

Annual Report 2003



Working together since 1983

AIDS Vancouver exists to alleviate individual and collective vulnerability to HIV and AIDS through care, support, education, advocacy and research.

TWENTY YEARS - 1983-2003

Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors

When I look back at the challenges and changes of this past year, I have to pause to marvel at how through a period of such transition for the agency, we have managed to keep so focused and so intent on our mission of reducing collective and individual vulnerability to HIV and AIDS.

Major changes to the way that health care funding is allocated and expended across the province have resulted in the need for community-based agencies engaged in health service delivery such as ours to consider unique and creative approaches. We are being directed to find a greater efficiency in the services we provide than ever before, while maintaining the same quality of service to an ever-increasing number of clients and individuals. Simultaneously this compels us to investigate alternative sources of funding in an environment of shrinking donations from the private sector – a reality faced by many organizations in the not-for-profit world.

“I am proud of the work that AIDS Vancouver does, and I am proud of the staff and volunteers that do that work. I know that they are up for the challenges ahead”

As we move into a new fiscal year that marks our 20th year of responding to the HIV/AIDS epidemic here in Vancouver, we clearly have our work cut out for us. Our priorities are mapped out – we need to invest new energy and resources in our prevention work in order to respond to an unacceptable increase in HIV infections, while at the same time continuing to deliver high-quality support services designed to stabilize and prolong the health of people living with HIV/AIDS. We will need to be creative and resourceful about how we access and use funding. And now, more than ever, we will need to stay focused on and dedicated to our mission and purpose.

I am proud of the work that AIDS Vancouver does, and I am proud of the staff and volunteers that do that work. I know that they are up for the challenges ahead.

Micheal Vonn, Chair

AIDS Vancouver Board of Directors

Executive Report

This year marks 20 years of operation for AIDS Vancouver (AV). This milestone is a bittersweet one for all of us who work at AV. It is sweet because it is gratifying to know that 20 years after being formed by an amazing and dedicated group of individuals, we have become one of the pre-eminent AIDS service organizations in Canada. We have had thousands of people generously donate their time and money to support AIDS Vancouver in its important work, and we are proud to say that we have made a substantial difference in the lives of thousands more, by reducing their vulnerability to HIV and AIDS.

On the other hand, the celebration is also a bitter one because 20 years in to our history and our work we are still no closer to a cure for this devastating epidemic that has claimed so many of our friends and loved ones than we were in 1983. People are still becoming infected with HIV, people are still getting sick with AIDS, and people are still dying. The work is still urgent and incredibly important.

Now, more than ever, we need to challenge complacency about HIV/AIDS. We need to continue to push for adequate support for people living with HIV – support that encompasses basic human needs such as income, shelter and nutrition – and for better medications to help them live longer and healthier lives.

We need to make sure that HIV prevention remains viable and responsive so that fewer and fewer people become infected with the disease. We need to advocate for expanded and accelerated research related to the development of vaccines to prevent HIV at home and across the planet. Finally, we need to make sure that people don't start to believe that HIV has gone away – the work is as pressing now as it was 20 years ago.

This past fiscal year was not an easy one for the agency. We have had to adjust, streamline, and in some cases re-invent the work that we do in order to accommodate new priorities and an evolving funding environment. Rest assured that despite these difficulties – or in some cases because of them – we at AIDS Vancouver remain committed to the work ahead.

We hold on to the hope that there will not be a need to mark our 40th birthday.

A/Co-Executive Directors,

Stephen Smith

Kim Hiebert

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Programs and Services

This year there has been a steady increase in the need for our services. Staff have responded by strengthening partnerships, increasing volunteer in-

volvement, creating program portability and making other adjustments that have increased accessibility.

Gay Men's Health and Wellness

The focus of Gay Men's Health Programs (GMHP) this year has been on building stronger relationships within the gay men's health and wellness community and the development of AIDS Vancouver's new Davie Street site.

This year has been marked by severe under-funding of HIV prevention programs targeting gay men, and changing values and norms within the gay community. Despite this there have been some rewarding successes for which agency staff, volunteers and community partners can feel proud.

GMHP played a key role in the creation of an action-oriented coalition of individuals and organizations working in the realm of gay men's health and wellness. Gay Men's Health Action (GMHA) is a partnership focused on promoting and advancing the health and wellness of gay men and gay men's communities. The first major initiative of GMHA was Euphoria - gay men's health fair and workshop series. This event was enormously successful and plans are underway to present Euphoria again in 2003. Gay Men's Health Programs also co-presented a workshop version of our acclaimed booklet *Frooty Booty* -

How to Keep Your Ass Fresh.

