

Canadian Treatment Action Council

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Canadian Treatment Action Council Annual Report

APRIL 1ST MARCH 31ST
2006-2007



Chair's Report

Louise Binder

IN 2006-2007, CTAC remained vigilant with respect to treatment access across Canada, developed new partnerships and fostered existing ones, and expanded its activities in the international arena. I am pleased to present this report on the highlights of the past year.

Access to Treatment, Drug Pricing and Cost Containment

National Pharmaceutical Strategy

The federal, provincial and territorial Ministers of Health are developing a National Pharmaceutical Strategy (NPS) which will have a significant impact on access to treatment. Unfortunately, there has been little public consultation and it has been difficult to obtain information about the process. As well, the focus of the proposed NPS seems to be on keeping costs low rather than keeping people healthy. In July 2006, CTAC issued an Action Alert to draw attention to these deficiencies and to urge CTAC members and other interested organisations and individuals to express their concerns to the Health Ministers.

Subsequently, CTAC did have an opportunity to provide input on the proposed common national formulary, which could become part of the NPS. In addition, as a member of the Best Medicines Coalition (BMC), and in partnership with the Canadian Pharmacists Association, the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Nurses Association, CTAC developed a policy statement on the NPS; the statement included recommendations on the Post-Approval Surveillance System (PASS) (see below). Finally, CTAC started working on a position paper on issues related to the NPS.

Community Workshops

In March 2007, CTAC partnered with the Nine Circles Community Health Centre and the Winnipeg PHA Caucus to organize a community workshop on cost containment and related access to treatment issues in the region. CTAC organized a similar workshop at its AGM in Montreal in November 2006. Plans were developed to hold more workshops in other cities.

Timeliness and Transparency Paper

In 2006-2007, in collaboration with the Canadian AIDS Society (CAS) and the Community AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE), CTAC updated and reissued its Paper on "Timeliness and Transparency: Accessing the Review Process for HIV Drugs." The Paper examines issues involved in the review and approval of therapeutic products used in the treatment of HIV/AIDS including, in particular, significant delays in filing new drug submissions and having those submissions reviewed.

Changes in Drug Access in Ontario

In collaboration with the BMC, CTAC advocated for improvements to Bill 102 (*The Transparent Drug System for Patients Act*). The new legislation included the development of a citizen council, improvements to conditional listing, new exceptional access mechanisms and provisions for rapid review of breakthrough drugs. The advocacy efforts were successful in bringing about changes to provisions in Bill 102 concerning the use of Section 8 (i.e., special permission) for certain drugs; and changes to the language concerning therapeutic substitution (the new language is less broad). As part of this advocacy effort, a position paper was developed.

As well, in partnership with the BMC and other organizations, CTAC persuaded the Ontario Government to allow patient representation on the Committee to Evaluate Drugs (CED). The CED provides independent and specialised advice to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care on drug-related issues.

Patented Medicine Prices Review Board

CTAC attended a Patented Medicine Prices Review Board Stakeholders Consultation to provide input on various aspects of the current Excessive Price Guidelines for patented medicines in Canada.

Cross-Border Internet Pharmacies

CTAC submitted a paper to the U.S. Subcommittee on Interstate Commerce, Trade and Tourism of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation regarding the *Pharmaceutical Market Access and Drug Safety Act* of 2007.

Other Activities

In 2006-2007, CTAC continued to monitor developments and issues with respect to generic drug pricing (CTAC is developing a position paper on this issue) and the Common Drug Review (CDR) process. CTAC is also developing a position paper on compassionate and expanded access to treatments.

CTAC members are in constant contact with representatives of pharmaceutical companies and government officials to advocate for

- expanded access to new HIV treatments not yet approved for sale in Canada;
- coverage on formularies for HIV treatments newly approved for sale in Canada; and
- adequate post-market surveillance.

As well, CTAC members prepared articles for the CTAC newsletter on the drug formulary in Ontario and "Case Study: Patient X" (addressing cost-containment and accessing the best treatment at the individual level when restrictions are placed on higher-cost drugs).

Post-Approval Surveillance System

In 2006-2007, CTAC continued its work on Canada's current Post-Approval Surveillance System (PASS). CTAC completed its research on consumer methods of providing PASS; the results of the data collection and related consultations can be found on the CTAC website via www.ctac.ca.

