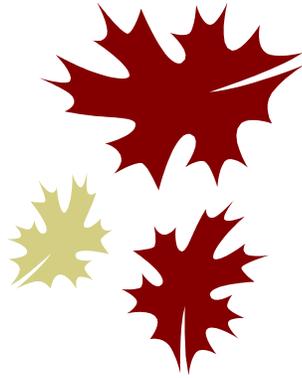


# EXTREME REALITY

## NORTHERN AIDS CONNECTION SOCIETY

Fall 2012



### Northern Region Testing Project

NACS in collaboration with a number of local community partners is engaging various communities across Northern NS in finding innovative ways to establish safe, accessible and sustainable testing options for HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and blood-borne pathogens (BBPs) within the broader context of unsafe sexual health and needle sharing behaviours. Listening to the communities' ideas will be key; exploring such possibilities as linkages between HIV testing and STI and or BBPs (Hep C and B) testing, sexual health check-ups greater public and physician awareness.

NACS and its partners are conducting a number of Dialogue Interviews to help capture key stakeholders and community partners ideas, to date a number of these interviews have been conducted. We are stepping up efforts to increase community buy in and support, creating local level core teams and increasing public awareness.

Do you feel you might want to be a part of this project to better understand and act on the testing and other issues related to sexual health or to find out more about the Testing initiative for Northern? Please contact our office.

### What's Inside?

#### Hep C Aware Project

Hep C Treatment at 48 Weeks 2

Hep C Aware Project Update 2

GLBTQI Activities in Northern 3

NEW! Message Board on our Web-Site 3

Health Fair at CEC4

Condom Co-op 4

Dates to Remember 4

Scotiabank AIDS Walk 5

Girls Matter Too Project 5

Gay Men's Health! 6

Services 6



### CHECK IT OUT!

Northern AIDS Connection Society's new look on our new Web site

Let us know what you think!

[nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca)

[www.northernaidsconnectionsociety.ca](http://www.northernaidsconnectionsociety.ca)

**EXTREME REALITY  
NORTHERN AIDS CONNECTION SOCIETY**

**Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)**

Hepatitis C is a virus that causes liver disease. Your liver is your body's filtering system. If your liver is not healthy you can get sick. **There is no vaccine to stop Hep C but there is treatment.** It can cause inflammation and scarring to the liver. It is very important to get tested. For more information on Hep C please contact our Hep C Coordinator, Janet at 895-0931 or via email [nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca).

**Treatment at 48 Weeks, by Bette**

In the first weeks of treatment, I thought I had adjusted very well even though my energy was low and I rested comfortably. Depending on how far the Hep C virus has advanced, the dose of medication for treatment can vary and everyone is affected differently. For me, cirrhosis is present and the doctor prescribed a maximum dose throughout treatment. I was informed from the beginning about the effects of treatment and from what I am experiencing, affects could be a lot worse. I thought I did well with what little ambition I did have. In the 1st 8 weeks a blood test was done to clarify progress of treatment. The result proved it is working, but not at the level I needed therefore, treatment as extended to 72 weeks. There were many hot summer days when I stayed in bed with a mound of blankets puffed up like a tent covering me to keep warm. The painful cold in my head, hands, knees and feet was more than I could endure at times and crying seemed to be the only alternative.

In Sept at week 34 of treatment, my aunt from Ontario visited for two weeks. I learned the hard way that company was not an option for me while I was still on treatment. My husband had 2 weeks of vacation then but his help wasn't enough. My energy dropped considerably that month and I lost 5 more pounds. I had to depend on my husband to do my household chores that I had been able to do by myself such as laundry and getting a meal started. I was 1/2 way to the end of treatment.

**More from Bette in the winter issue of Extreme Reality.**

**Hepatitis C Aware Project**

NACS currently has 2 dates to deliver workshops in Cumberland and Pictou Counties called "Get Hip not Hep" - a presentation that focuses on Hepatitis C prevention among youth, primarily teens. This presentation in particular looks at the links between unsafe tattooing and piercing and Hep C. The presentation looks at safe choices and things to look for after deciding to get a tattoo or piercing.

As a result of the Hep C project there has been a sharp increase in the numbers of needle exchange clients coming to our office. This is a direct result of outreach work that has been conducted through NACS's partnership with Mainline Needle Exchange. There is a different level of comfort in coming to the NACS office once contact is made with the Injection Drug Use Community and seeing familiar faces when people come to the door to meet clients needs. NACS appreciates the strong and valued relationship with Mainline.

2

**AWARE**

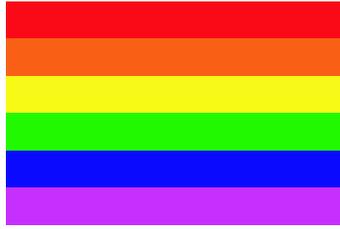
**Hep C^Project**



Just what is Hep C? What can treatment be like? An article from one Individual.



