

# EXtreme REALITY

## Northern Connection Society

### What's New ?

#### Wednesday Lunch N' Grab

Open to persons who  
access the NACS  
needle exchange.

Return used needles  
on Wednesday and  
have lunch on us !!!

Forum on the NACS  
website—get  
connected and share  
your views.

Share your story in  
the newsletter—and  
our new You Tube  
series—confidential  
and anonymous.

Do you have too  
many conference  
bags ???

NACS has started a  
recycling program  
where old conference  
bags are stuffed with  
educational material  
and donated to the  
local Food Bank.

These bags not only  
act as a stronger bag  
for carrying food,  
but also provides an  
opportunity to share  
knowledge and  
information and is  
good for the  
environment.

Please donate your  
used cloth confer-  
ence bags to NACS.



Winter 2015



Northern AIDS Connection Society is now on Twitter. Check us out at  
[NACS@NorthernAIDS](mailto:NACS@NorthernAIDS)



### Community Awareness Panel—"Connecting the Dots"

The Northern AIDS Connection Society will be hosting an awareness panel on February 12, 2015 at the Nova Scotia Community College Truro Campus. The goal of this panel discussion is to increase awareness of the social factors that impact priority populations with respect to Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections (STBBI's) as well as to address risk and access to services among the general public and key healthcare professionals.

The panelists include: Trina Guthro—Opiate Treatment Clinic; Lennie Walser—Pharmacist/Owner of The Medicine Shoppe; Al McNutt—Northern AIDS Connection Society; Constable Jim Fleury—Truro Police; Janet MacPhee—Hep C Aware Project/Needle Exchange and Melanie Davidson—Mental Health & Addiction Services. The key objective is to increase the level of awareness and knowledge to targeted students participating in the NSCC courses such as Corrections, Medical Office Assistant, Continuing Care Assistant and Nursing. A key outcome will be to increase the level of knowledge and awareness and to enhance a greater understanding of services and resources available within the community of Truro.

### 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)

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### Lighthouse— Youth Photo- Voice Project

NACS is just wrapping up a program with young girls after receiving funding through the Lighthouse Grants from the Nova Scotia Department of Justice.

NACS has already started the process of securing funds for another project.

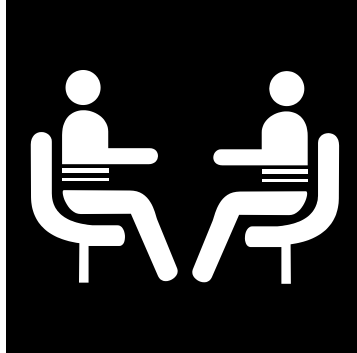
The program was a huge success.

### Hep C Aware Project

Are you HEP C Positive? Would you be interested in being a part of a teleconference to share your story and or experiences living with Hepatitis C with others that are newly diagnosed or those that may be accessing treatment and looking to talk to others who have already gone through the treatment and may be able to shed some light on question they may have. We are looking to start a starting a sharing session ... a way to share what worked for you and what didn't. A peer to peer sharing session. Call the office at 902-895-0931 and find out more information or to register to become part of this ANNONOYMOUS sharing session.

The Hep C Aware Project is looking for volunteers to tell their story about what it is like living with Hep C on YouTube. We value your input and we respect your anonymity and privacy, so we have arranged not to have your picture or name on YouTube.

Your story will be highlighted only and will serve as an educational and awareness piece. If interested please contact Janet at 902-895-0931. If you are interested in receiving information on NACS Hep C Aware Project or tattooing and piercing please contact Janet at [nacsaccountant@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacsaccountant@eastlink.ca).



### FACE 2 FACE

**(Face to Face is a new article where we will be featuring interviews with people who have accessed NACS Services or Programs & want to share their stories. Contact us to be heard.)**

Q) "How long have you been visiting the NACS office for services or programs?"

A) "I've been coming to the Northern AIDS Connection Society for over five years now...they assisted me in getting a job after I completed a student placement at NACS."

Q) "How did you feel coming into NACS?"

A) "At first I thought that NACS was a gay organization, but now I know the organization does so much more especially around issues of sexual health for all."

