

COLLECTIVE EMPOWERMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH CRITICAL COMMUNITY-BASED ACTION RESEARCH: EVIDENCE FROM 10 YEARS OF COMMUNITY EFFORTS

Alan Li, Henry Luyombya, Josephine Wong
Committee For Accessible AIDS Treatment

CNHC 2012

Committee For Accessible AIDS Treatment (CAAT)

- A coalition formed in 1999 to reduce barriers faced by people living with HIV/AIDS (PHAs) who are immigrants, refugees or with precarious status in Canada
- Coalition of over 35 health, legal and social service organizations plus individual immigrant/refugee PHAs
- Focuses on Empowerment Education, Research, Service Coordination and Advocacy on issues related to HIV, Immigration and Access

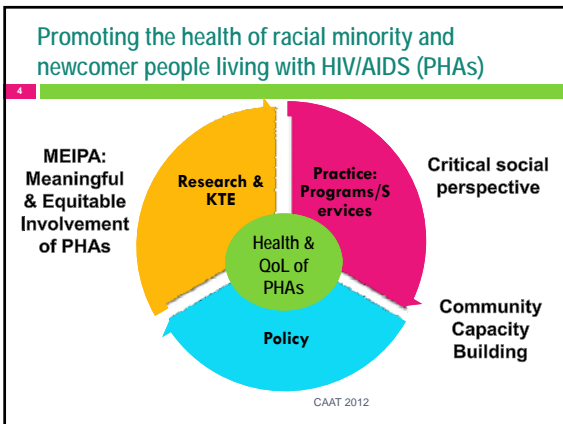


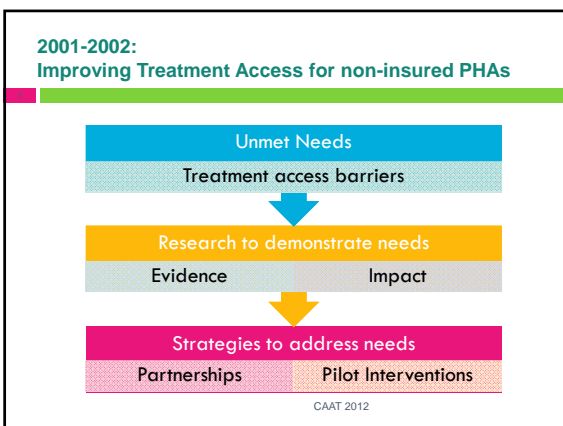
CAAT 2012

Changing Demographics of HIV

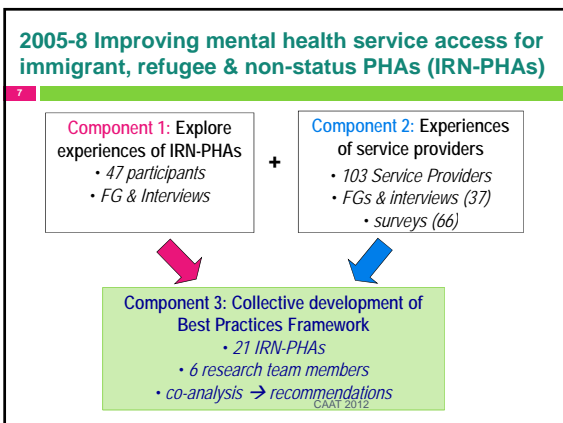
- In the 1980s, over 80% of persons living with HIV/AIDS were men who had sex with men (MSM)
- In 2009 – MSM (42%), heterosexual (31%), intravenous drug user (22%)
- In 2009, over 67% of all reported HIV cases still did not have information on race or ethnicity
- Among HIV case reports with ethnic or race information in 2009, racialized new immigrants and refugees comprised 22.5% of new HIV cases (PHAC, 2009)
- Over 40% of the people living with HIV/AIDS (PHAs) from endemic countries contracted HIV **after** their arrival in Canada (Remis et al., 2006)

