

Canadian Women's Health Network

A Project of Women Healthsharing

January 13, 1992

Dear friends,

A dream of many women is becoming a reality: a Canadian Women's Health Network is being formed. Women Healthsharing, a feminist organization which promotes women's health through publicizing the quarterly magazine Healthsharing, has received funds from Health and Welfare Canada to begin to establish links between organizations, groups and individuals throughout Canada working on issues which affect women's health.

This three year project aims to lay the groundwork for the network in three ways:

- *We will gather information about women's health activities and organizations in six Canadian regions to create a current resource bank.
- *An issue of Healthsharing will be devoted to each of the six regions, which will include the region's resource bank, and will be freely distributed within the region.
- *We will organize a Canada-wide conference on women's health which will focus on sharing resources, linking our struggles, and determining a structure and direction for the network.

Hopefully by the end of this project the network would have developed focus and momentum to organize an ongoing structure and future projects.

This is an opportunity for women to share resources, analysis, vision, and strategies for change. Links can be made between women's health and social problems such as poverty, sexism, racism, and heterosexism. We will do everything we can to help the network develop in a way that represents and includes the concerns of women from diverse classes, races, cultures, sexual orientations, ages and physical abilities.

We are pleased that the western region, Alberta and British Columbia, will be focused on first. The western issue of Healthsharing will be out in May 1992.

We hope that you will help to form the network. To begin, please complete the following questions about your work, your community, and goals for the network. We look forward to hearing from you, by January 24th if possible.

Yours truly, *Anne Fraser*

Anne Fraser
Regional Animator, B.C. and Alberta

14 Skey Lane, Toronto, Ontario M6J 3S4

416 532-0812; fax 416 588-6638

Western Address: 131 East 27th Avenue,
Vancouver, British Columbia, V5V 2K5
604-879-1747

Building a Canadian Women's Health Network

The following questions will be used to build a resource bank for the western region of the Canadian Women's Health Network, and also to influence planning for the Canada-wide consultation slated for the fall of 1992. Please answer the questions as fully or as briefly as you would like to on separate paper (point form is fine). Leave out any questions which do not seem relevant to you, or seem overwhelming, but please clearly number the other questions.

If you do not have time to fill out the questionnaire, please send us a brief note or pamphlet describing your work.

If you are responding as an individual, rather than as a member of an organization, then either answer the questions about organizations as an individual, or write a short description of your work.

Please return your answers by January 24th if possible.

Name of organization:

Address:

Phone (and fax if applicable):

Contact person (include address and phone if different):

1. How does your organization's work relate to women's health?
2. What is the history of your organization? (include the date you started)
3. What are your current goals?
4. What services do you provide?
5. Do you work with a specific group of women (immigrant women, First Nations women, disabled women, women of colour, lesbians etc)?
6. How do you fund your work?
7. How many people work in your organization? (paid and unpaid)?
8. Do you have any specific projects right now? What are they called? What are their goals? How are they funded? What are their time frames?
9. What are the biggest barriers you face at this time? Are you in crisis?
10. What work have you done that you think has been particularly effective?

11. What resources (books, pamphlets, other organizations...) do you find most useful?
12. Have you produced any resources, or are you in the process of creating any resources? What are they?
13. What information/support/resources do you need to be able to do your work more effectively?
14. What do you think are the most pressing health concerns for women in your community? (first briefly describe your community)
15. How could a Canadian Women's Health Network be useful to you?
16. What do you think the primary goals of the Canadian Women's Health Network should be (support, sharing resources, resource bank, lobby, research, other)?
17. Are there other women, organizations, or projects that you think should be included in the resource bank?
18. Would you like to write an article about your organization, your health, your community's health, or another health topic for Healthsharing? (The western issue will come out in May 1992)
19. Is there anything else that you want to add?

