

Evidence-based Practice Unit Announcement

The Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN), in partnership with the AIDS Bureau, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, is pleased to announce the establishment of an exciting new ***Evidence-based Practice Unit***. The purpose of the Unit is to provide more support for Ontario's community-based agencies in their efforts to evaluate and strengthen their programs and services. The new Unit will bring together two existing initiatives – OCHART* and OCASE** - under one area. It will also provide expertise in program evaluation and evidence-based practices. Unit staff will provide practical tools that agencies can use to evaluate their programs and will help agencies make more effective use of their OCHART and OCASE data. They will also help to identify best practices and programs to better address the needs of Ontarians living with HIV and those most at risk.

“We know our agencies are committed to providing high quality services and that they want to know ‘what works’,” says Frank McGee, Coordinator of the AIDS Bureau. “The Unit is part of our ongoing effort to ensure agencies have the technical support, data systems, tools, advice and information on best practices they need to provide effective prevention and support services.”

A competition was held to select a Director to lead the new Unit. The goal was to find a candidate with a unique combination of frontline experience, knowledge of the community-based sector in Ontario, and a commitment to evaluation. We are pleased to announce that Charles Shames is the successful applicant for the position of Director, Evidence-based Practice, at the OHTN.

Charles has a long history working and volunteering in the AIDS movement in Ontario. In 1987, he helped found the Peterborough AIDS Resource Network and was a volunteer there for a number of years. In 1999, he became their Education Coordinator where he was responsible for HIV prevention initiatives, including programs for gay and bisexual men, youth and people who use injection drugs. He also developed education programs for service providers who worked with those most at risk for HIV. He was a Program Consultant with the Public Health Agency of Canada's AIDS Community Action Program and the Hepatitis C Program. Most recently, he was Director of the Ontario HIV and Substance Use Training Program. He has been part of numerous committees and strategies addressing HIV prevention in Ontario and helped to promote the use of evidence-based programs and evaluation practices. Charles brings to his position extensive knowledge of the communities in Ontario and a strong passion for our work.

Charles and the Unit staff will be working closely with community-based AIDS organizations to develop this exciting new resource. If you would like more information about the ***Evidence-based Practice Unit***, please contact Charles Shames: cshames@ohntn.on.ca.

*OCHART – Ontario Community-based HIV and AIDS Reporting Tool

**OCASE – Ontario Community-based Agency Services Evaluation