

For Immediate Release:

**AIDS ON OUR STREETS: This World AIDS Day, Dr. Peter AIDS Foundations says
HIV Treatment Needs to Reach More People on the Street**

(Vancouver) – Treatment stability is critical for people living with HIV/AIDS, and more must be done to support those on Metro Vancouver streets, says Maxine Davis, Executive Director, Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation.

“AIDS on our streets is a real and devastating problem in the lower mainland,” says Davis. “Metro Vancouver is home to the vast majority of approximately 2000 HIV+ British Columbians who should be on Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART) and are not.”

Tuesday December 1st is World AIDS Day, and Davis is encouraging people to think about those they may see on the streets every day with the deadly disease.

“While HIV medication is available, there’s limited success in keeping severely disadvantaged individuals – particularly those with unstable housing, serious mental illness and active addiction – linked to treatment.”

The Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation is recognized locally, nationally and internationally for successfully engaging disadvantaged individuals with HIV treatment in a sustained way.

With an occupancy rate of 99.9%, the Dr. Peter Residence offers 24-hour nursing care for people who have nowhere else to go to have their complicated health problems stabilized, and to start HAART treatment. The Day Health Program serves approximately 300 people most in need of care, providing treatment support, daily nursing care, meals and other services to keep people medically stable and sustain their engagement with HAART. Last year the program saw 21,200 health visits and served almost 40,000 meals.

Dr. Peter Centre West End’s care model improves health outcomes and reduces health care costs. It has been so successful that it is being looked to as a model for other organizations in BC (Victoria), other parts of Canada (Toronto) and around the world (Russia, Georgia, Ukraine).

“It’s unacceptable that HIV treatment is out of reach for so many individuals in our city and our province,” continues Davis. “The Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation wants to serve even more people in need – and after the tough economic year, we need the public’s help to do it.”

For more information about the work of the Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation, please visit www.drpeter.org or join us for Voices of Hope on December 1.

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