

realize FOSTERING
POSITIVE CHANGE
FOR PEOPLE LIVING
WITH HIV AND OTHER
EPISODIC DISABILITIES

REALIZING
THE FULL SPECTRUM
OF HIV AND WELLNESS

ANNUAL REPORT **2017-2018**



We are looking for **champions** who value **social change and innovation** – people who understand that **well-being goes far beyond** medical treatment.

JOIN US TO **REALIZE** THE FULL SPECTRUM OF HIV AND WELLNESS

- ▶ Become a **Realize** advocate and share our work with the people you know.
- ▶ Become a **Realize** member – see our website at www.realizecanada.org
- ▶ Become a monthly donor – an easy and affordable way to give that helps **Realize** plan more effectively.

OUR REACH

Realize has individual and organizational members across Canada. Our Board members comprise a strong mix of health care and other professionals as well as HIV community activists. We convene or are active in an array of agency coalitions that are focused on issues of critical concern to people living with HIV and other episodic disabilities. In addition we have a national constituency of over 3,400 people we reach annually through our courses, Forums and think tanks, who apply their learnings working within a wide range of community-based organizations, professional associations, care centres, clinics, and research groups.

OUR THANKS

The impact and reach of **Realize's** work transcends the size of our organization because of the expertise, dedication and commitment of our volunteer Board of Directors, our staff, our members, individual and corporate donors and partners. **Thank you.**

We thank the Public Health Agency of Canada, the M·A·C AIDS Fund, and ViiV Healthcare Canada for their funding. Finally we wish to acknowledge the generous support of the estate of Lillian Zack.

Realize

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 HIVandRehab  @HIVandRehab

Established 1998,
Incorporated 2002

Charitable Registration number
85699 5535 RR0001

"I can count on **Realize to help me understand what to expect and how to manage a long and healthy life with and despite my HIV infection."**

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

**20
years
ago,**

in October 1998, thirty people gathered in a room in Quebec City to explore the possibilities of rehabilitation (in a broad sense) as a vital tool in HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. Present were people living with HIV, representatives from AIDS service organizations, government program and policy makers, researchers and rehabilitation and other health care providers. They were innovators who understood that well-being goes far beyond medical treatment.

From the roots of that meeting, a working group was formed that would become the Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation, and now **Realize**. Though we are a small organization, **Realize's** impact, reach and thought leadership have transcended the number of staff and our modest budgets.

In the past few years, the HIV funding environment and impetus for global action have narrowed to focus on medical diagnosis, access to anti-retroviral drug therapy and treatment adherence. Along the way, people and organizations that have been at the forefront in the fight against AIDS from the early days of the struggle – people who have a full spectrum view of the social, economic and wellness implications of living with HIV – have been increasingly sidelined.

Realize has not been immune to this trend. 2017-2018 was a difficult year financially and the Board, along with our Executive Director, have been faced with some difficult decisions. Still, the core of **Realize's** work remains strong and we have been taking steps to diversify our funding.

Along the way, we've begun to see encouraging signs that funders and policy-makers are coming to understand that a critical piece has been missing from their HIV responses – it's not just life-span that's important, but quality of life.

This has always been **Realize's** focus. Our work on HIV and aging promotes health for the long term and looks to improve quality of life as people grow older. Our pioneering work on rehabilitation and HIV, and how readily people can or cannot access much-needed services is unique in the HIV world. Our work to increase labour force participation and income support for people living with HIV and other episodic disabilities is a key component of wellness. And finally, we know that

mental health and well-being play a key role in all other aspects of people's lives as they live with HIV, so we always look to understand how mental health can be supported and made better.

The Board of Directors was active on many fronts this year to ensure that **Realize's** vital work is well supported by strong governance, transparent decision-making and strategic leadership. Looking forward to our third decade, we are determined to ensure that there is a full spectrum response to HIV and wellness in Canada and beyond.

**Stéphanie Clavez-Loranger
and Dave Skitch
Co-Chairs, Board of Directors**

**...it's not just life-span that's
important, but quality of life.**

ACCESS TO REHABILITATION

At Realize we continue to pioneer ground-breaking

initiatives related to rehabilitation and wellness for people living with HIV. This past year, under the Access to Rehabilitation portfolio, we had the opportunity to partner with Casey House to spearhead the development of an out-patient physiotherapy department within their new Day Health Program.

For people living with HIV, physiotherapy can be an adjunct to medical treatment to maintain and improve quality of life during their progression along the 90-90-90 HIV care cascade, and beyond.

Working with Casey House, Puja Ahluwalia, a physiotherapist and the Access to Rehabilitation Project Coordinator at **Realize**, played a critical role in developing a physiotherapy program from the ground up, including recruiting and hiring a physiotherapy resident, and providing mentorship and supervision to this new hire.

The successful partnership between Casey House and **Realize** has resulted in a thriving physiotherapy program that is an example for the rest of the country of how physiotherapy can be fully integrated into community-based programs for people living with HIV.

HIV AND AGING

This year **Realize** continued to prepare and interpret the most up-to-date information on HIV and aging for diverse audiences. We reached people growing older with HIV through community sessions hosted

by Asian Community AIDS Services, Pacific AIDS Network, the AIDS Committee of Toronto and Central West Opening Doors. We summarized key policy issues affecting older adults with HIV through five new briefs for decision-makers. But perhaps most notably, **Realize** provided targeted education and training on the care and support needs of older adults living with HIV to over 400 service providers and healthcare workers.

