

# ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

Remember

Honour

Celebrate

Cure

Serving Huron, Oxford, Perth, Elgin, Lambton and Middlesex Counties



Regional  
HIV/AIDS  
Connection

Community Inspired. Courage Driven.



# All About the PEOPLE We Serve

As we reflect back on 12/13 at Regional HIV/AIDS Connection (RHAC) the two prominent themes that come to mind are GIPA (Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV/AIDS) and our dynamic relationship with the John Gordon Home (JGH). These themes are intrinsically linked because they serve to illuminate the purpose of our existence - the people we are entrusted to serve. As RHAC continues to be mindful of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PHA) engagement at all levels of the organization, we continue to look at creative ways to “action” the spirit and intent of The Ontario Accord. This past year included a PHA led planning committee for our Annual GIPA Commitment Ceremony. This amazing committee planned and mounted a powerful and deeply meaningful GIPA commitment event through their guiding voices.

Throughout our shared and rich histories JGH and RHAC have endured highs and lows both together and separately. We currently share a solid and trusting relationship with JGH which creates opportunities to better serve our shared clients. This past year we jointly announced that we will initiate a program integration dialogue to explore the concept of becoming one organization. There are shifts and changes happening across political and

funding landscapes. It is our shared objective to ensure we do all we can to strengthen our capacity to serve our respective missions. As with GIPA, the program integration dialogue is also about the people we serve. A decision to move forward will be informed by clear evidence that both organizations will be able to respond to the needs of our most vulnerable community members. There continues to be myriad challenges living with HIV/AIDS and HCV and RHAC continues to respond to these challenges by ensuring dignity and respect for each individual that finds the courage to seek out our services. Potential for change can create fear and uncertainty for the future. However, throughout any process of change RHAC will be constant in its commitment to providing quality harm reduction, education, outreach and support services across its 6 county catchment area.

Thanks for your  
continued support,



Brian Lester  
*Executive Director*



Tamara Landry  
*Board President*





# Our Mission

We are a community-inspired organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for individuals and diverse communities living with, at-risk for or affected by the challenges associated with HIV/AIDS.



# By the Numbers

**37,000 +**  
condoms handed out

**\$18,944**  
in Financial Assistance  
provided

**175**  
presentations 3,600 +  
people reached

**25,000 +**  
brochures distributed  
throughout the  
community

**1.7 Million**  
syringes distributed  
68% returned

**76**  
HIV/HCV Support Group  
sessions

**487**  
Case Management/  
Counselling Sessions

**6,284 hours**  
of volunteer time,  
representing an  
estimated value of  
\$106,900 were donated

**20,807**  
contacts with  
clients  
served through  
Counterpoint





# Client Services

Client Services launched an integrated approach to service delivery in 2012 - 2013. This new approach has strengthened and increased our capacity to respond to the needs of individuals we serve. The department experienced greater demand for all programs with a significant increase in requests for practical supports including transportation, advocacy, housing supports, liaison with social assistance and access to Country Cupboard food bank.

Through our **Wellness Fund**, which comes from fund raised dollars, we were able to provide financial support to PHAs. This fund has assisted with child care, transportation, (both locally and regionally), Country Cupboard food bank as well as medical and dental emergencies not covered by any other benefit or existing resources in the community

Our partnership with **London Intercommunity Health Centre (LIHC)** is helping to enhance service options for our clients. We were able to introduce the services of a wound care Nurse Practitioner to help address health related issues that develop through frequent injection drug use. This critical service improves health outcomes for many clients.

PHA meetings with the Executive Director at RHAC continue, and this year we introduced a similar feedback mechanism



with LIHC's Executive Director for our **Hepatitis C Care Team** clients. These meetings create an excellent opportunity for clients to meet with RHAC and now LIHC leadership, to provide feedback and ask questions. This approach ensures programs and services are informed by the people we serve.

RHAC continues to explore ways to increase engagement at a variety of levels within the organization. This year, there were 23 Peers involved in a variety of outreach activities including Syringe recovery, IDU Outreach, Hep C Educator, Facilitator, and Counterpoint.

To help address the isolation of living with HIV/HCV we offered a range of group sessions including **The Peer Social**, **Women's Group**, **PHA Café** and **Winners Circle**.





# Education

The Education Department deeply values collaboration and we are therefore committed to partnering with community organizations, volunteers and peers to move innovative initiatives forward. Collaborative approaches allow us to leverage our strengths to offer engaging and relevant educational opportunities to the diverse communities we serve.

A notable collaboration from 2012-13 was the **TLC (Toys, Lube & Condoms) Sex Show**, which saw members of RHAC's Education Department, London Inter Community Health Centre's Options Clinic, the Middlesex London Health Unit, Dr. Carlen Costa, and Western University pool their creativity, knowledge, skills and enthusiasm...and bring sexual health 'edutainment' to the masses as a result! TLC Sex Shows held at a number of residences at Western University engaged hundreds of students to learn about sexual health in a safe, fun and interactive atmosphere.

The success of the TLC Sex Show demonstrates the power of collaboration to effect positive change, and we look forward to seeing what opportunities and initiatives collaboration makes possible in the year ahead!



# Community Relations

Our signature fundraiser, **A Taste for Life**, raised over \$58,000 to support essential services. It was the inaugural year for this event in Stratford with 6 participating restaurants, raising \$5,000 for services in Perth County.

**Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry** raised another \$21,871.55 from the medical student's annual production of Tachycardia. This third party event has now raised over \$135,000 in six years, for our client services programs!

In February of 2013, **Gen Pop**, a queer collective, celebrated one full year of hosting events that fundraise for Open Closet.

Volunteers continue to be vital to the service delivery and spirit of all we do here at RHAC. Our Annual GIPA/ MIPA ceremony where we rededicate our agency support to the Ontario Accord was a great success, with the greatest ever PHA volunteer support to the organizing committee.

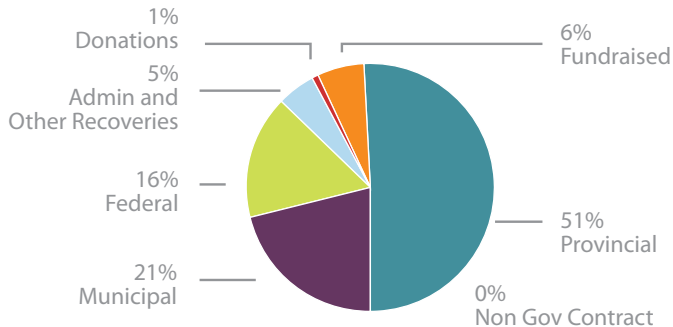
RHAC along with members of the **Southwest Networking Committee** (made up of reps. from each of our 6 surrounding counties) created a postcard/poster project that helps promote where free cross-county testing clinics will be held. Over 1,400 pieces were distributed.



# Financials

The year ending March 31, 2013 was a year in which RHAC continued to increase funding across several sources. Financial reporting in this publication includes the funds administered for both the **Ontario Organizational Development Program** and **London CARES Coordination** funding.

RHAC has made a commitment to ensure our services remain sustainable and so continue to diversify our funding sources through project specific grant seeking and successful fundraising events. The Community Relations team continues to nurture relationships with individual and corporate

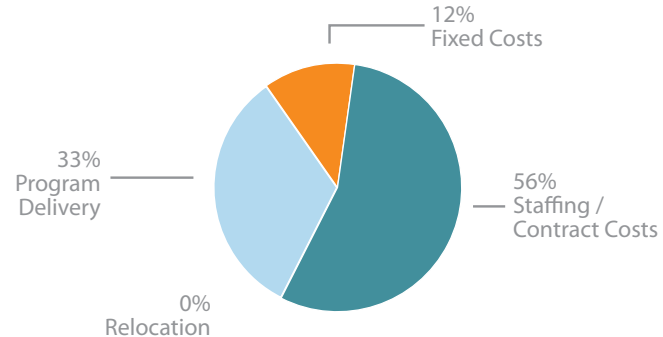


REVENUE  
TOTAL \$2,206,630

supporters of the agency, easily demonstrating the needs being experienced by our clients and how we attempt to meet those needs. As part of our commitment to sustainability, we continue to add to our contingency fund ending this year with a balance of \$66,000 after four years.

We have ended this year with a modest surplus demonstrating responsible financial practices by all members of RHAC's team.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to our supporters. Your contributions to RHAC, financial or otherwise, allow us to continue to be strong leaders in delivering services within our community and ensuring our mission, values and vision remain in the public eye.



EXPENSES  
TOTAL \$2,178,414

# RHAC Staff

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Brian Lester**

## DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

**Elizabeth Lam**

## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

**Mwaimba Chileshe**

## DIRECTOR OF CLIENT SERVICES

**Shannon Dougherty**

## CLIENT SERVICES MANAGER

**Sonja Burke**

## CASE MANAGER

**Miriam Rivera**

## CASE MANAGER

**Richard MacDonagh**

## PEER SUPPORT WORKER

**Rob Newman**

## HEPATITIS C OUTREACH WORKER

**Jesse Huntus**

## HEPATITIS C PEER SUPPORT WORKER

**Keri Wheatley**

## IDU OUTREACH WORKER

**Nick Scrivo**

## IDU PEER ENGAGEMENT WORKER

**Marsha Milliken**

## NEEDLE & SYRINGE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

**Karen Burton**

## DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

**Sue Brooks**

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

**Martin McIntosh**

## FUND DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

**Natalie Hebert**

## REGIONAL COORDINATOR OF HIV/AIDS SERVICES

**Carlen Costa**

## DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

**Meredith Fraser**

## GAY MEN'S HIV PREVENTION WORKER

**Kevin Murphy**

## GBMSMT2S & HIV COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

**Wes Heney**

## MULTICULTURAL HIV PREVENTION COORDINATOR

**Mbaka Wadham**

## WOMEN'S HIV/AIDS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

**Bonnie Baynham**

## HEPATITIS C EDUCATOR

**Zach Templeman**

# Board of Directors

## PRESIDENT

**Tamara Landry**

## VICE PRESIDENT

**Mana Khami**

## SECRETARY

**Lynn Humfress-Trute**

**Matthew Reid**

**Stephen Barr**

**Eugene Dufour**

**Nancy Griffiths**

**Adam Guzman**

**Tendayi Gwaradzimba**

**Laurie Patterson**

**Bryna Warshawsky**





Our Board of Directors and staff sign the Ontario Accord yearly and recommit to the greater involvement and meaningful engagement of people living with HIV/AIDS (GIPA/MIPA) as the centre of our work and as the driving force behind the delivery of our mission.



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