With partners from across the province, AIDS Vancouver participated in a Community Based Research Centre - lead research and capacity building project. The product of this partnership was the development, delivery and analysis of the Sex Now Survey. This survey had over two thousand respondents completing questionnaires in Victoria, Prince George and Vancouver that will assist community based program developers in creating interventions for gay men based on knowledge of local populations. The findings will be released in April of 2003. This project will continue on an annual basis with new locations and partnerships planned for this year already.

In conjunction with the Asian Society for the Intervention of AIDS and the Storefront Orientation Services a series of postcards in Spanish, Cantonese and English were created for distribution in bars, bathhouses, Pride and other community events to raise awareness of issues related to HIV health and relationships.

The work done in 2002/03 has put AIDS Vancouver in a positive

position for a continued role in gay men's HIV prevention and support as we move towards a new era in gay men's health and wellness in British Columbia and across the globe. None of this could have been done without the dedication of a great team of volunteers.

"...there have been some rewarding successes for which agency staff, volunteers and community partners can feel proud."



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Women's Programs

The issues for women infected and affected by HIV/AIDS can be complex. Coming to terms with the barriers or social determinants of health for women was the focus of women's programs, leading to the prevention of illness and the promotion of health. The goal of the program is to help women manage their health options based on the ability to make informed choices. We accomplished this through education, advocacy, community partnerships and research.

An ongoing project for Women's Programs is research; development and design of a new program aimed at education and outreach for heterosexual men. Through the educational work done, program awareness has increased around the need for a more inclusive approach to outreach activities. Many at risk women in the community are asking the question, "Why aren't we educating men as well as women

"Why aren't we educating men as well as women around responsibility for safer sex?" The argument can be made that educating men may be the only way some women will be able to protect themselves from contracting HIV and other STD's.

around responsibility for safer sex practices?" The argument can be made that educating men may be the only way some women will be able to protect themselves from contracting HIV and other STD's. A major role for women's programs is to respond to the needs of the community in ways that are relevant and reflective of the changing epidemiology. Traditionally educational workshops and outreach activities were geared primarily to at-risk women. While this is still a priority our services have expanded to include male partners of women who are at risk, male and female service providers, and students participating in home care, health care and nursing programs. We are actively involved in training volunteers in various organizations to be sensitive to the prevention needs of at-risk individuals connected to their programs.

As more women and men become infected with HIV

the demand for education and outreach programs increases. The coordinator of women's program has had real success in meeting those demands in a flexible and comprehensive way.

Over the next year we will continue to tailor efforts to a diverse population while moving toward a wider community focus.

Women's Program Statistics

Female condoms distributed	939
Male condoms distributed	435
Pamphlets distributed	955
Workshops	67
Attendees	810
Workshop hours	170

Web Site



News & Events

AIDS Vancouver's web site continues to serve nearly 60,000 visitors per year, providing a wide variety of information which includes an introduction to the basics of HIV transmission and progression; HIV/AIDS related news and events; details on the workings of the agency along with agency programs and services.

More recently, we've created a secure donations page where individuals can make a donation to AV from the comfort of their own computer.

Grocery

The AIDS Vancouver Grocery continues to be a well utilized service. An average week brings over 600 people through its doors. With the demand for this service steadily rising, the workload has increased for volunteers. Currently, we have 17 volunteers performing a wide range of duties including stocking shelves, unloading delivery trucks, bagging groceries for clients, working the computer and packing produce.

Increasing cutbacks from the Province continue to impact the Grocery program. The team is working hard to approach the issue with compassion, respect and creativity. In addition, the Grocery has experienced a significant reduction in the items received from the Vancouver Food Bank Society.

For three consecutive year's AIDS Vancouver has surveyed our Grocery clients. The results have assisted the Grocery with purchasing items that meet the needs of the greatest number of grocery users.

"...adequate nutrition is critical for sustaining and prolonging quality of life..."

To ensure accessibility for grocery clients we are providing them with alternative pick-up locations. These locations are situated at the following agencies: A Loving Spoonful, Positive Women's Network, Surrey HIV/AIDS Support Network, Portland Hotel Society, and Vancouver Native Health.

