

**Canadian Treatment Action Council (CTAC)**  
**Conseil canadien de surveillance et d'accès aux traitements (CCSAT)**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**The Federal Budget contains a few goodies for the health  
of people with HIV but the silence on national drug  
programs is deafening**

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“There were some announcements in the budget proposed today that may be of benefit to the health of people living with HIV/AIDS, although the associated funding is far from adequate” said Ron Rosenes, Vice Chair of CTAC. These funding announcements include:

- The renewed commitment to reduced wait times in health care although without new monies
- Funding for the Canadian Mental Health Commission, a national focal point for addressing mental health issues
- \$22M for CIHI to enhance its work internationally
- \$35M over 2 years includes funding for students undertaking health related studies
- \$10M for the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research
- \$85M per year for research targeted to priorities such as health sciences
- \$500M for labour market training
- \$105M over 5 years for Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership

Measures which address social determinants of health are of value in addressing the HIV epidemic in Canada.

There is bad news when it comes to other program announcements affecting people with HIV/AIDS. The National Drug Strategy to address the use of illicit drugs is now the Anti-Drug Strategy which will work to reduce illicit drug production, and focus on prevention and treatment. Nothing is said about ongoing funding for harm reduction which puts in jeopardy programs including the InSite Safe Injection Site in Vancouver and organizations dedicated to reducing the social, health and economic harms associated with drugs and drug policies.



A proposed tax incentive to encourage Canadian companies to participate in international programs to donate life-saving medications to developing countries is mentioned but nothing is said that addresses the barriers preventing the exportation of Canadian-made generic antiretrovirals and other medications to those countries.

Louise Binder, Chair of CTAC, commented: "This budget is remarkably silent on the funding for a national catastrophic drug program. It says nothing about funding for a national formulary, further investment in post market surveillance of new medications or funding for expensive drugs for rare diseases."

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