

PRESS RELEASE

Health Minister Terry Lake marks World AIDS Day at the Dr. Peter Centre

Vancouver, B.C. – (December 1, 2014) – On World AIDS Day, Health Minister Terry Lake visited the Dr. Peter Centre to recognize British Columbia's leading role in global efforts to end AIDS. Clients of the Dr. Peter Centre and their families shared their personal stories about the challenges of living with HIV.

World AIDS Day is a day when the global community takes time to remember those who have died of AIDS, to mark the tremendous progress in HIV/AIDS treatment, and to support those who are living with HIV – including some of the most vulnerable citizens of our own city.

Thanks to the highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) program pioneered right here in B.C., those living with HIV are now able to live to a near-normal life span. HAART has also been shown to help prevent transmission, reducing the number of new HIV infections.

"Here in B.C., thanks to our highly successful Treatment as Prevention strategy, we are the only jurisdiction in Canada seeing a consistent decline in new HIV infections," said Health Minister Terry Lake. "That success would not be possible without the tremendous work of health care providers across the province, including the Dr. Peter Centre. I am confident that we will continue that trend, helping us lead the world in reaching the United Nations 90-90-90 treatment target, which has a goal of ending the AIDS epidemic worldwide by 2030 – a goal which is modelled on B.C.'s strategy."

Maxine Davis, Executive Director of the Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation, noted, "The Dr. Peter Centre's approach is HIV care for life with dignity, which means more than just daily HIV medication. It's about nutritious meals, a safe and comfortable therapeutic environment, nursing care for basic and complex health concerns, counselling and other therapies, and an opportunity to have support of peers who share the experience of living with HIV."

The Province of British Columbia and its health system partners are committed to the global aspiration to end AIDS and HIV.

About the Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation and Dr. Peter Centre

The Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation is recognized locally, nationally and internationally for its progressive approach to health care for vulnerable individuals living with HIV – one of Canada's greatest health care challenges. The Dr. Peter Centre is an innovative HIV/AIDS facility that includes a 24-hour specialized nursing care residence, day health program and enhanced supportive housing program. In addition to living with HIV, many of the Centre's clients face a complexity of illnesses, disabilities and social challenges, including serious mental illness, active addictions, nutritional deficiency, homelessness and unstable housing, and aging with HIV.

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