**Did you know?? NACS in 2011 distributed over 30,000 pieces of Literature including HIV/AIDS, Hep C, STIs. NACS also partners with Mainline to exchange dirty needles at our office location.**



## GLBTQ Groups and NACS Activities

NACS has developed a Gay Men’s Health Brochure available through contacting the office.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

NACS has new website tools. From our web-site you can access our Facebook site or our NEW Message Board. It’s easy just sign up on the Message Board and you can post questions or get in on the conversations or post a comment.

We will be hosting a Gay Men’s Health Evening in November of 2012—we need to hear from YOU to make it happen. If you are living in Pictou and area please contact our office to register. A great opportunity to gather for food, fun, and learning about what matters—your health.

NACS supports the youth community through work and support of GSA’s in schools and GLBTQ youth participating in our Colchester Youth PhotoVoice. Often youth in the group report feeling alone we offer an opportunity to meet others in a safe non-judgemental atmosphere. There is a strong learning component each week, pizza and an opportunity to get creative taking pictures throughout of subjects representative of the youths’ lives.

### **New Pride Group!**

**North Nova Pride is the LGBT community of Northern Nova Scotia.** For those of you who haven’t heard Rainbow Proud is now North Nova Pride. We are a random group of individuals who meet, and attempt to create various, not to mention fun, activities within the community. We have been around and have gone through many changes over the past number of years but we are still here and making connections.

You can find us at [northernmaidsconnectionsociety.ca](http://northernmaidsconnectionsociety.ca)

As individuals and as a group we sometimes gather to go to fun parties like Octoberfest in Tatamagouche; pot-lucks in New Glasgow; and Womyn’s Dances in Tatamagouche and Halifax. As a group we meet for coffee every Wednesday, 6–7 p. m. at the CoCo Community Café, 535 Prince Street, Truro, where we often end up playing Cribbage and just hanging out. We also come together for brunch every other Sunday at 11:30 a.m. at a different affordable- location (see our facebook page for updates of time and place).

Wayne Collette and I had the privilege of participating in the Aids Walk this year, where Wayne surpassed his personal goal of pledges (yeah Wayne). We got wet feet from the aftermath of this year’s flood, but were well compensated with hotdogs, pop and cake. You can check out the pictures on North Nova Pride’s face/book page.

There will be a big Halloween Dance on the 27<sup>th</sup> at Lion’s Hall, 1100 Prince Street, Truro from 9 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. There will be great door prizes by local businesses and local artists. The cost is \$10.00 per person or \$8.00 if you arrive in costume.

If you wish to contact us, we are at [northnovapride@hotmail.com](mailto:northnovapride@hotmail.com) Or at [www.northnovapride.wix.com](http://www.northnovapride.wix.com)



In struggle and pride, *darl wood*

# EXTREME REALITY

## NORTHERN AIDS CONNECTION SOCIETY

### Health Fair at CEC

NACS along with community partners are organizing a Healthy Decision Making Fair for the Cobequid Education Centre.

The Health Fair will feature many different partners with a health and wellness message from gyms and self-defence to run clubs, dating safety, sexual health, addictions self-esteem, health food and oh yes! Free Condoms.

The Truro and Area Community Health Board are supporting this initiative.

The health fair will be taking place at CEC on November 23, 2012 and reaches many vulnerable populations of students.

For more details or to book a booth space contact the NACS office, spaces are going fast.

Thank you to CEC staff and the Truro and Area Health Board for helping to make this Healthy Decision Making Fair possible.

**CAUTION-Do NOT enter without one!**



### Condom Co-op

Condoms, when used consistently and correctly, are the **only** form of protection that can help stop the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as HIV/AIDS.

Condoms are available for **FREE** from different centres in Truro and Northern NS ~ the NACS office (33 Pleasant Street Truro), Teen Health Centres, Women's Resource Centres, Centres for Sexual Health and the John Howard Restorative Justice for Youth (Truro). There are no age limits to buying condoms. Buying a condom no matter how old you are shows that you are taking responsibility for your actions.

### Condom Co-op

NACS's condom co-op offers condoms at cost to local groups, community partners and businesses \$30.00 per bag of 144 condoms.

It's important to always check the expiry date on your condoms and ensure they haven't been tampered with. The condom package should feel spongy when you squeeze it.

