

2019/2020

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

THE AIDS NETWORK

Hamilton, Halton, Haldimand, Norfolk and Brant





REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has dominated much of 2020 and demanded massive change and innovation from organizations across the country and throughout the world. The AIDS Network (TAN), like so many other nonprofit organizations, was forced to adapt to this new reality and we are proud to share the many accomplishments & positive achievements we were able to bring to our clients despite these challenging times. TAN has been the primary voice for HIV/AIDS prevention, education, and support since 1986, now more than ever it is vital for us to continue delivering our programs and services to the most vulnerable members of our community.

COVID-19 precautions required The AIDS Network's physical office and meeting spaces to be closed, however, we committed to continue providing support to people living with and affected by HIV through call and text, as well as with some non-contact practical assistance. We continue to see demand for our services with new clients registering and support services still being conducted. Though the office is closed, some clinical services are now resuming with new precautions – by appointment only, with masks required, etc. Resuming these services are significant as the creation of our own clinical space in September of 2019 has been crucial for our community. Through our HIV and harm reduction programs, we saw an increasing amount of people who were not engaged in healthcare, ranging from wound care to specialty HIV care, and it was compromising their overall health.

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In Hamilton, our harm reduction outreach program was able to continue without interruption through community outreach as well as our mobile Van program in partnership with The City of Hamilton. Our Van program has added additional service in the afternoon while continuing the evening outreach. A **major advancement** in our services has been the addition of our Van program in Haldimand, Norfolk, Brant County, and Brantford which has been able to provide harm reduction supplies and naloxone via a service schedule and pre-packaged harm reduction gear with no-contact dropoff.

2020 also saw The AIDS Network's Walk Away from Stigma become a virtual event. While COVID-19 restrictions meant the walk could not take place in person, the online format made it easier than ever for people to participate via social media in any way they could. We are happy to say that this year's walk was **twice as successful** as our previous year. Events like these help us not only to spread awareness of TAN's mission and reduce stigma but also to raise funds to help continue delivering crucial programs and services.

To further assist those who use our services, specifically with the difficulties resulting from COVID-19, TAN conducted a mask drive that resulted in over 2000 handmade, reusable masks being distributed through our harm reduction program. The fallout from COVID-19 has also seen an increased demand for our food security programs. In the past, The AIDS Network has prepped and cooked hot meals regularly for those we serve. With gathering together currently not an option, we have responded by instead delivering much-needed grocery items to make sure people using our services still have access to food they may otherwise go without.

The AIDS Network has become a vital organization in the areas we serve and one which helps to support several others succeed within the community. As Jelena Vermiliom of SWAP (Sex Workers Action Project) states, **"The AIDS Network is our most invaluable community partner. Without their support and willingness to help our cause, we would have had much less capacity to deploy our outreach services"**.

COVID-19 has brought on many unexpected hurdles, for TAN as an organization as well as for those who access our programs, however, we are proud to have adapted as quickly and effectively as possible to ensure those who require our services still have somewhere to turn to. We continue to evaluate how we can be most effective in our community with our services not just in 2020 but for years to come.

Toni Hammond-Grant
President

Tim McClellmont
Executive Director





**WE'VE
BEEN
TOLD**



In a world where most agencies and government departments say no, or “give us this”, TAN says yes and what do you need. TAN says yes to hosting our drop in, TAN says yes to being meaningfully low barrier, TAN says yes to supporting our growth. It is no exaggeration to say that we punch above our weight as an organization because of the support of TAN, which has enabled us to spend all of our energies focusing on people, not infrastructure and bureaucracy. It is hard to overstate the importance of that kind of unsung support.

Lisa Nussey, Keeping Six

The AIDS Network is a tremendous partner for the Halton Equity & Diversity Roundtable. Not only are they our Trustee, which supports us to secure funding for the work of the roundtable, staff are highly visible and participative in the Equity and Diversity work in the Halton region. Both agencies have great synergies and we both access and support similar intersectional communities.