Thank-you very much for taking the time to answer these questions.
Please mail your responses to:

Anne Fraser
Regional Animator, B.C. and Alberta
Canadian Women's Health Network Project
131 East 27th Avenue
Vancouver, British Columbia
V5V 2K5

604-879-1747

***Please pass these questions on to anyone else who you think should be included in the resource bank and network.

SEXUALITY INFORMATION AND
RESOURCES CLEARING HOUSE
(SIRCH)

PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION OF CANADA
430 • II Nicholas Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 7B7





CIRSIRCH

Centre d'information et de ressources sur la sexualité

Sexuality information and resources clearing house

HIV/AIDS EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES for WOMEN : A NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY of EDUCATORS & SERVICE PROVIDERS

This survey is designed to gather information about the educational resources (i.e., pamphlets, posters, videos, etc.) and services (i.e., counselling, AIDS awareness education, etc.) *specifically about women and HIV/AIDS*, that you use and offer in your work. Your input is critical for the collection of existing resources and the development of meaningful new resources for women.

1. Name of person completing survey _____
Job (or position) title: _____
Phone # _____ Fax # _____
Sex: ☐ female ☐ male

2. Name of Organization _____
3. Mailing Address: _____

4. Language(s) spoken at work: (check all that apply)
☐ English ☐ French ☐ Other(s) (please specify) _____

5. Whom do you provide services to?

AGE (of clientele)
(check as many as apply)

☐ 0 - 12
☐ 13 - 19
☐ 20 - 25
☐ 26 - 49
☐ 50 - 64
☐ 65 +

SEX (of clientele)
(check one)

☐ females only ☐ males only
☐ mostly females, some males
☐ mostly males, some females
☐ equal numbers of females, males
☐ other (please specify) _____

6. Do you need educational resources about women and HIV/AIDS: (Check one)

☐ primarily for your own education?
☐ for your clients?
☐ for BOTH yourself and your clients?
☐ other (please specify) _____

7. Is providing HIV/AIDS educational resources (or services) for women part of what you presently do?
☐ yes ☐ no

<If NO, it is not necessary that you fill out the rest of the survey. Thank you for your time. Please return in self-addressed envelope.>

8. Do you target the information you provide about women and HIV/AIDS to specific groups? ☐ yes ☐ no

Which group(s) do you target? (check all that apply)

☐ general public ☐ college/university students ☐ lesbians/bisexual women ☐ youth
☐ women only ☐ ethnocultural groups ☐ injection drug users ☐ health care workers
☐ other(s) _____

9. In what context do you provide information/education about women and HIV/AIDS?

Please indicate below whether you
have plans to do so in the future.

(Check as many as apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> one-to-one counselling	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> group counselling/support	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> telephone support/information	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> one-to-one teaching (health ed.)	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> group teaching (classes, workshops)	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> staff training	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> display information	
(ex. information tables at events)	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> distribution of materials	
(i.e. pamphlets, condoms etc)	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> theatre/drama	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> networking with other	
community organizations	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> doing outreach to women	
(who are NOT using your services)	yes - no
<input type="checkbox"/> other (please specify) _____	

10. Do you provide information about HIV/AIDS: (check as many as apply):

☐ as a separate topic?
☐ in the context of other sexually transmitted diseases?
☐ in the context of preventing pregnancy?
☐ in the context of planning a pregnancy?
☐ in the context of sexuality?
☐ other (please specify) _____

11. Has your organization developed any HIV/AIDS educational resources for women? ☐ yes ☐ no

If YES, please list the resources you have produced: (attach additional list if necessary)

12. What educational resources (i.e. pamphlets, posters, etc.), specifically about women and HIV/AIDS, do you find MOST USEFUL in your work? Please list up to 6 items. (Identify publisher or date, etc., so we will know what you are referring to.)

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____

13. Are the resources you identified in #12 better than average? ☐ yes ☐ no

Please elaborate...

14. Please describe in detail what you do NOT want to see reproduced in new resources. (Give examples of resources you do not want to see reproduced.)

15. What do you think about the MESSAGES of educational resources for women about HIV/AIDS (eg. "Tell him to wear a condom")? Please complete the following statements:

I find the messages to women are

I think the primary focus of educational resources for women should be

I would like more

I would like less

I would change

16. What FORMAT of educational resources do you find most useful for providing information/education to women about HIV/AIDS? (Rate items from 1 to 5, where 1 is most useful.)

