP

The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia acknowledges the importance of support networks in promoting well-being among people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. As such, it encourages the development of mutual assistance and natural support networks.

4. COMMUNITY-BASED

The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia recognizes the role of community based activities in mobilizing people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS around common concerns. It thus encourages the development of community-based initiatives aiming to promote the well-being of people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS and the prevention of the spread of HIV infection.

★ 5. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia is committed to being anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-classist, anti-homophobic, and anti-ableist. Through a policy of affirmative action, the provincial response strives to be representative of all Nova Scotians living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

## \* 6. VISION OF SOCIAL CHANGE

The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia recognises the role of social inequalities in producing barriers including, but not limited to poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, heterosexism, drug-use, violence, ignorance and injustice, and thus, in detracting from the welfare of people living with AIDS/HIV. It is therefore driven by a vision of social change aimed at overcoming social inequities.

7. The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia recognizes the integral role of education and support.

8. The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia recognizes that HIV/AIDS affects all Nova Scotians.

## 7. MEMBERSHIP:

7.1 Members shall accept goals, objectives and governing principles as previously outlined, and pay the annual membership fee. Members are entitled to attendance with voting privileges at the Annual Meeting and other general meetings.

7.2 The founding groups of the AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia are:

- AIDS Coalition of Cape Breton
- Pictou County AIDS Coalition
- Valley AIDS Concern Group
- Black Outreach Project
- Women and AIDS Project
- Men's Project
- Mainline Needle Exchange
- AIDS Nova Scotia
- Nova Scotia Persons with AIDS Coalition
- Provincial PHA network

7.3 Upon application, membership will be granted by the Board of Directors in accordance with membership criteria.

7.4 Other organizations and individuals may also participate in the activities of the organization as supporting members.

Upon application, and subject to approval by the Board, supporting member status will be granted to individuals or groups who support

and seek to advance the objectives of the coalition, but whose primary focus is no HIV/ AIDS specific.\*Supporting members have no vote, but may have a voice at general meetings of members if so permitted by the majority of member delgates present.

7.5 Individuals may ask for information or to attend functions of the coalition, but are eligible to be supporting members only.

7.6 Every member to remain in good standing, shall pay an annual membership fee as determined by the Board of Directors.

7.7 A member shall cease to be a member of the coalition:

a) by mailing to the Secretary of the Coalition a letter of resignation. Such letter of resignation will not take effect fo ninety days from its receipt in the organization's office and may be withdrawn upon written request by the authorized person(s) prior to the end of the ninety day period.

b) if a member group has been dissolved an no longer exists.

c) if at a general meeting of the organizaition 2/3 of the delegates vote to remove a group.

## 8. Organization Structure:

8.1 The AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia structure will function through member groups, member group delgates, a Board of Directors and staff.

8.2 Composition of the Board of Directors:

a) 8 regional representatives

All geographically-based member groups will belong to one of four regional divisions and elect one non-identified HIV status representative and one HIV+ representative from their region. The four provincial regions will concur with the province's health regions and are as follows (list 4 regions):

As new geographically-based community groups become members, they will vote for the rerepresentatives corresponding to the region of which they are a part.

b) 4 cultural community representatives

At the founding of this Coalition, four member groups have cultural communities as their focus. These communities include: women, Black Nova Scotians, gay men, and injection drug-users. The Women and AIDS Project will elect a representative to the Board of Directors, the Black Outreach Project will elect a representative to the Board of Directors, the Men's Project will elect a representative to the Board of Directors, and Mainline Needle Exchange will elect a representative to the Board of Directors. Upon the addition to the membership of other groups focused on these same cultural communities, they may participate in choosing the representative for their cultural community with the groups already mentioned. Upon the addition of new cultural communities to the membership, the membership as a whole will vote at a general meeting on amending the constitution if necessary to ensure their incorporation into the structure of the Board.

c) 4 representatives of the provincial PHA network

The provincial PHA network will elect four representatives to the Board of Directors. Furthermore, they will choose one of the co-chairpersons of the Board of Directors from among the 4 representatives they have elected, the 4 regional identified HIV+ representatives, and any other HIV+ Board members.

d) 5 at-large representatives

Five At-Large representatives will be elected by all member groups.

e) 2 ex-officio positions (non-voting?)

