



Blueprint for Action on Women & Girls and HIV and AIDS

Report Card: CANADA, August 2008

www.womensblueprint.org

OVERALL: We demand adequate, appropriate and sustained resources for improved programming and policies.

Strategic Area	Grade	Comment
Legal, ethical and human rights issues	D	<p>While Canada has a Charter of Rights and Freedoms, there is little protection for women who are HIV+ or at risk for HIV infection. Removal of support for harm reduction strategies that been proven effective is unacceptable and detrimental to the health of women with HIV, including federal budget cuts, refusal to implement safe tattooing in prisons, and the potential cancellation of safe injection site in Vancouver.</p> <p>In addition, the following are also examples of problematic elements of Canadian policies affecting women and girls affected by HIV and AIDS: Eradication of federal Status of Women office; Cancellation of court challenges programme; Lack of support for same-sex marriage; and Failure to implement the Kelowna Accord. Positive efforts have been made, such as apologizing publicly for the atrocities of the residential school system. Be sure to <i>act</i> now as this is only a first step.</p>
Research	C-	<p>We need funding for the implementation of current successful prevention methods. Shame on the government for cutting community funding and not identifying new sources for HIV vaccine research. For example, the research into IDU, prison and Aboriginal issues has not received adequate support. While there has been some funding for community-based research, cuts to community groups limit this effort. The government has been successful in its microbicide research and in promoting national epidemiological research with people with HIV; but need epidemiological data on women specifically.</p>
Stigma and Discrimination	D-	<p>Issue not addressed adequately by government in area of human rights. Continued criminalization of sex work. Lack of federal public education campaigns against HIV stigma, sexism and homophobia. Failure to enforce laws against gender-based violence – objectively. Next step - acknowledge and address the diversity of multiple oppressions faced by women in Canada.</p>
Diagnosis and Treatment	D	<p>Lack of action on HIV human rights and stigma/discrimination discourages testing. Failure to implement National Pharmaceutical, home care and dental programs. Failure to overhaul Common Drug Review to ensure safe, innovative life saving drugs available in timely fashion. Failure to curb high drug costs for generic and brand name drugs. Good job on supporting continued support for Patented Medicine Prices Review Board (PMPRB). Lack of support federally for voluntary testing. Good job Ontario for continuing to insist on opt-in testing for pregnant women, and for expanding anonymous testing sites and point-of-care testing.</p>
Prevention and Health Education	D-	<p>While important, too much focus on prevention for the future but not for the present generation (e.g. vaccines and microbicides but not condoms, clean needles, safe injection sites, tattooing in prisons). Lack of targeted prevention messages. Lack of sex positive and sexual rights messaging around HIV. Very little effort to incorporate HIV education in schools, or any other education related to stigma (racial, sexuality, gender, etc). A need for and lack of “positive prevention”.</p>
Care and Support	D	<p>Lack of national home-based care plan. Cuts to dollars for community groups, care and support unacceptable. A need for and lack of safe, affordable and appropriate housing for women and women with families</p>

A excellent B Satisfactory C Fair D Poor F Fail