



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

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World AIDS Day – December 1 – campaign for an AIDS-free generation

The theme of this year's World AIDS Day – December 1 – is *Shared Responsibility: Strengthening Results for an AIDS-Free Generation*.

Since 1988, HIV/AIDS activists have observed World AIDS Day by raising public awareness through research and education, fundraising initiatives, and anti-prejudice campaigns. The red ribbon became an international symbol of HIV/AIDS support and a commitment to finding a cure for the virus that's killed millions of people around the world.

It's a day for nations to review international statistics, current issues and trends, rates of infection, innovative treatments, research funding, and prevention.

And December 1 is also a day to remember those who have died from the disease. Throughout the world, candlelight vigils are traditionally held to mourn the lives of those lost and to reaffirm government leaders' commitment to continue funding.

It was 30 years ago that the first case of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) – the virus that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) – was documented.

The face of HIV and AIDS has changed over the decades.

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada's 2011 stats, there are an estimated 71,300 Canadians currently living with HIV and AIDS, including more than 6,300 Aboriginal people and 16,600 women.

These numbers have grown significantly since PHAC released their previous stats in 2008. Canadian women now make up 23.3 per cent of the nation's HIV-infected individuals.

And the World Health Organization's 2012 statistics reveal that there are currently 35.3 million people living with HIV in the world, including two million adolescents (ages 10-19).

Visit Positive Living Society of British Columbia at <<http://www.positivelivingbc.org/>>.

December 1, 2013