Q) "What service were you obtaining?"

A) "I first accessed NACS when I was doing a project for school and visited their resource Library, now I volunteer."

Q) "How did you find out about NACS programs and services?"

A) "Friends who were accessing the needle exchange."

Q) "What are you taking away from your visit to NACS?"

A) "The office is such a cool place...no bullshit, stigma and discrimination."



An unprecedented study of sex and seniors finds that many older people are sexually active. The article states that seniors are "surprisingly frisky".

<http://www.nbcnews.com/id/20395061/ns/health-sexual/t/sexed-up-seniors-do-it-more-you-d-think/#V1Cgt9LF-So>

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## Northern AIDS Connection Society



Pride Health in Halifax has a great model of practice which the Northern AIDS Connection Society would like to adopt for northern Nova Scotia.

NACS is launching a YouTube series of interviews with Poz Gay Men in northern to share their stories pertaining to stigma and discrimination. If you are living with HIV, gay and reside in northern Nova Scotia (Colchester-East Hants, Cumberland and Pictou Counties) and would like to share your story, please contact our office by calling 902-895-0931 or [nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca)



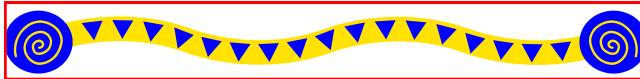
### Pride in Truro/Colchester County

Anyone interested in getting together to have a discussion on what could be happening in the Truro area, please contact Al McNutt at 902-895-0931 or by email at [nacssuper@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacssuper@eastlink.ca)

The Truro area has had a history of local dances, potlucks, coffee times, workshops and more... Let's start talking...we can be proud of who we are.

**Proud and Out !!!**

Gay men from Pictou-County.....anyone interest in attending "Ass Class", call 902-895-0931 for details and possible location and time.



**NACS in partnership with Dr. Jacqueline Gahagan from Dalhousie University offered a consultation with members of the LGBTQ community in Truro to look at issues of accessing health care. We hope to continue with this work in 2015. Stay turned and ready !!**

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The Northern AIDS Connection Society continues to provide knowledge exchange and information sharing sessions to local schools, colleges and community agencies within the northern area of Nova Scotia. If you are interested in a community awareness presentation please contact Janet at 902-895-0931.

### Lunch and Grab !!!!

Return your used needles on Wednesday and have lunch on us.

This is an opportunity to return your used needles, exchange them for new ones and share your story while having lunch.

If you are interested in this program or have a friend or family member who might benefit from it ... give us a call at 902-895-0931.

From April 2013 to March 2014 NACS distributed 3412 new needles.



Ask for Janet or Al

### Did you know?

NACS in partnership with Mainline Needle Exchange offers clean needles for those engaged in Injection Drug Use. If you need us call 895-0931 or stop by 33 Pleasant St. Truro.

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## Northern AIDS Connection Society

**Did You Know?  
NACS distributed 1000 condoms, 1000 pieces of drug using equipment and 9139 pieces of educational material from April 2014 to September 2014**

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

National Condom Day -  
February 14th

Sexual Health Awareness  
Week—February 14 ~ 21

International Women's  
Day—March 8th

World Health Day—  
April 7th

World Hepatitis Month—  
May

International Day  
Against Homophobia—  
May 17th

World Hepatitis Day—  
July 28th

International Youth  
Day—August 12

AIDS Awareness Week—  
last week in November

World AIDS Day -  
December 1st

Different Options for Testing—The Forms of testing vary in how the test is tracked and recorded.

**ANONYMOUS TESTING**—The name or identity of the person being tested is not required, nor is any identification or proof of medical coverage. The test is ordered using a code known only to the person being tested. If the test comes back positive epidemiological data (including age, sex and risk factor for HIV infection) may be collected and reported, depending on the province where the test was carried out.

**NOMINAL TEST**—The service provider ordering the test using the person's full name. If the test is positive, the laboratory is required to report the result to the local medical officer of health, for data collection and partner notification. Nominal testing which is provided by family doctors, clinics and other health facilities, is available throughout the country.

