

---

# Ontario AIDS Network

---

October 20, 2008

Dear Colleagues,

As many of you know, the Positive Action Fund, now known as the "OAN Positive Support Fund" has existed in various forms since 1995. The OAN has worked to sustain the Fund for four years and we have determined that we will discontinue our efforts to sustain the Fund effective the end of this fiscal year.

For the first nine years, the Positive Action Fund existed under the stewardship of the Toronto People with AIDS Foundation as the administrator of the fund. When the fund was first created there was no need for fundraising to support it since it was 100% supported through profits from the sale of AZT. The manufacturer of AZT created this special fund to invest in research, provide support for people with HIV and to deter the Ontario government from considering the purchase of a generic alternative.

In 2004 due to the entry of additional providers of anti retro-viral therapies into the marketplace and the waning threat of generic competition, the manufacturer stopped supporting the fund. That same year the Toronto People with AIDS Foundation appealed directly to the Board of the Ontario AIDS Network to take over the administration of the fund. The OAN Board voted to accept their request and the OAN became the administrator of the fund. In 2005, the OAN membership also ratified a 3 year sharing formula in support of the fund. The OAN, on a best efforts basis, also acted as the primary fundraiser of the fund.

From 2005 to 2008, the OAN worked independently to support the fund to try and make it self-sustaining. In 2005 the OAN hired a professional fundraiser to help grow the fund. Unfortunately while some growth was achieved, the fund did not become self sustaining. In 2006 the OAN continued to work on the fund without a fundraiser on staff and no longer took the \$5,000 administrative fee that had been taken by the Toronto People with AIDS Foundation and the Ontario AIDS Network in prior years. Unfortunately we have never exceeded in raising more than \$87,000 in any given year. Over this time however we raised over \$231, 691.71 a significant contribution to PHAs across the province.

We also note that in 2007, the Board of Directors shared with the membership its concern about the ongoing viability of the fund and advised that the sharing formula that governed the fund would expire at our May 2008 AGM. For much of 2008 the OAN has been in conversation among Board members, donors, member agencies that receive the fund, as well as non participating member agencies to discuss the future of the fund. As part of our strategic planning process we have also considered what the OAN's priorities should be with respect to supporting the very pressing needs of people with HIV.

We have come to the conclusion that the OAN is best positioned to work on behalf of people with HIV through advocacy and skills development for people with HIV and that fundraising for direct financial assistance to support for people with HIV is not within our mandate. The OAN is therefore advising you that we will be dissolving the fund at the end of this current fiscal and that our active fundraising efforts to support the fund have ceased effective today's date.

As stewards of our association the OAN board has had to make this very difficult decision to ensure that we work within our capacity and continue to do what we do well in order that our entire membership can be effectively supported. In order to assist you with the transition, the OAN will be making a final distribution of the funds raised before the end of 2008 We will also be pleased to share any contact info as well as our case for support.

We know that you will appreciate that this has been a very difficult decision for us to make. Please rest assured that we will continue to support you and the interests of PHAs any way that we can to the maximum extent of our resources and mandate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J Babcock', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Joseph Babcock

Co- Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S Ryan', with a stylized, cursive script.

Shannon Ryan

Co-chair