Two ex-officio positions will be reserved on the Board for the Executive Director of Administration and the Executive Director of Fund Development.

8.3 The Executive of the Board of Directors will consist of the following:

a) 2 Co-Chairpersons

One elected by the provincial PHA network (identified HIV+ status), the other elected by the Board.

b) Treasurer (chair of Finance/Fund Development Committee)

The Finance/Fund Development committee may put forward recommendations for this position. The treasurer will then be elected by the Board from among those recommended (if recommendations are

made), or from among those nominated by the Board, if non are recommended by the Finance/Fund Development Committee.

c) Secretary

Elected by the Board.

d) Vice-Chairperson-Advocacy

The Advocacy Committee may put forward recommendations for this position. The vice-chairperson will then be elected by the Board from among those recommended (if recommendations are made), or from among those nominated by the Board, if none are recommended by the Advocacy committee.

e) Vice-Chairperson-Programs

The Programs Committee may put forward recommendations for this position. The vice-chairperson will then be elected by the Board from among those recommended (if recommendations are made), or from among those nominated by the Board, if none are recommended by the Programs committee.

f) Vice-chairperson-Public Relations/Communications

The Public Relations/Communications Committee may put forward recommendations for this position. The vice-chairperson will then be elected by the Board from among those recommended (if recommendations are made), or from among those nominated by the Public Relations/ Communications Committee.

8.4 Board members will be elected for two year terms. The rotation of the Board members will be as follows:

a) in even numbered years

- 4 non-identified regional representatives
- women's representative
- gay men's representative
- 2 provincial PHA representatives
- 3 At-Large representatives

b) in odd numbered years

- 4 HIV+ identified regional representatives
- Black Nova Scotian's representative
- injection drug-users representative
- 2 provincial PHA representatives
- 2 At-large representatives



8.5 The Executive of the Board of Directors will serve one year terms on the Executive Committee. No executive shall remain in their position for more than two consecutive terms.

8.6 The member group delegates will elect the At-Large Board of directors at the Annual General Meeting. Each member in good standing will select and send to the meeting two official delegates. Although two official delegates are sent, each member group may cast only one vote.

8.7 If a member group is unable to send an official delegate to the meeting, it may in writing designate its vote by proxy to another member group/

8.8 No member group may carry more than one proxy vote.

8.9 In the event of a vacancy in the At-large positions, however caused such vacancy may be filled by appointment of the Directors for the duration of the term.

8.10 In the event of a vacancy among regional representatives, cultural representatives, or PHA network representatives, however caused, such vacancy will be filled through the election of a new representative by the member groups who elected them initially.

8.11 Affirmative action principles shall be applied in elections for all positions.

## 9. Committees:

9.1 Each committee shall have a minimum of three members, one of whom shall be the committee chair and a Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Directors. Representation from staff is also required.

9.2 The term of office, composition and duties of committees shall be prescribed by the Board of directors.

9.3 All committees shall report to and be accountable to the Board of Directors and the Annual Meeting. They will be required to submit regular updates of their activities at scheduled Board meetings.

9.4 The Standing committees shall be as follows:

a. Advocacy

- b. Programs
- c. Public Relations/communications
- d. Finance

## 9.5 Standing committee functions

### a) ADVOCACY

The Advocacy committee is a permanent committee whose mandate is to communicate with and lobby external partners on behalf of the health and well-being of people living with and affected by AIDS. This committee has a special mandate to be pro-active in learning about advocating for the needs of Nova Scotian communities less represented in the provincial AIDS movement.

### b) PROGRAMS

The Programs Committee is a permanent committee whose mandate is to ensure that programs and services meet the needs of people living with and affected by AIDS/HIV. Furthermore, it strives to ensure coordinated and quality education/prevention programs to target groups, as well as advising external partners on education/prevention initiatives to other groups.