Grocery Statistics

Grocery bags distributed (total)	25,109
Clients Served	1,246

Case Management

The Case Management program continued to flourish this year under our 2nd Generation Case Management model. The Access (short-term) and Intensive (long-term) teams provide comprehensive case management across a broad continuum of client needs. Case Managers work to maximize clients' access to the resources they require to stay safe and healthy: adequate housing, income stability, access to quality health services, psycho-social support, treatment information, and practical assistance.

Our Case Management team worked diligently to support our clients through extensive changes to government programs. The introduction of the provincial government's Employment and Assistance program, and accompanying disability designation review process, created increased anxiety for many of our clients. As qualified disability assessors, the case management

team works closely with physicians to ensure that our clients maintained access to these much needed disability benefits.

Over the past year, we continued our mission to connect with those individuals living with HIV/AIDS who are most difficult to reach. Our Case Manager situated at the Downtown Community Health Clinic continued to provide HIV case management services as part of the clinic's multi-disciplinary team. We also strengthened our connections with agencies serving families, such as the Surrey HIV/AIDS Support Network, and the HIV/AIDS social workers at St. Paul's and Vancouver area hospitals.

Through the assistance of co-operative education students from Simon Fraser University, we were fortunate to develop a web-based client

Case Management (continued)

database. This database has provided us with an increased ability to inform our service delivery.

We are also grateful to the students at the Vancouver Film School's new media program who produced a CD-ROM highlighting our program through the stories of six of our clients. This moving and informative document demonstrates the importance of the social determinants of health upon which our case management program is based.

Case Management	
# New clients	253
Avg # clients served per month	277
Hours of Service	
Total	3,676
Presenting Issues	
Income	2822
Housing	1403
Psycho-social	1482
Individual skills/capacities	1704
Health services	1645
Health status	817
Other	407

Communications

The Communications program provided substantial support to the agency's programs, by arranging press conferences and participating in a variety of media conferences addressing HIV/AIDS. One such conference was The City of Vancouver's Four Pillar Plan.

As well, communications support was provided to a variety of AIDS organizations and non governmental agencies around the province and within the lower mainland.

AIDS Vancouver continued its involvement in advancing HIV/AIDS awareness nationally

through participation in Health Canada's HIV/AIDS Awareness Steering Committee. The agency has also been active in addressing the problems of HIV-Hepatitis C co-infection locally and through activities with the Canadian AIDS Society.

The program assisted in the development and delivery of communications for campaigns in the Women's Programs, Gay Men's Health and the Community Development department programs.



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Support Programs

AIDS Vancouver's Support Programs consist of the Home and Hospital Visitor program, the Care Team program, and the Professional Counselling program. All services provided by these programs are delivered by volunteers.

Home and Hospital Visitors provide companionship to individuals in hospital, hospice, or in some cases, private homes. Visitors are trained volunteers whose primary role is to spend social time with people who do not receive many visits or whose personal visitors cannot spend as much time as desired.

A Care Team is a group of volunteers who provide a combination of companionship, practical assistance, and personal care to people living with HIV or AIDS at home. Support may be provided by one to three volunteers, as needed.

The Professional Counselling program helps people living with HIV/AIDS to access professional counselling services; the program

is available to those with incomes of less than \$20,000 per year. The counsellors are trained professionals who work in private practice.

The Care Team program faced increased demand this year, as access to paid home care services was reduced for many clients. We continue to recruit and train new volunteers, with the hope of adding an additional Care Team in the spring of 2003. Similarly, requests for volunteer visitors increased as some programs in hospital settings were reduced or eliminated.

We also continued to see great demand for the Professional Counselling program this year. Unfortunately, demand for this program consistently outpaces our ability to meet the needs presented. This is simply a reflection of the complex psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs generally experienced by people living with HIV/AIDS, and the lack of availability of free counselling services.

We recognise that we cannot meet these challenges alone, and this past year we engaged in a number of new partnerships with other community agencies and programs. We have greatly increased our information and resource sharing, so that together, we can better meet the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS in the Greater Vancouver area.

Despite the challenges, the work of Support Programs continued to be fostered by a dedicated group of more than 50 volunteers this past year. Together, these women and men provided services to dozens of individuals and families dealing with HIV/AIDS disease. Their contributions to the lives of these people, and to the wider community, have been truly remarkable.

“We have greatly increased our information and resource sharing, so we can better meet the needs of people living with HIV in the Greater Vancouver area.”

Help Line



The Helpline added a new dimension this year with the development of the Helpline Online, a free electronic discussion forum which allow community members to connect and respond to each others questions.

This new development was made possible from an ongoing partner-

ship with an international agency in Mexico. The service is also available in Spanish.