CTAC is now entering the dissemination phase of this research. This work will be done in collaboration with other consumer groups. To this end, in March 2007, CTAC participated actively in a symposium entitled "Ensuring Greater Involvement of Consumers in Post Approval Surveillance System" in Ottawa. The symposium brought together a variety of consumer groups, Health Canada and industry representatives. CTAC made a presentation entitled "Community-based research towards a consumer-centred PASS within the HIV/AIDS community." The symposium identified key challenges within the current PASS and generated concrete recommendations.

CTAC continues to have a working group focussing on this issue.

Regulatory Issues

Progressive Licensing and Clinical Trials

In November 2006, CTAC participated in a Progressive Licensing Framework Development Workshop organized by Health Canada. The purpose of the workshop was to seek input from consumers in the developing a new drug licensing framework for Canada. The consultation focussed on what the core values of the licensing framework should be. During the meeting, a CTAC member led a discussion group on issues related to PASS. CTAC looks forward to working with Health Canada on the implementation phase of the Progressive Licensing Framework; in this work, CTAC will draw on its PASS research.

CTAC also participated in a Clinical Trials Regulatory Review Stakeholder Workshop organized by Health Canada in March 2007. The purpose of this workshop was to continue the consultations begun at the November 2006 meeting, and to seek the views of stakeholders on ways to improve the clinical trial regulatory framework.

Natural Health Products

CTAC has been actively involved in providing input concerning the regulation of natural health products. CTAC has a seat on two important committees in the Natural Health Products Directorate of Health Canada: the Management Advisory Committee, and the Expert Advisory Committee.

International Issues

In 2006-2007, CTAC became more involved in international treatment access issues in recognition of the fact that population-specific issues are often international in scope and can have an impact at both international and national levels.

CTAC sees its role internationally as

- linking the Canadian context to international networks;
- supporting international networks where they take the lead;
- tracking and being informed about international trends and policies on access to treatment; and
- continuing to support Canada's role internationally as it relates to treatment access, treatment literacy and women's issues.

This past year, CTAC created a new partnership with the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC) and maintained its partnerships with other organizations working on access to treatment and international women's issues—including MAGnet (Microbicides Advocacy Group Network), Athena (Advancing Gender Equality and Human Rights in the Global Response to HIV/AIDS) and the Coalition for a Blueprint for Action on Women and HIV/AIDS (the national women's coalition).

CTAC is now a member of ITPC's North American Regional Advisory Committee. As well, in 2006-2007, CTAC conducted some advocacy work concerning access to treatment issues in Thailand. Finally, stemming from its involvement in the organization of the International AIDS Conference in Toronto in 2006 (see next page), CTAC and other partners began planning for the next International AIDS Conference in Mexico City in 2008.

AIDS 2006

CTAC was front and centre at the International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2006) held in Toronto in August 2006. Ron Rosenes, Vice-Chair of CTAC, was one of the founding members of the Toronto Local Host Committee. In addition, CTAC undertook the following activities at the conference:

- CTAC held a press conference during AIDS 2006 to draw attention to treatment access issues in Canada. Joining CTAC on the panel were representatives from the African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario and the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network. The panel called for a national catastrophic drug coverage plan, a national formulary based on the best available medicines, a comprehensive orphan drug plan and the dismantling of the CDR process.
- CTAC prepared and distributed postcards challenging the myth that Canadians have full access to the medicines they need.
- CTAC helped to organize, and participated in, the Women's and Girls' Rally and March.
- CTAC staffed a booth in the Global Village together with ITPC.
- CTAC exhibited posters on free and informed consent and access to information needed for informed treatment decisions.
- CTAC supported the work of the Coalition for a Blueprint for Action on Women and HIV/AIDS, including operating a women's networking zone.
- CTAC filed a complaint about journalist Margaret Wentze's inaccurate reporting during the conference.

HCV/HIV Co-Infection

About 30 per cent of people living with HIV/AIDS are co-infected with HCV. AIDS service organizations and HIV/AIDS clinics have taken on the role of providing services and support to meet the growing demand and need in certain communities, even though most of these organizations are not mandated and do not have dedicated funding to provide such services.

In 2006-2007, CTAC created a working group to work on this issue. As well, CTAC formally partnered with the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN) to coordinate a meeting on HCV/HIV co-infection entitled "Towards Greater Integration: A Think Tank on HIV and Hepatitis C Co-Infection in Ontario." The purpose of the meeting, scheduled for April 2007, was to identify existing efforts, gaps, challenges and opportunities in addressing issues related to treatment, care and support for people dually infected with HIV and HCV. The participant list included people living with HIV and HCV,

health care providers, researchers, and policy makers. CTAC also contributed to the development of fact sheets for the meeting.