<input type="checkbox"/> pamphlets	<input type="checkbox"/> videos	<input type="checkbox"/> posters	<input type="checkbox"/> books
<input type="checkbox"/> latex	<input type="checkbox"/> articles	<input type="checkbox"/> newsletters	<input type="checkbox"/> safer sex kits
<input type="checkbox"/> buttons	<input type="checkbox"/> overheads	<input type="checkbox"/> demonstration models for condoms	
<input type="checkbox"/> other(s) (please specify)			

17. Indicate whether you agree/disagree with the following statements:

a. Educational resources <u>specific to women and HIV/AIDS</u> need to be developed.	AGREE - DISAGREE
c. Educational resources <u>specific to women who are HIV positive</u> need to be developed.	AGREE - DISAGREE
d. Educational resources <u>specific to the birth planning field</u> need to be developed.	AGREE - DISAGREE
e. I do not know what educational materials/resources about women and HIV/AIDS are available.	AGREE - DISAGREE
OTHER comments	

18. Identify the criteria that would MOST influence your selection of a NEW HIV/AIDS educational resource for women?
(Check items which you consider MOST IMPORTANT.)

<input type="checkbox"/> availability	<input type="checkbox"/> cost	<input type="checkbox"/> integration of HIV and other STDs
<input type="checkbox"/> explicitness	<input type="checkbox"/> lesbian positive	<input type="checkbox"/> integration of HIV and birth control
<input type="checkbox"/> meaningful messages	<input type="checkbox"/> women-specific, women-sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/> literacy level
<input type="checkbox"/> culturally appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> available in other languages	<input type="checkbox"/> sex positive messages
<input type="checkbox"/> Canadian	<input type="checkbox"/> presentation, visual appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> targeted to certain groups
<input type="checkbox"/> other(s) (please specify) _____		

19. Do you have any suggestions about alternative or innovative ways of educating women about HIV/AIDS? (Please indicate if you are using these strategies/resources in your work.)

20. To whom (i.e. service providers and educators) would you suggest distributing NEW HIV/AIDS educational resources for women (eg., gynecologists, peer counsellors, etc.)?

BIRTH PLANNING/BIRTH CONTROL

21. What issues or topics do you think need to be addressed in new HIV/AIDS educational resources for women that have particular relevance to the field of birth planning/birth control (eg., testing, oral contraceptives, etc)?

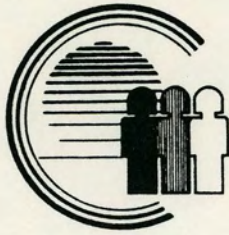
21. What are the major gaps that you have identified in terms of what you need to provide education and services to women about HIV/AIDS in the context of birth planning/birth control?

23. Additional comments

Thank-you so much for taking the time to complete the survey. Please (please!!!) try to drop this in the mail (or fax it: 613-238-1162) as soon as possible (either before your holidays or as soon as you return). Would you also please send samples (when you can--not necessarily at the same time that you send back the survey) of the educational resources you produce, as well as those which you listed in question #12. (Enclose invoices for resources for which there is a charge.) Thanks again and happy holidays!

If you have any questions, please call Brenda at 613-238-4474.





*Status of Women Council
of the N.W.T.*

P.O. Box 1320, Yellowknife, NWT X1A 2L9
403-920-6177

PLEASE BE ADVISED OF THE FOLLOWING CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Katherine Peterson, President
Northwest Territories Advisory
Council on the Status of Women
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
X1A 2L9

IS NOW:

Rita Arey
President
Status of Women Council of the NWT
Box 1320
Yellowknife, NWT
X1A 2L9

Thank you for changing your mailing list.