As well our trained volunteers receive calls and respond to emails. The Helpline can be contacted by using the telephone and or though the internet at AIDS Vancouver's website.



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PARC Library

The PARC Library continued with its mission of making timely and relevant information available to individuals and groups throughout the Lower Mainland and British Columbia. A total of 7,658 people accessed a variety of library services either in-person, via email, mail, or fax.

With the addition of a third computer workstation, our computers continue to be one of the most popular and consistently utilized resources in the Library with a yearly total of 3,499. Forty six percent of the people accessing Library services used the computer workstations at some point in their visit.

With the acquisition of 104 new book titles and 17 new video titles, the Library realized a greater representation of newer material in the collection with the number of titles published since 1997 growing over the year from 30% to 40% of the total.

A systematic update of core reference materials, the careful withdrawal of dated materials, and the selection of materials reflective of our community's needs, has resulted in a relevant and useful collection. Upholding our reputation as an accessible and comprehensive HIV/AIDS resource centre, we maintain subject files on a variety

of topics and distribute a large number of pamphlets and information packages throughout British Columbia. Over 30 resources were identified as having potential value to educators.

The PARC Library has been able to acquire these resources because of collaboration with and funding from the HIV/AIDS Division at the BC Ministry of Health. Interest from educators in British Columbia has been quite substantial, with many province wide requests underscoring the Library's reputation in the community as a comprehensive resource centre, and the primary source of HIV-related information in the province.

Volunteer Resources



“Volunteer Resources strives to build organizational commitment and competency by providing meaningful and relevant volunteer opportunities that support and enhance the mission of AIDS Vancouver. Paid and unpaid staff work together to alleviate vulnerabilities to HIV/AIDS.”

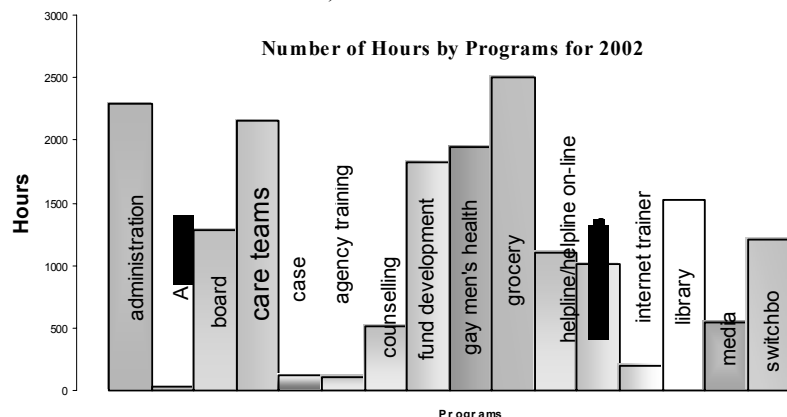
We have recruited, trained and placed 200 volunteers who are involved in over 15 different programs and services at AIDS Vancouver. From direct services to support, pre-

vention, fundraising, research and advocacy, volunteers continue to be a vital and valuable contribution to our work. Their enthusiasm, skills, resources and motivation provide the agency with the ability to enhance and expand our response to HIV/AIDS.

Some of our key successes this year included: implementing developed measurement tools for our Out-

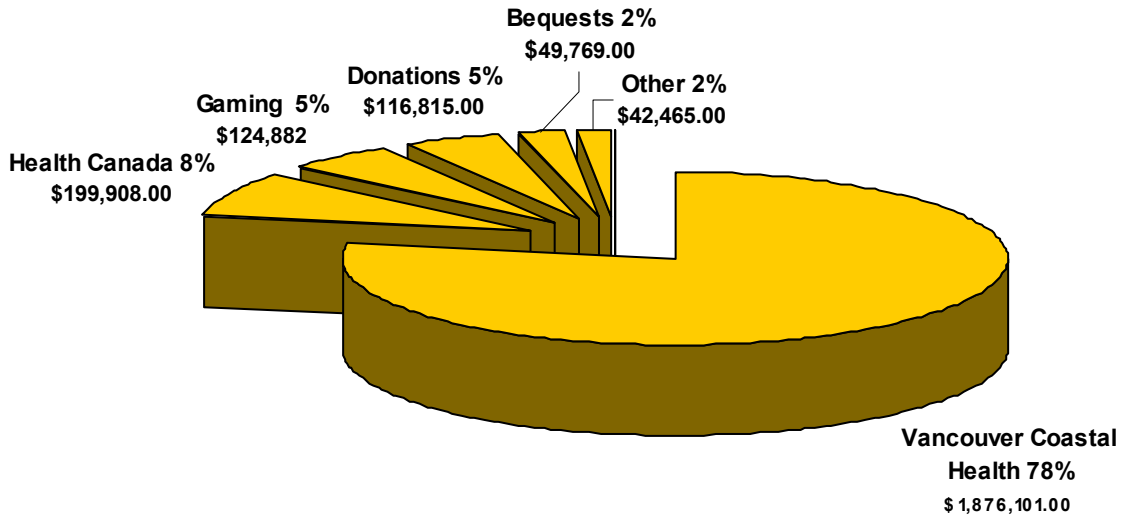
comes Based Evaluation Framework; completion of a more comprehensive and modified curriculum for volunteer training; program based recognition, development and implementation of a Volunteer Handbook of policies and procedures; moving to a new and bigger space as well as increased administrative efficiencies through a new database and office systems.