90 of these learners participated in our intensive *HIV and Older Adults* blended learning course, investing 6-8 hours each in a combination of online self-study and interactive activities co-facilitated by older adults living with HIV. Fanshawe College, Woodstock campus, integrated the material into their coursework for students in health disciplines.

In partnership with Capacity Builders, a division of the Ontario Community Support Association, **Realize** had a valuable opportunity to deliver tailor-made training to all 140+ personal support workers, nurses and case managers working at Lumacare, a home and community care provider for seniors in Ontario. **Realize** and Casey House also jointly hosted three educational webinars for 60+ administrators and staff of long-term care homes.

We addressed issues affecting older adults living with HIV with mental health professionals, presenting at the Gay Men's Sexual Health Summit, giving guest lectures to social work students at the University of Toronto, and delivering HIV rounds at Toronto General Hospital.



LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND INCOME SUPPORT

For Many,

life insurance represents a step they can take towards knowing their passing won't leave loved ones with financial worries piled on top of grief. Historically, people living with HIV have been denied access to this peace of mind. In recent years, two of Canada's major insurance companies have started taking applications for life insurance from people living with HIV. This year, **Realize** partnered with the Canada Positive People's Network (CPPN) on the "HIV and Life Insurance Think Tank". The Think Tank provided a rare opportunity to have people living with HIV, representatives from Community-based HIV Organizations (CBHOs) and the insurance sector in the same room to discuss the current state of life insurance and HIV. Participants suggested a number of concrete initiatives to address the knowledge gaps on the practicalities of acquiring life insurance and life insurance pay-outs for people living with HIV.

As a partner in the 16-member Alliance for an Inclusive and Accessible Canada, **Realize** has been working to ensure that the voices of people

living with episodic disabilities like HIV are heard and are integrated into the new federal accessibility legislation. Expected in mid-2018, the new legislation will have a significant impact on how people living with disabilities (episodic and otherwise) access federal programs and supports.

Realize recognizes the importance of employment and income security to the lives of people living with HIV and other episodic disabilities. We will continue to fight for economic security and opportunity through our Labour Force Participation and Income Support programs and networks!

MENTAL HEALTH

Our 2017 Forum

put the mental health of people living with HIV front and centre. "Setting our Minds to it! HIV & Mental Health in Canada: A dialogue about meeting unaddressed challenges

in policy and community action" involved people living with HIV, mental health workers and representatives from community-based HIV organizations (CBHOs) from across Canada. Participants were asked to consider what's working, and what's not, in supporting the mental health of people living with HIV. The resilience of people living with HIV and innovation in the context of constraint were overarching themes. A broad ranging discussion was had about the development of a National HIV and Mental Health network, with participants agreeing that finding a way to connect across Canada on issues affecting the mental health of people living with HIV would be of critical importance.

Realize will work towards the development of the much-needed national network and will continue to be at the forefront of national work toward supporting the mental health of people living with HIV.

"I'm deeply grateful to Realize for their knowledge and guidance, and hopeful that they continue to steer us into a world in which people aging with HIV can thrive."





Steve Tattle

“Steve has generously provided dedication, time, excellence and innovation to CWGHR (now Realize) over the years since its inception. He is not afraid of pushing new boundaries in the field. I can’t say enough about his intelligence, dedication, leadership, and innovative thinking. He ranks as one of the most passionate people about the field of HIV and rehabilitation. I feel incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to collaborate with him.”
(nomination letter of support)

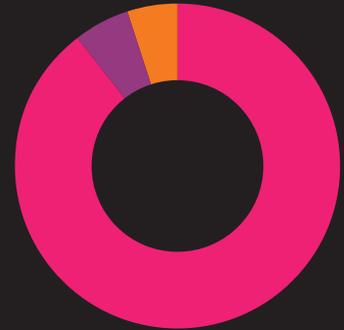
ELISSE ZACK AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN HIV AND REHABILITATION

2017 RECIPIENT: STEPHEN G. TATTLE

Stephen is a Registered Nurse with a Master of Science in Nursing Science from the University of Toronto. Over a 30 year career he has worked across the healthcare continuum in the hospital and community sectors, the last 8 years of which he was Vice President Programs and Chief Nurse Executive at Bridgepoint Health in Toronto. He has also been an active member of the Canadian Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (CANAC) since its establishment.

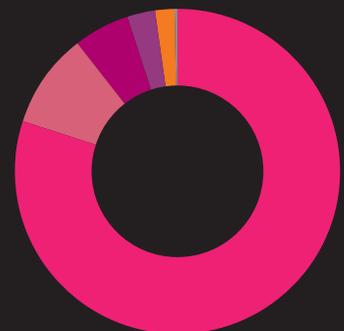
He has been involved with **Realize** since its inception, having attended the organization’s founding meeting in Quebec City in 1998. He served on the **Realize** Board of Directors for 10 years, the last 3 of which he filled the role of Co-Chair. Stephen joined **Realize** on a part-time basis in September 2013 as a Program Consultant and acted as Executive Director from December 2013 until February 2015. Stephen continued to work with **Realize** in the role of Programs and Operations Consultant until his retirement in January 2017.

REVENUE



- GRANTS 89%
- MEMBERSHIP 5.5%
- DONATIONS 4.9%

EXPENSES



- PROGRAM AND CONTRACT STAFF 80%
- OCCUPANCY COSTS 9.4%
- FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION, PRINTING AND MATERIALS 5.4%
- TRAVEL 2.9%
- EVALUATION 1.7%
- MEMBERSHIP MEETING <1%