December 13, 1991

Dear friend(s),

Although we are confronting many issues which tax our strength and challenge our endurance, I am writing to you with a small piece of good news about the development of a new HIV/AIDS educational resource for women. First, let me introduce myself: my name is Brenda Macevicius, and I am a volunteer with the Women's Project of the AIDS Committee of Ottawa. I am also in the process of completing my research (for a Master's degree in Social Work) on the topic of HIV prevention for women. A few weeks ago, I was contracted to work with the Sexuality Information and Resources Clearing House (SIRCH), on a *national survey of the quality of HIV/AIDS educational resources for women* used by educators and service providers in the field of birth planning/birth control. The results of this survey will determine the nature of a new educational resource to be produced in 1992.

I hope that you will want to influence the development of this new resource. If you are working directly in the field of birth planning/ birth control or if you talk to women about the wide range of topics relevant to this field (i.e. STDs, sexuality, intimacy, relationships, etc.), then it is essential that we add your voice to the feedback we give to Health and Welfare in January 1992 in our survey analysis and recommendations. The producers of new resources need to benefit from your experience and knowledge.

Briefly, the purpose of the study is to find out:

- (a) what resources you use
- (b) what good resources exist
- (c) what makes some resources better/more useful than others
- (d) what type of new resources need to be developed

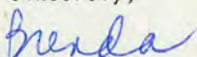
Furthermore, given the development of the Sexuality Information and Resource Clearinghouse, we ask you to send a copy of each of the educational resources, specific to women and HIV/AIDS, that your organisation has produced-- as well as those which you use in your work and would recommend for our collection.

I would greatly appreciate it, if you, or the appropriate person in your organization, would complete the survey and return it in the self-addressed envelope. I realize that you may not have much time to respond to a survey, but we really need your input. Funding is available for the development of a new resource IF we can make recommendations, based on the survey results, by the end of January. Therefore, please respond as early in the New Year as possible.

If you have any questions or comments, please telephone me (613) 238-4474, or fax: (613) 238-1162.

Thank you so much, I look forward to integrating your comments and suggestions into my final report to Health and Welfare.

Sincerely,



Brenda Macevicius

BM/ms

Enc.



THE SEXUALITY INFORMATION AND RESOURCES CLEARING HOUSE (SIRCH)

SIRCH

SIRCH is a new agency, initiated with the support of the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada and funding from Health and Welfare Canada. Currently being established, its databases will provide information and referrals on request across Canada. SIRCH will also publish and reprint high quality Canadian resources on sexuality and reproductive health. SIRCH is also building a national depository collection of all sexuality education resources (print, A/V, kits, cassettes, directories, handouts, pamphlets, brochures, posters, etc., etc.) produced in Canada. To ensure that materials produced by Canadian organisations active in this field, are included in the databases for referral and promotion, SIRCH is requesting one copy of each resource published or produced since 1985 be sent to the SIRCH depository collection.

Women and AIDS education in Canada

At the present time in Canada there is still no public sense of HIV prevention for women. The implications are far-reaching: women do not perceive themselves to be at risk; women are contracting the virus in increasing numbers; women's presentation of AIDS-related symptomatology goes misdiagnosed; women are dying faster of AIDS; and so on.

Are most women even aware of the threat that HIV poses to their own health? How do we, as women, protect ourselves (from getting the virus, or from getting sick if we already have the virus)?

Women's lives have been undervalued and ignored for far too long in the AIDS crisis. This survey seeks to acknowledge the inter-connectedness of HIV with many other aspects of women's lives. Its goal is the development of a new resource that is meaningful and relevant to women.

The Need for New Resource Development

One of the main mandates of SIRCH is to facilitate the production of high quality, appropriate and sensitive resources in Canada. Obviously, educational resources are not the only resources needed to address the impact of HIV/AIDS on women's lives. However, the funding provided to SIRCH for this survey enables us to compile information about HIV/AIDS educational resources for women, with the ultimate aim of developing a new high quality resource to meet the needs of educators and counsellors working in the birth planning/birth control field. Two promising features of this new resource are that it will make the connections between birth planning/birth control and safer sex and will be developed from a woman-centered perspective.

For further information about SIRCH, please contact:

Gillian Phillips, Director - SIRCH, 1 Nicholas St., Suite 430, Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 7B7 Tel: (613) 238-4474