### World AIDS Day December 1, 2012

### AIDS Awareness Week: November 26th to 30th

- NS Community College Display of a Section of the AIDS Memorial Quilt Nov 28th
- Also look at our web-site for further details about displays and activities to commemorate AIDS Awareness Week around the community



**Dates to Remember**



# EXTREME REALITY

## NORTHERN AIDS CONNECTION SOCIETY

### Our Contact Information

Tel: 895-0931  
Toll Free 1-866-940-AIDS (2437)  
E: [nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca)  
Web: [northernaidconnectionsociety.ca](http://northernaidconnectionsociety.ca)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nacsns](http://www.facebook.com/nacsns)

Fall 2012

Like us on Facebook!

[www.facebook.com/NACSNS](http://www.facebook.com/NACSNS)

The **mission** of the Northern AIDS Connection Society (NACS) is to promote the health and well being of persons living with and those affected by HIV/AIDS. NACS also offers support, services, referrals and education to individuals, families, loved ones, groups and communities throughout Northern Region (Colchester East-Hants, Pictou and Cumberland Counties). All services are provided in a safe and confidential environment—free of judgment.



The 2012 Scotiabank AIDS Walk for Life saw an increase in turnout in Truro both with individual walkers and new teams. We were the first Walk in Canada to have a PONY in the lead! Other areas in Northern NS were down from previous years in attendance and monies raised. We have to ask ourselves as a community “What can we do differently” to grow our walks?” We’d love to hear any and all comments and suggestions. For example, how can we increase teams. We currently offer 50% back to teams who have raised \$100 or more for HIV/AIDS related work. Remember it’s never too late to start on next year’s team! We would like to say thank you to all walkers this year and a **BIG Thank You** to our Sponsors and Supporters: Greg Langille, Fraser’s Bakery and

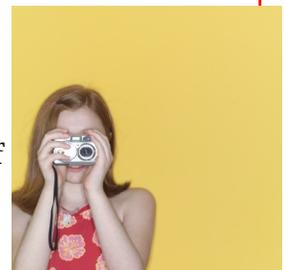


### Youth PhotoVoice—Girls Matter Too Project

NACS is taking it’s highly successful PhotoVoice Project to Cumberland and Pictou Counties. We are thrilled to be working with Pictou Landing First Nations Community and Springhill Junior and Senior High School.

The project utilizes a creative photography component as well as learning modules about self-esteem, addictions, HIV, Hepatitis C, Internet Safety and many more topics through a six week program.

Many thanks to the Canadian AIDS Foundation for their support of this valuable project, making program delivery possible through a grant to NACS.



### Did you know???

NACS delivered over 100 presentations to youth last year. We’re popular why? We deliver safer sex facts straight up to youth! Talk the talk...Youth remember our presentations and talk about them months and years later!

# EXTREME REALITY

## NORTHERN AIDS CONNECTION SOCIETY

Fall 2012

### Our Contact Information

Tel: 895-0931

Toll Free 1-866-940-AIDS (2437)

E: [nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca)

Web: [northernaidsconnectionssociety.ca](http://northernaidsconnectionssociety.ca)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/nacsns](http://www.facebook.com/nacsns)

### Gay Men's Health

The NACS addresses Gay Men's Health in many ways. Look for our new Gay Men's Health Brochure at your Public Library or on [www.northernaidsconnectionssociety.ca](http://www.northernaidsconnectionssociety.ca).

### R U Interested??

Gay Men/MSM would you like to participate in a gay men's health seminar? If so give us a call at 902-895-0931 or email [nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca). Coming soon to Pictou County!!

### Amherst

#### Sexual Health Centre Cumberland County

Information, Education Workshops, Free condoms

667-7500

[shccc@ns.aliantzinc.ca](mailto:shccc@ns.aliantzinc.ca)

11 Elmwood Drive (side entrance)

### Pictou

#### Pictou County Centre for Sexual Health

Services for both women and men

695-3366

[Pcsexualhealth@hotmail.com](mailto:Pcsexualhealth@hotmail.com)

[www.pictoucountysexualhealth.com](http://www.pictoucountysexualhealth.com)

### Pictou County Women's Centre

755-4647

[pcwc@womencentre.ca](mailto:pcwc@womencentre.ca)

### Truro

#### Central Nova Women's Resource Centre

676 Prince St. Truro

895-4295

[cnwrc@eastlink.ca](mailto:cnwrc@eastlink.ca)

[Cnwrc.weebly.com](http://Cnwrc.weebly.com)

### Colchester Sexual Assault Centre

Provides Support & Information to Anyone Affected by Sexual Assault

897-4366

80 Glenwood Drive, Truro

[trurosexualassault@hotmail.com](mailto:trurosexualassault@hotmail.com)

### RESPECT

Students Making Healthy Decisions

NS Agricultural College

893-6300

[respect@nsac.ca](mailto:respect@nsac.ca)



...Just Remember Cover Your Cock!



Services