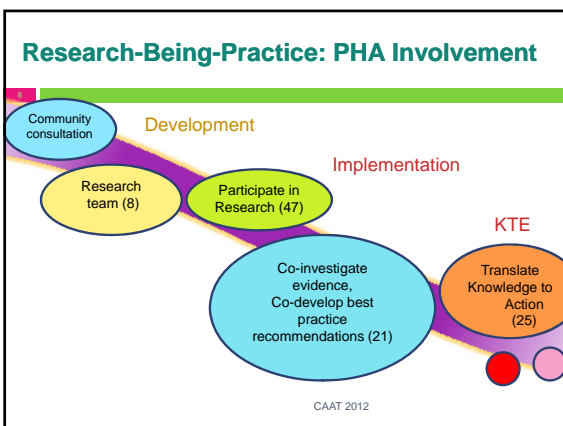
CAAT 2012

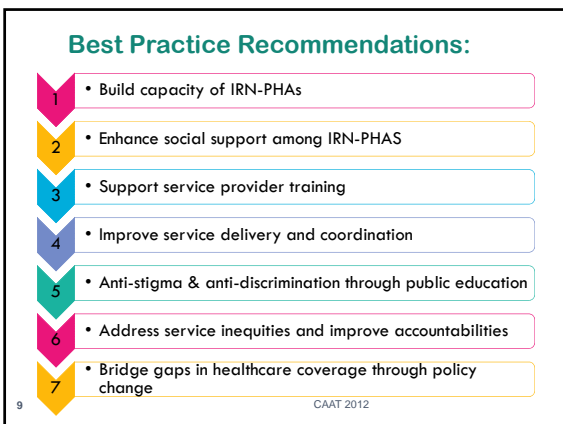




- ### Research Outcomes
- Engaged all relevant stakeholders to work on issues together & co-develop strategies
 - Compassionate Treatment Access program set up at Toronto PWA Foundation
 - HIV & Immigration Training Program (RPCHC)
 - Accessible legal education information for PHAs (with HALCO)
 - Advocate for immigration lawyer at HALCO
- CAAT 2012







CAAT Follow-up: Research-Policy-Action

PHA SKILLS BUILDING:

- Legacy Mentorship Project
- Newcomer Sexual Health Promotion project

SERVICE PROVIDER TRAINING:

- Designated Medical Practitioner Training
- HIV and Immigration Access Training

ANTI-STIGMA:

- MEL Study: Mobilizing Ethno-racial Leaders Against HIV Stigma action research

POLICY GAPS:

- Medical Inadmissibility Study
- Advocacy via Mental Health Strategy & AIDS Strategy

CAAT 2012

Research outcome: Legacy Project: A structured PHA mentorship program

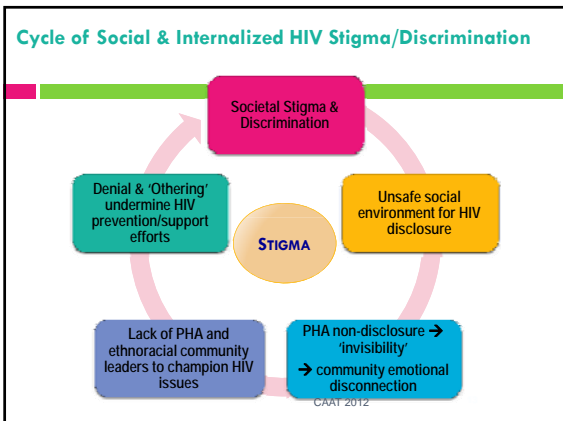
CAAT 2012

The MEL Study: Mobilizing ethno-racial leaders against HIV stigma and Discrimination (2009/2010)

CAAT 2012

BACKGROUND

- Follow-up study from recommendations of MH Access Study to explore the challenges and opportunities in engaging leaders from ethnoracial minority communities to address HIV stigma and discrimination.
- Seven focus groups – Recruited 22 faith, media & social justice leaders and 23 PHAs from five ethno-raical communities
- Three community forums – engaged over 60 stakeholders



- ### Key Follow-Up Action Strategies & Study Recommendations
- Reclaiming HIV as an important health and fundamental human rights issue concerning everyone
 - Facilitating critical dialogues within and across the target sectors to address the cognitive and affective knowledge gaps related to HIV/AIDS
 - Developing strategies to reduce internalized stigma and external stigma / discrimination
- CAAT 2012

Follow-up Research: CHAMP STUDY

Community Champions HIV/AIDS Advocates Mobilization Project – An intervention study to:

- Engage ethnoracial and newcomer PHA and Non-PHA leaders
- Pilot and evaluate 2 interventions:
 - Acceptance Commitment Training, and
 - Social Justice Capacity Building Training

CAAT 2012

Access & Equity Award, City of Toronto 2009

16



CAAT 2012

Casey Award 2012

17



CAAT 2012

From Engagement to Empowerment

18

Community Succession: Passing the torch to affected communities



Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV/AIDS

CAAT 2012