**NON-NOMINAL-TESTING**—This test is similar to the nominal test, except the test is ordered using a code or the person's initials, so only the person being tested

and the health-care provider or tester know the result. If the test is positive, it is recorded in the person's medical files and reported to the local medical officer of health for data collection and partner notification. This test is available throughout the country.

**RAPID HIV TESTING**—This test uses a drop of blood to detect the presence of HIV antibodies within approximately 60-120 seconds. The rapid test is reported to reduce the stress associated with the period spent waiting for results, it can be carried out in a broad range of locations and contexts and allows for continuity in the pre and post test counselling experience

**THERE ARE CONCERNS HOWEVER**—That voluntary, informed consent and counselling could be diminished in certain situations or settings. Rapid testing is unavailable in NS and most of Canada, with the exception of a few specialized clinics and pilot projects.

### **Why do I need to use a condom?**

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

Condoms are available for FREE from different centres ~ 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.

### **??Condoms, Lube and Flavour??**

Condoms are typically made of latex. Latex condoms can only be used with water based lubricants, NOT oil based lubricants such as Vaseline as it breaks down the latex. Flavoured condoms should be used for oral sex only as the sugars they contain may cause yeast infections.

### **Condom Co-op**

NACS's condom co-op offers condoms at cost to local groups, community partners and businesses. **Be a part of the solution and not the problem...offer free condoms !!!**

When condoms break, it is often due to not using them properly.

This website includes a video showing proper use:

<http://www.sexualityandu.ca/stis-stds/how-do-i-protect-myself-from-stis-stds/male-condom>

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## Northern AIDS Connection Society



Like us on Facebook!

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

Volunteers are welcome !!!

Volunteering provides great experience, the chance to meet new people, utilize your skills and give back to the community.

Remember... volunteers are the core of any organization !!



**NACS**  
**902-895-0931**  
**Toll Free -**  
**1-866-940-AIDS**  
**(2437)**  
**[nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca)**

**The mission of the Northern AIDS Connection Society (NACS) is to promote the health and well being of persons living with and those at risk for HIV/AIDS, STIs, HCV and other Blood Borne pathogens. NACS also offers support, services, referrals and education to individuals, families, loved ones, groups and communities throughout the northern region (Colchester ~ East-Hants, Pictou and Cumberland Counties). All services are provided in a safe and confidential environment—free of judgment.**

**The planning committee of which NACS staff are members is getting geared up for the 2015 Knowledge Exchange and Health Promotion Forum. If you work in the field of sexual health, blood borne infections, youth, LGBT...don't hesitate to contact our office to be added to the list to receive information on this terrific opportunity for learning.**



**Call Janet or Al at 902-895-0931 or by email at [nacs@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacs@eastlink.ca)**



### Youth Health Fair

Northern AIDS Connection will be collaborating with the Truro Boys and Girls Club to offer a youth health fair at Truro Junior High School in March 10, 2015. There will be over 30 exhibitors invited to participate in the fair that promote overall wellness within the Truro area. The mandate at Northern AIDS Connection is first and foremost to be supportive of healthy choices for individuals living, working and raising their families within Northern Nova Scotia (Colchester—East Hants, Cumberland and Pictou Counties).

The Truro Boys & Girls Club has a similar vision as they recognize that every young person has the ability and potential to fulfill their wants and dreams and it is their objective to help the youth see this potential in themselves. The combined focus and desired outcome of this event will be about empowering youth within our community to learn about their own bodies and how to keep themselves well, and to be aware of healthy decision making and healthy choices.

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### BENEFITS OF IMPROVING SELF ESTEEM...

Persisting in face of difficulties and challenges

Improved decision making

Greater independence

Greater self respect

Increased creativity and improved ability

Treat people how you want to be treated...with respect

Improved personal happiness

Confidently expressing your values

Identifying attainable goals

Greater honesty

Willingness in admitting mistakes



### Girls Action Foundation:

The Northern AIDS Connection Society has been awarded funding to create and host a one day event to promote self esteem and self confidence amongst a group of 15 female students involved in varsity sports at a local high school in Truro, Nova Scotia. The funding was made possible through the Girls Action Foundation which is a national charitable organization.