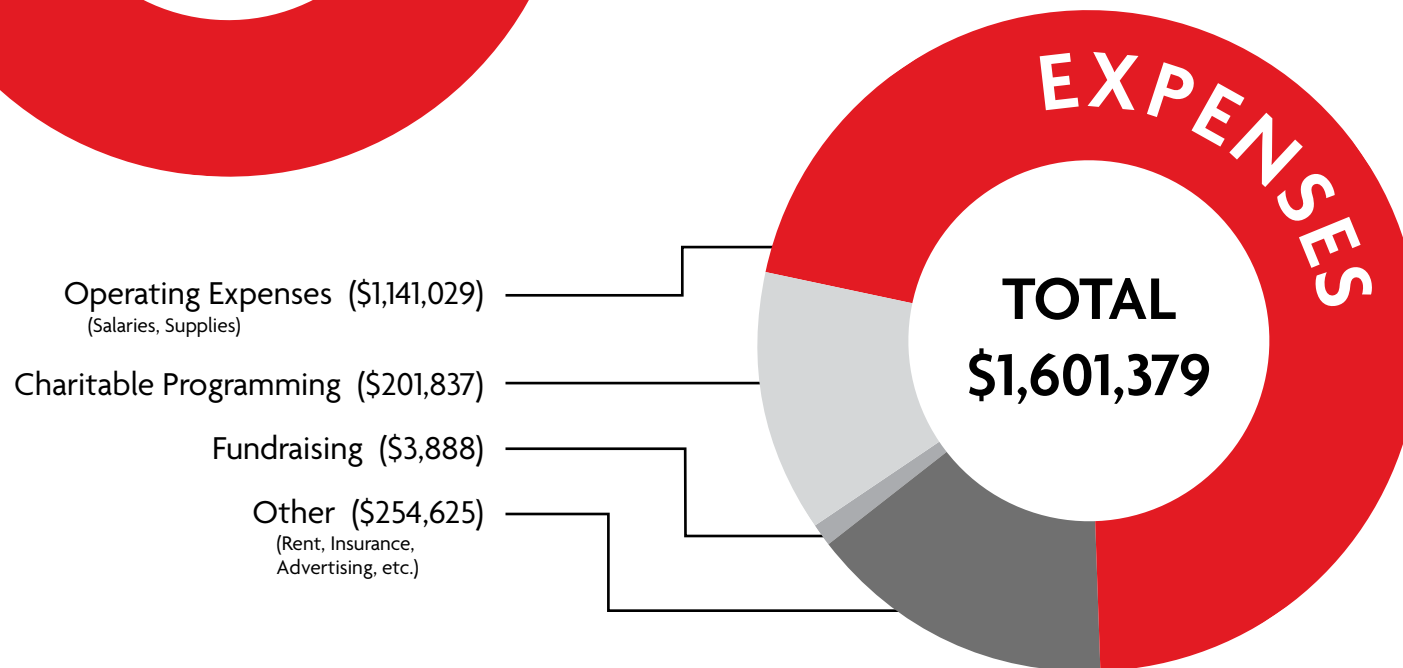
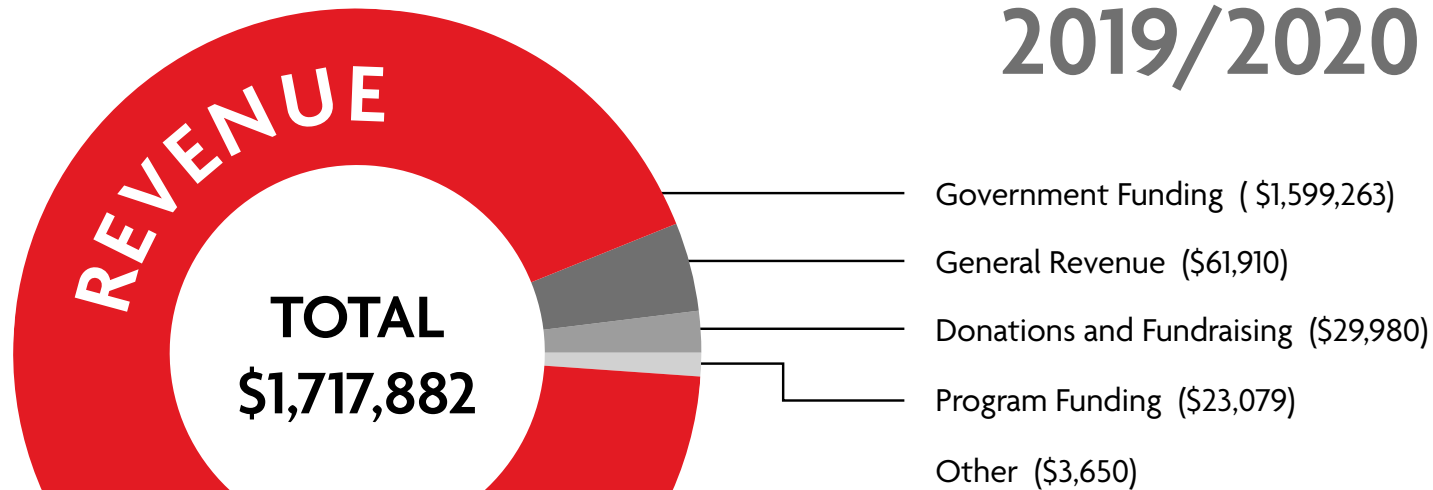
Marcus Logan, Co-chair Halton Equity & Diversity Roundtable

The AIDS Network has been a valued and vital partner to our organization, the Hamilton Social Medicine Response Team (HAMSMaRT) as we work towards our goal of providing excellence in clinical care to individuals poorly served by the traditional medical system. The AIDS Network is a place where our patients feel comfortable, accepted and valued, and as such is an ideal location for us to provide medical care. We are proud to work with an organization that is clearly skilled and committed to the ideal of doing whatever it takes to improve the lives of the individuals which it serves.

Doctor Tim O'Shea, HAMSMaRT

BY THE NUMBERS

2019/2020



APRIL 2019 – SEPTEMBER 2020

940 095

NEEDLES DISTRIBUTED

80 760

CONDOMS DISTRIBUTED

APRIL 2020 – SEPTEMBER 2020

888

**INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED
HARM REDUCTION**

791

**SUPPORT SESSIONS FOR
REGISTERED CLIENTS**

THANK YOU

THE AIDS NETWORK

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