

Prisoners HIV/AIDS Support Action Network

Strategic Plan

2011 – 2015



**“...Enhancing the quality of life for prisoners,
youth in custody, ex-prisoners and their supports
at risk of or infected by HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C...”**

Background

2011 marks 20 years since the creation of PASAN as a coalition in 1991 and its incorporation in 1993. PASAN serves the needs of an increasingly large and diverse group of prisoners, ex-prisoners, youth in custody and those who support them in their ability to live with or avoid contracting HIV/AIDS and/or Hepatitis C.

Many of the challenges, which guided the creation of the first strategic plan, still confront the organization today. In fact, they have increased in complexity, placing ever-greater demands on PASAN to satisfy the growing needs of the communities it serves. Stigma and discrimination surrounding prisoners and HIV have not diminished. People from racialized communities including First Nations and African/Black/Caribbean communities; continue to be over-represented in prisons and in the HIV/Hepatitis C epidemic.

The challenges facing PASAN continue to include resource constraints and funding streams that inhibit the ability of the organization to grow with effective infrastructure for the longer term. More than ever, effective partnerships are seen as the key to providing seamless services for clients, but that means educating partners in health matters pertaining to incarceration with HIV and Hepatitis C. The ability to supply good education and risk reduction materials within the prison system remains challenging.

Mindful of the current funding environment, the Board identified the need to develop PASAN's next strategic plan in a way that would build on its strengths, respond to ongoing challenges and become a practical guide for its work over the next 3 years.

Process

Ron Rosenes, a consultant with the Ontario Organizational Development Program (OODP), was retained in September 2010 to facilitate the strategic planning renewal process that will guide the work of the organization through 2014.

The planning process leading to the development of the new strategic plan has included the following:

- A review of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing PASAN both internally and externally through a review of existing documentation, as well as focus groups in person and on line with community partners and clients
- A full day facilitated strategic planning session with Board and Staff, followed by a review of the Strategic Directions document that resulted
- Sessions to develop an Action Plan with both Board and Staff
- Development of a plan to monitor and evaluate the strategic planning process

The key elements of this document are:

- A **Vision Statement** that guides us towards our future and clarifies our expectations and hopes for PASAN and our clients
- A **Mission Statement** that clearly describes why we exist as an Organization
- **Statements of Guiding Principles and Values** that describe how we work with each other and on behalf of our clients on a daily basis. These statements build on our work over the years to document our Basis of Unity, another key aspect of how we fulfill our mandate
- **Strategic Directions** that outline the key areas of commitment and resource allocation over the next three years. They represent areas where PASAN can best focus its efforts to serve its clients.

We recognize the importance of committing to a renewed set of **Strategic Directions** through this document. It can only serve as a guide to the future if it remains a living document that allows us to adapt to a rapidly changing environment. The renewal of the strategic plan for PASAN represents our commitment to ensure the health of the organization so that it can continue to serve the needs of our communities of prisoners, ex-prisoners, youth in custody and those who support them in the issues they face around HIV, Hepatitis C and ongoing stigma and discrimination with sensitivity, dignity and compassion.

Our Vision

A world in which the human rights and dignity of prisoners, youth in custody, ex-prisoners and their loved ones are respected and realized; and where societal attitudes, laws and policies facilitate HIV and Hepatitis C prevention efforts, holistic care, treatment and support.

Our Mission

PASAN is a provincial community based prisoners' rights organization. We provide education, community development skills and non-judgmental support within a harm reduction and social justice framework, to prisoners, youth in custody, ex-prisoners and their supports in relation to HIV and Hepatitis C. We are guided by a Basis of Unity, and we work against all forms of discrimination and oppression to promote the health of our communities.

Guiding Principles and Values

PASAN is committed to a supportive environment for prisoners, youth in custody, ex-prisoners, staff and volunteers with or at risk of HIV and/or Hepatitis C, through the following principles and values that guide our work on a daily basis. Our approach to these issues is informed by an over-arching framework of social justice and anti-racist, anti-oppression principles.

Health Promotion

Prisoners, youth in custody and ex-prisoners, particularly those with HIV/AIDS and/or Hepatitis C, have a fundamental right to optimal health. Health is viewed holistically as encompassing mind, body and spirit.

Harm Reduction, Self Determination and Equitable Access

Prisoners, youth in custody and ex-prisoners have a right to the knowledge that will protect them against HIV, Hepatitis C and other infections. They have a right to current and optimal treatment as followed in "Best Practice Models". HIV and Hepatitis C support, prevention and education programs should be available from community-based organizations with access to the institutions.

Privacy and Informed Consent

Prisoners, youth in custody, ex-prisoners, staff and volunteers, have a right to keep their health status private. These means that HIV-antibody testing should be done anonymously, with informed consent, and include pre- and post-test counseling. PASAN also values and respects the privacy and confidentiality of health status and employment issues for its current and former staff, and volunteers.

Client-centred

PASAN's client-centred approach views individuals in a holistic manner and involves tools for empowerment, and respect for individual autonomy, voice, and participation in decision-making.

Community Engagement

PASAN values its collaborations with community partners and the volunteers whose contributions it strives to support.