The participants will create a mural for the female locker room that will have an uplifting and inspirational quotes so that each day the girls walk in this room they can be reminded and inspired to be all they can be. The primary aim is to not only affect change in the lives of young women, but the message can affect change with every individual who walks into this particular locker room for years to come.

The Northern AIDS Connection Society will work with the Clay Café in Truro, where the girls will create the mural. It is the hope of the NACS to not only involve the girls in this meaningful project, but will address some underlying issues that impact their lives, such as body image, self esteem, healthy decision making, healthy eating and much more.

This event will be held on February 14, 2015.

### STAFF TRAINING AT THE CENTRAL NOVA WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE:

The Northern AIDS Connection Society feels there is a need to discuss/teach core competencies for the prevention of Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infection including HIV (STBBI's). There is a huge need to address knowledge exchange, skills development, attitudes and behaviors that front-line service providers need in order to enhance services and improve health outcomes for those most at risk.

This training will be offered to staff at the Central Nova Women's Resource Centre, Third Place Transition House and the Colchester Sexual Health Centre. The core competency training will

include discussions of risk factors, as well as modes of transmission and treatment options.

This training will be offered at the Women's Centre March 2015.

For information and additional details, please call Chantale Hache at 902-895-0931 or by email at [nacspc@eastlink.ca](mailto:nacspc@eastlink.ca).



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**Did you know you  
can protect yourself  
and others by using  
“Sharps  
Containers”?**

**For quick, confidential and up to date information  
on Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infections  
(STBBIs) ie Hep C or HIV, call or drop by.....**

**Contact Janet**

33 Pleasant Street, Truro, Nova Scotia B2N 3R5

Phone: (902) 895-0931

1- 866-940-AIDS (2437)

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

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

<http://facebook.com/nacsns>



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## Northern AIDS Connection Society

**Our Contact Information**  
 Tel: 902 895-0931  
 Toll Free 1-866-940-AIDS (2437)  
 E: nacs@eastlink.ca  
 Web: northernaidconnectionssociety.ca  
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/nacsns  
 Twitter: NACS@NorthernAIDS



**Mental Health Services—Crisis Response**  
 600 Abenaki Road, Truro, N.S.  
 B2N 5A1  
 902896-2606 or toll free at  
 1-800-460-2110 ext. 2606  
 www.cehha.nshealth.ca

**Opiate Treatment Program**  
 902-893-4776

www.addictionservices.ns.ca.

### Rise in Syphilis

Syphilis is BACK...Across Canada, communities have seen a huge rise in syphilis over the past 7 years. In most communities gay men, bisexual men and men who have sex with men (MSM) have seen increases in positive transmissions. Over half of the cases reported have been among men who are living with HIV. Syphilis can easily be tested for and treated if caught early enough.

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by bacteria that attacks the body in three stages. You may have syphilis and not know it. Some people develop visible symptoms of syphilis but some don't.

...**Just Remember Cover Your Cock!**



Don't Forget International Day Against Homophobia is May 17th!

#### Amherst

#### **Sexual Health Centre Cumberland County**

Information, Education  
Workshops, Free  
Condoms

902 667-7500  
shccc@ns.aliantzinc.ca  
11 Elmwood Drive  
(side entrance)

#### Pictou

#### **Pictou County Centre for Sexual Health**

Services for both  
women and men

902 695-3366  
pcsexualhealth  
@hotmail.com  
www.pictoucounty  
sexualhealth.com

#### **Pictou County Women's Centre**

902 755-4647  
pcwc@women  
centre.ca

#### Truro

#### **Central Nova Women's Resource Centre**

82 Esplanade. Truro  
902 895-4295  
cnwrc@eastlink.ca  
cnwrc.weebly.com

#### **Colchester Sexual Assault Centre**

Provides Support &  
Information to Anyone  
Affected by Sexual  
Assault

902 897-4366  
80 Glenwood Drive,  
Truro  
Trurosexualassault  
@hotmail.com

#### **RESPECT**

Students Making  
Healthy Decisions  
Dalhousie Agricultural  
Campus

902 893-6300  
respect@nsac.ca

#### **DalOut—Dalhousie Agricultural Campus**

Services