18,368.55 volunteer hours x \$16.05 per hr (American) x 1.6 (exchange rate)
= \$471,704.36 dollar value of volunteer time



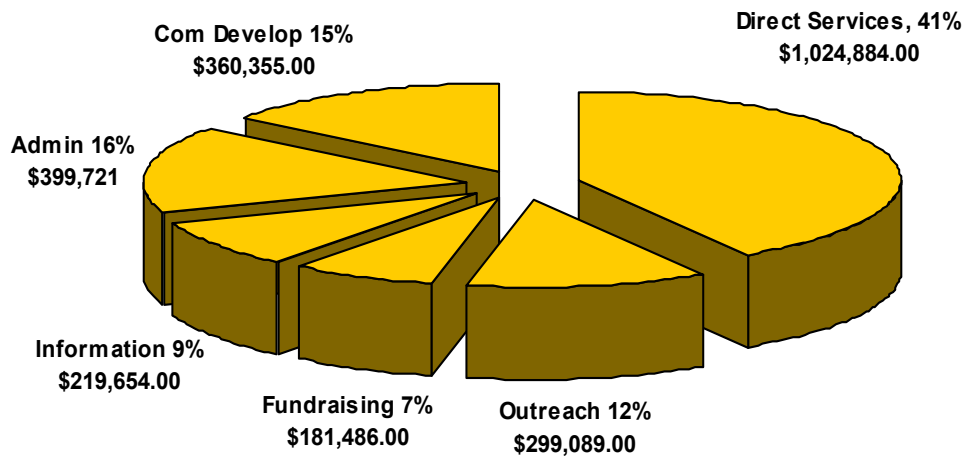
Finance Report

Revenue 2002-2003



Direct Services: Case Management, Grocery Program, Support Programs, Financial Assistance Fund
 Outreach Services: Women's Program, Gay Men's Health Program
 Information Services: PARC Library, Reception/Helpline, Computer Network, Website
 Community Development: Communications, Volunteer Resources, Print Resources, Symposia
 Administration: Financial Management, Human Resources, Board of Directors

Expenditures 2002-2003



Major Donors

Government Funders

Vancouver Coastal Health
Government of Canada, Health Canada

Organization and Individual Funders

2001 Odyssey Touring Co. LLC
Body Energy Club
Bosley's Pet Supplies
Canadian Society for International Health
Cassop, Greg
Coast Capital Savings Credit Union employees
Davis & Company
Dubé, John
Estate of Allen Darcy Skinner
Euchre Planers of the West End
Fountain of Hope
Green Shield Canada employees
Estate of Ronald Hagler
IBM Employees' Charitable Fund
John Cheetham Memorial Fund
Labatt Breweries of Canada – Labatt People in Action
The Lounge Hair Salon
Michael Robin Holding Ltd
Mortis Consulting Ltd
Nabess, Cory
P-CAN P-CAN

Pezzot, Don
Rethink Communications
Rix Family Foundation
Rudy and Patricia North Foundation
Sears Employees Charitable Fund
Terra Breads
United Way of Greater Toronto
United Way of Lower Mainland
Vancouver AIDS Memorial
Vancouver Food Bank
Vancouver Foundation
Winberg Foundation –
Judy Winberg & Andy Pollack

*“Very special
thanks to all donors
of AIDS
Vancouverwhose
generosity ensures
we can continue to
offer essential
services to our
clients”*

Converted into dollars, AIDS Vancouver Volunteers have contributed \$471,740.36 hours worth of service.

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