Diversity

PASAN strives to be respectful of the diverse values, beliefs, and behaviours of those it serves. The social cultural and linguistic needs of all clients, staff and volunteers, are considered in the way that we work together to deliver services and support.

Meaningful Involvement of People with HIV and/or Hepatitis C

PASAN values the lived experience and expertise of every person from the communities it serves.

Our Strategic Directions

Over the next three years, we will actively pursue four goals:

- 1. Ensure the health and development of our organization**
- 2. Strengthen our ability to effectively change policy**
- 3. Ensure the financial sustainability of our organization**
- 4. Strengthen our ability to provide excellent programs and effective services**
- 5. Ensure the health and development of our organization**

Over the past 20 years, PASAN has become widely known for its skilled, caring and committed Staff, Board and volunteers. PASAN staff are considered to be the known experts and leaders on prisoners' issues related to human rights and access to health. The environmental scan indicated some internal weaknesses in the areas of training, policies and procedures, and a concern about working in silos. While the relationship between Board and Staff is strong, a need was identified to look for ways to improve communication. Given the growth and size of the organization, PASAN has identified the need to expand its managerial capacity.

Over the next three years, we will:

- ◆ Create a document outlining the history of our organization and its accomplishments
- ◆ Update the manual of policies, practices and procedures in order to eliminate inconsistencies
- ◆ Improve Board/Staff communication through:

- Regular presentations on their programs by staff to the Board
- Establishment of an ad hoc Board/Staff committee on Policies and Procedures
- Site visits for Board members
- ◆ Support our staff to develop their skills through:
 - Buddy and mentorship programs
 - Training programs
 - An updated training manual
- ◆ Continue to leverage our partnerships with other community organizations and agencies by:
 - Formalizing partnerships through written agreements with organizations, not individuals
 - Ensuring the power balance between and among partners
 - Establishing new partnerships in research (for example, with OHTN, CIHR and academia)
- ◆ Raise the profile of PASAN and its work through:
 - Greater marketing and communications
 - Updating agency brochures and literature
 - The newsletter (Cell Count)
- ◆ Work to fund additional managerial positions for the organization
- ◆ Commit to consult on a name change for PASAN

2. Strengthen our ability to effectively change policy

While PASAN has always worked tirelessly to protect the rights of its individual clients, there remains a need to develop the tools and capacity to respond to systemic problems that result in inequitable access or lack of continuity to services for the communities we serve. Increasingly, policy makers are demanding research data to support changes to existing policy in an effort to reduce barriers and improve equitability and access. In order to do this more effectively, we have identified the need to strengthen our capacity to engage in Community Based Research that will enable us to contribute to the policy, planning and funding decisions that affect individuals we serve. We will not do this alone; we will work through strengthened partnerships and coalitions.

In order to strengthen our capacity to impact and change policy, we will craft a three-year fund development plan that will:

- ◆ Develop a strategy to create and use research to effectively change policy
- ◆ Engage in Community Based Research (CBR) to better understand the complex needs of the people we serve

- ◆ Develop a media strategy to raise awareness and respond to issues that impact the people we serve in a timely fashion
- ◆ Strengthen partnerships and build coalitions to address root causes of social issues

3. Ensure the financial sustainability of the organization

PASAN has seen considerable growth over the past five years in terms of the size of its budget. Increasingly, however, in the current fiscal environment, the majority of funding, which is derived from the public sector, is project based. This creates challenges for the organization to meet its needs in terms of having sufficient resources for additional managerial staff and for expanded office space that would allow the organization to better serve its clients on site.

In order to ensure the fiscal health and sustainability of the organization, over the next three years, we will:

- ◆ Seek to diversify funding sources including public, foundation and private
- ◆ Seek opportunities to increase core funding
- ◆ Leverage increased funding through research grants
- ◆ Seek funding specifically to allow the organization to increase administrative support and middle management
- ◆ Seek funding to for expanded office space
- ◆ Seek funding for increased community programming
- ◆ Seek funding for a volunteer coordinator
- ◆ Seek funding for another provincial prison worker
- ◆ Implement “fee for service” arrangements with community partners where possible to raise awareness and generate revenues

4. Strengthen our ability to provide excellent programs and effective services

One of our continuing strengths lies in the area of programs and services, which received many positive comments during the consultations with clients and community partners. We recognize, however, that there is always room for improvement. While it is easier to maintain control over programs delivered to ex-prisoners, there are ongoing

systemic barriers to the provision and access of services in prisons. Data generated from CBR and partnerships and coalitions are among the strategies proposed to increase access, but there are additional ways to strengthen programs and services that we will seek to develop and implement.

In order to be able to offer excellent programs and effective services, over the next three years, we will:

- ◆ Develop and implement a team-building approach with Staff
- ◆ Improve in-house training and professional development
- ◆ Build capacity among our community partners to provide additional services in prisons
- ◆ Increase opportunities for volunteers and peer mentorship by hiring a volunteer coordinator
- ◆ Assist clients to develop community and mentorship skills through in-house and OAN provided skills building
- ◆ Hire and train additional provincial and federal prison workers
- ◆ Seek to increase the amount of community programming (along with hours of operation) offered on-site to serve the increasing number of clients being returned to the community
- ◆ Evaluate our Programs and Services on a regular basis.