



PRESS RELEASE

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## **New Campaign Says Federal Response to HIV in Canada is “Stuck in the Past” Ahead of International AIDS Conference**

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA – One month before Canada hosts AIDS 2022, the world’s largest conference on HIV and AIDS, a group of community-based HIV and human rights organizations are calling on the federal government to adequately fund the domestic response to HIV.

These organizations—known collectively as the National Advocates—have launched a campaign on [HIVfunding.ca](https://www.hivfunding.ca). The campaign encourages people across Canada to sign letters to the Minister of Health, which call for an increase in HIV funding in Canada to \$100 million annually, and better engagement with organizations and people living with HIV. As a member of the National Advocates, CBRC is one of [18 organizations](#) that came together to develop the campaign.

“Since 2008, federal funding for HIV has been fixed at around \$73 million per year—meanwhile, the number of people living with HIV in Canada has increased 25%,” says, Jody Jollimore, Executive Director at CBRC. “Amidst a rising demand for services, a lack of federal funding has forced many community-based HIV organizations to end services or shut down.”

The call for increased funding featured on [HIVfunding.ca](https://www.hivfunding.ca) is backed by recommendations from the House of Commons’ Standing Committee on Health. This group, made up of MPs from all political parties, has twice recommended that \$100 million per year be spent on the federal response to address HIV here in Canada—first in 2003, and again in 2019.

While the federal government released an action plan in 2019 to address HIV and other sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections, no new funding was attached to this plan. The government has also committed—both to Canadians and to UNAIDS—to reaching the latest 95-95-95 UNAIDS goals, but Canada is not on track to achieve them.

“Without an increased financial commitment to supporting people impacted by HIV, case numbers will continue to rise and people living with HIV will not get the support that they need,” says Jollimore. “We have a responsibility to address HIV in Canada, not just to protect the health of Canadians, but to avoid further inequities. Indigenous and Black Canadians are disproportionately represented among new HIV infections and more than half of all people living with HIV in Canada are gay, bi, and queer men.”

The International AIDS Conference has a strong history of activism and is scheduled to take place in Montreal from July 29 until August 2. The National Advocates’ campaign will encourage people across Canada to send letters to the Health Minister and their MP via [HIVfunding.ca](https://www.hivfunding.ca) until the \$100 million a year commitment to address HIV in Canada is made.



For interviews, please contact:  
Michael Ianni  
CBRC's Media Relations Officer  
[michael@praid.ca](mailto:michael@praid.ca)  
604.345.7689

Christopher DiRaddo  
CBRC's Associate Director, Communications  
[christopher.diraddo@cbrc.net](mailto:christopher.diraddo@cbrc.net)  
514.806.5087