Women's Issues

In 2006-2007, CTAC continued its focus on women's issues, principally through its participation in the Coalition for a Blueprint for Action on Women and HIV/AIDS. CTAC's participation involved, among other things,

- consultations with AIDS service organizations;
- attendance at public forums;
- participation in conference calls and meetings organized by the International Partnership for Microbicides; and
- presentations at various conferences.

CTAC is represented on the Microcredit Project Committee, a project funded by OHTN entitled "Learning from the South: microfinancing for HIV positive women in Ontario."

Skills Building

In 2006-2007, despite the fact that funding was not renewed for Tools for Action, CTAC's capacity building program designed to enhance HIV Treatment advocacy, knowledge and advocacy-practice among Canadians working in HIV/AIDS service, care and advocacy; and among the broader community of people living with HIV, CTAC was nevertheless able to deliver its Ethics and PASS workshops in French and English at the CAS AGM in June 2006. About 20 people attended each session. In October 2006, the Women I and II workshops were delivered via two teleconferences, with about 10 people participating in each session.

Organizational Issues

This past year, CTAC established dedicated seats for youth and Aboriginal persons on the CTAC Council. CTAC hired a Project Coordinator for its Voluntary Sector Response Fund (VSRF) grant, and a Clerical Assistant for general office work.

CTAC Vice-Chair Ron Rosenes received the 2006 Glen Hillson Award for Excellence for the work he has done over many years on treatment access, and particularly for his hard work on the International AIDS Conference in Toronto.

I am pleased to report that as of March 15, 2007, CTAC had 433 full and associate members.

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For an electronic version of this report
or for more information on CTAC's current work,
please visit our website at:
www.ctac.ca

Financial Statements

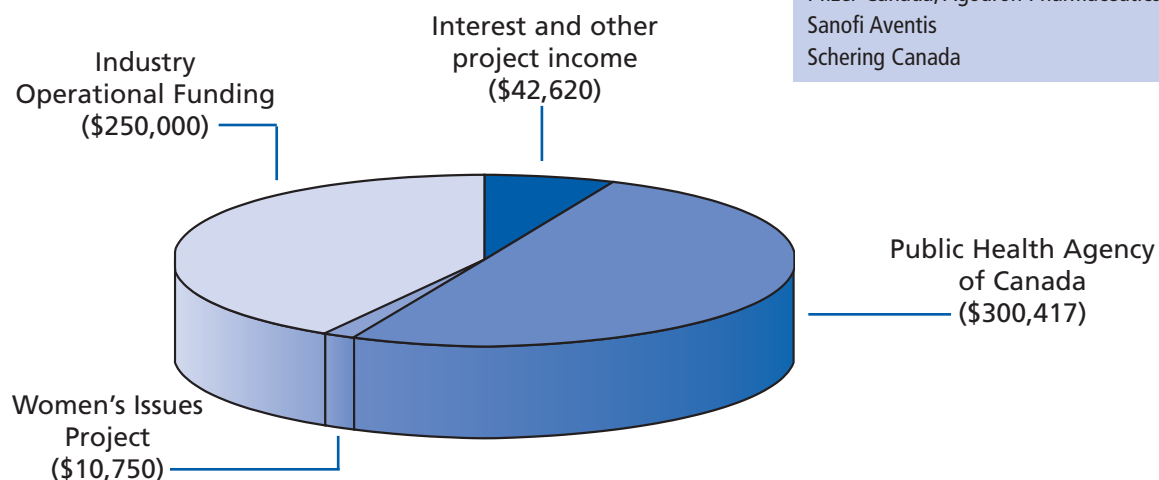
The following is a summary of selected financial information from CTAC's audited financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2007. Full statements are available upon request, through the CTAC office.

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Revenue	\$ 603,787	735,861
Expenses	532,299	708,416
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	71,488	27,445
Fund balances, beginning of year	245,245	217,800
Fund balances, end of year	\$ 316,733	\$ 245,245

Primary Sources of Revenue

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)
 PHAC - Volunteer Sector Response Fund
 PHAC - National HIV/AIDS Capacity Building Fund
 Abbott Laboratories
 Boehringer Ingelheim Canada Inc.
 Bristol-Myers Squibb Pharmaceutical Group
 Gilead Sciences
 GlaxoSmithKline in partnership with Shire BioChem
 Hoffmann-La Roche
 Janssen-Ortho
 Merck Frost
 Pfizer Canada, Agouron Pharmaceuticals Inc.
 Sanofi Aventis
 Schering Canada

Revenue



Expenses by Program