### c) PUBLIC RELATION/ COMMUNICATIONS

The Public Relations/Communications Committee is a permanent committee whose mandate is to educate the public concerning the functions and activities of the organization through networking with media, and creating external partners. It strives to increase the awareness, understanding and support of AIDS/HIV issues across the province.

### d) FINANCE/FUND DEVELOPMENT

The Finance Committee is a permanent committee whose mandate is to ensure that the organization has the necessary funds for its operations by recommending plans for fundraising, controlling revenues and expenditures, and recommending the annual fundraising budget and the budget revisions.

9.6 The Board of Directors may delegate any, but not all, of their powers to the standing committees except as herein provided:

a) A committee shall conform to any rules imposed on it by the Board of Directors, and shall report, for ratification, every act or thing done in the exercise of those powers to the earliest meeting of the Board to be held after it has been done.

b) The members of a committee may meet and adjourn as they think proper.

9.7 Ad Hoc committees may be constituted by the Board of Directors as it deems advisable.

9.8 At their first meeting immediately following each annual meeting, directors shall appoint a Nominating Committee composed of not less than five persons. The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall normally be either of the immediate Past Chairpersons of the Board, or failing this, any other such director as the Board may appoint. No one may serve more than three consecutive years as a member of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall submit a report to the Secretary at least six weeks prior to the general meeting at which nominees are to be elected, accompanied by the written consent of each nominee to act as a director if they are nominated by a delegate and elected. Furthermore, members can be nominated from the floor if they are present at the meeting, or may present themselves for nomination at the General Meeting.

9.9 Committee members shall not be remunerated for serving on a committee but may be reimbursed for all expense necessarily and reasonably incurred while engaged in the affairs of the organization.

## 10. Member Group Delegates:

10.1 Member group delegates will act on behalf of their group.

10.2 Member group delegates will be responsible for disseminating information on the organization to their local group.

10.3 At-Large Directors will be nominated and elected by the member delegates and may be removed by the member delegates.

10.4 The member delegates will annually approve the directions and aims of the organization.

10.5 In addition to removal by delegates, any at-large member of the Board of Directors may be removed by a 2/3 majority vote of directors for an interim period until the next general meeting.

10.6 Regional representatives, representatives of cultural communities, and representatives from the PHA network may be removed by directors in consultation with the appropriate member delegates. Official approval by the member group involved and 2/3 approval by the Board is needed for directors to initiate such a removal. In such a case, the involved member group will elect a new representative.

10.7 Regional representatives, representatives from cultural communities, and representatives from the PHA network will be nominated and elected by their respective member groups, and may be removed and replaced by these groups, at any time, and without the approval of the Board.

10.8 The member delegates will be responsible for approving a tentative annual budget.

#### 11. Directors:

11.1 Newly elected directors will take office at the first meeting of the Board following the annual general meeting.

11.2 The directors may exercise all the powers within the framework of the organization's goals, objectives and governing principles between annual general meetings.

11.3 Following an election of the Board, the directors shall meet within sixty days of the annual general meeting to designate executive officers and carry out appropriate business.

11.4 The directors will designate their executive officers internally.

11.5 The co-chairpersons shall together be responsible for the calling meeting and making of agenda and for chairing all regularly scheduled meetings of the Board.

11.6 One of the vice-chairpersons of the organization will be responsible for taking over the duties of the chairpersons when they are both unable to fulfill them.

11.7 The treasurer of the Board shall be responsible for overseeing the finances of the organization, developing financial reports and budgets, and chairing the Finance/Fund Development Committee.

11.8 The secretary of the Board shall ensure the keeping of minutes from all meetings and distribution to both the directors and member group delegates.

11.9 The executive officers, notwithstanding any other legitimate removal, shall retain their offices for one year, until new officers are designated.

11.10 Officers may be removed by a majority of the directors at a regular meeting of the Board, where 2/3 of the directors are present.

11.11 Officers will not receive any remuneration for carrying out their duties as described herein.

11.12 The directors will have responsibility to carry out all organizational business between annual general meetings including fundraising, approving annual membership fees, authorizing payment of expenditures and dissemination of information to the member group delegates.