



Aboriginal Hepatitis C Month May 2017

Awareness Campaign Debuts Promising Practices Hep C Documentary & Tool Kit

Vancouver, BC (April 20, 2017) – To launch *National Aboriginal Hepatitis C Month May 2017*, The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) is proud to release, “*Promising Practices in Timiskaming First Nation*”, the second film in a series of documentaries which showcase community-led initiatives and the power of storytelling to improve health outcomes.

This time the camera lens focuses on tackling Hepatitis C with culturally appropriate practices as Indigenous People in Canada are 7 times more likely to be infected and 44% of those chronically infected are not aware of their status. In 2011, it was estimated over 461,000 Canadians had a history of a Hepatitis C infection and injection drug use remains the highest risk factor for contracting this blood to blood virus.

This past summer Health Canada approved a drug touted as a cure for hepatitis C, but numerous challenges remain: limited access to treatment, insufficient diagnosis, high cost of drugs; and not least of all, HIV co-infection, which is over represented in Canada’s Aboriginal communities, particularly in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

While filming over a two-year period, “*Promising Practices in Timiskaming First Nation*” tells the story of how the Timiskaming First Nation is addressing Hepatitis C in their community by utilizing the Community Readiness Model. One of the documentary’s narratives follows an Anishnabe woman’s powerful story of her lived experience using rich Indigenous culture and traditions to face her challenges.

CAAN invites everyone to request a copy of the documentary for personal or community use. They are also sharing their Aboriginal Hepatitis C Toolkit to bring further awareness to this disease believed to have infected hundreds of thousands of Canadians, many of whom are unaware they harbour the virus. www.caan.ca/hepatitis-c-toolkit/

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About Promising Practices Documentary Series

“*Promising Practices in Timiskaming First Nation*” and “*Promising Practices in Indigenous Communities in Saskatchewan (Sturgeon Lake)*” are part of the documentary series that in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and First Nation communities will feature Indigenous-led responses toward Hepatitis C, HIV and AIDS Community Readiness, and HIV and Youth. CAAN invites all to request a copy of these documentaries for personal or community sharing.

“*Promising Practices in Timiskaming First Nation*” will debut May 1, 2017 in Cobalt, Ontario.



About CAAN www.caan.ca

The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) is a non-profit coalition of individuals and organizations which provides leadership, support and advocacy for Aboriginal individuals living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, regardless of where they reside. Their philosophy is that all Aboriginal Peoples deserve the right to protect themselves against infectious disease and thrives on providing the Aboriginal community with accurate and current information about HIV including risks of contracting the virus, issues of care and treatment, and support for families and those living with the disease.

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