

# A community engagement discussion guide

January 2016

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### Using this Discussion Guide

This Discussion Guide was created for people who want to use *Consent: HIV non-disclosure and sexual assault law* to engage colleagues, clients, students and communities on the use of sexual assault law to criminalize HIV non-disclosure in Canada. The film addresses complex and emotional issues. We therefore encourage audiences to talk before and after viewing the film and delve more deeply into the issues that it raises.

The discussion questions in this Guide intentionally address a range of topics. Not all questions are suited to all audiences; choose those that best meet your group's needs and interests.

### Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

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Consent: HIV non-disclosure and sexual assault law www.consentfilm.org

Content warnings: sexual assault, rape, coercion, HIV transmission, sex offender



This Guide contains information about the law. This information does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied upon as legal advice. Only a lawyer can provide legal advice. *Ce document est également disponible en français.* 

### Statement from the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

Around the world, many countries have laws criminalizing HIV non-disclosure, exposure or transmission. Canada is no exception: HIV non-disclosure — in circumstances where there is what the courts term a "significant risk of serious bodily harm"<sup>1</sup> or more recently, a "realistic possibility of HIV transmission"<sup>2</sup> — has been prosecuted as a serious criminal offence since the late 1990s. This legal requirement has resulted in a great amount of confusion, anxiety and controversy in the years since.

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network's engagement on this issue has been multi-faceted. We have intervened in key cases; developed informative resources for people living with HIV, service providers and legal professionals; participated in related research studies; and spoken out in the media regarding the negative public health impacts and injustices resulting from many HIV-related prosecutions. We have also paid particular attention to how the criminalization of HIV non-disclosure affects diverse women in our communities and worked to bring diverse voices to the table.

One of the things that makes the Canadian legal approach to HIV unique is the aggressive use of sexual assault law to prosecute these offences. The Supreme Court of Canada has characterized HIV non-disclosure as an issue of consent to sex — as opposed to a physical harm or a public health issue. For advocates committed to equality and ending sexual violence, this particular framing of HIV non-disclosure poses a range of challenges.

Policy analysts at the Legal Network began posing questions such as the following: Does HIV non-disclosure result in the same sort of harm as sexual assault? Is nondisclosure a form of objectification, an assertion of power over one's sexual partner? Or is an aggravated sexual assault prosecution for HIV non-disclosure a misapplication of laws intended to promote sexual equality, integrity and autonomy? Will rulings in HIV non-disclosure cases undermine feminist victories with respect to reforming sexual assault law? What can we learn from service providers, lawyers and activists in the sexual violence sector to bolster our work against the overly broad criminalization of HIV non-disclosure?

To explore these questions and others, over two days in April 2014, the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network brought together a group of feminists: people living with HIV, lawyers, professors, service providers, students and activists. We called the weekend a "feminist dialogue." It was an important opportunity to have an in-depth discussion about the criminalization of HIV non-disclosure, with a particular focus on how HIV intersects with sexual violence, and priorities for feminist research, education and action. The conclusions of the dialogue demonstrated this approach both overextends the criminal law against people living with HIV and threatens to damage hard-won legal definitions of consent aimed at protecting women's equality and sexual autonomy. They also emphasized the disparate impacts of criminalizing HIV non-disclosure on diverse women. Consent: HIV non-disclosure and sexual assault law captures important elements of that conversation.

We wish to thank our collaborator, Alison Duke (Goldelox Productions), for bringing her amazing vision and spirit to this project. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to the women who appear in this film and the entire crew who made it happen. Finally, we thank Dr. Eric Mykhalovskiy for his encouragement and support.

It is our hope that *Consent: HIV non-disclosure and sexual assault law* will inform, challenge and inspire you, and that this Discussion Guide will help you to use the film effectively.

In solidarity, Alison Symington

Co-producer, *Consent: HIV non-disclosure and sexual assault law* Co-director of research and advocacy, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

January 2016

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> R. v. Cuerrier, [1998] 2 SCR 371.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> R. v. Mabior, 2012 SCC 47.

### **About the Film**

*Consent: HIV non-disclosure and sexual assault law is* a 28-minute film featuring commentary by eight experts in HIV, sexual assault and law. The film uses photographs, original sketches and music to lead viewers through an interrogation of, and reflection on, the application of sexual assault law with respect to HIV non-disclosure in Canada. It makes clear that the law is developing in a problematic way, and the advocacy agenda to oppose the overly broad criminalization of HIV non-disclosure must include feminist allies and address the use of sexual assault law to prosecute alleged non-disclosure.

A French-language version of the film is available (with French subtitles and on-screen text).

### Credits

Executive Producer: Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Director: Alison Duke
Producers: Alison Duke, Janet Butler-McPhee and Alison Symington
Editor: Eugene Weiss
Director of Photography: Robin Bain
Music & Sound Mix: Derek Brin
Illustrations: Jeff Duke and Nikita Mor

A Goldelox Production

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## About the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network (Executive Producer)

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network promotes the human rights of people living with and vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, in Canada and internationally, through research and analysis, advocacy and litigation, public education, and community mobilization. The Legal Network is Canada's leading advocacy organization working on the legal and human rights issues raised by HIV/AIDS.

The Legal Network is opposed to criminal prosecutions for non-disclosure in cases of otherwise consensual sex, except in limited circumstances (such as when a person is aware of their status and acts with malicious intent to infect someone else). Working with numerous AIDS service organizations (ASOs), researchers, criminal defence lawyers, health care providers and others, the Legal Network is responding to the criminalization of HIV non-disclosure in a number of ways, including tracking Canadian and international cases; supporting lawyers, ASOs and people living with HIV facing charges; developing educational resources and delivering workshops, training session and lectures; intervening before appellate courts; mobilizing community; and advocating for policy guidance. Visit www.aidslaw.ca for more information.

### About Alison Duke (Producer and Director)

Alison Duke is an award-winning independent filmmaker. She formed Goldelox Productions — a boutique film, video and multi-media production company — in 2001. Her films have aired on a range of cable, private and public networks including Superchannel, TVO, Sundance Channel, CBC Newsworld, Much Music, MuchMoreMusic, BET, Rogers Television, TVOne, Encore, Black Starz, Oxygen, LIFE Network and OMNI1. Alison has worked on many informative productions commissioned by various prominent organizations, as well as more creative mainstream productions. Read more at www.alisonduke.com.

### **About Eugene Weis (Editor)**

Eugene Weis has worked in the Canadian film industry as an editor for the last 10 years, entrusted by top directors and industry professionals. His most recent work as editor of Milk premiered at Hotdocs 2015 in Toronto and was nominated for "Best Feature Documentary" at the 2015 Hollywood Film Festival. Weis also edited The Poet of Havana, winner of the Audience Choice Award for "Best Documentary" at the 2015 Gasparilla International Film Festival and Who The F\*\*K Is Arthur Fogel, which garnered Eugene a nomination for "Best Picture Editor" by the Canadian Academy of Motion Pictures (2015). Select titles from his filmography include *Positive* Women: Exposing Injustice with Director Alison Duke; Desert Riders with Director Vic Sarin; Teaching the Life of Music with Director David New; Let's Talk About It; and The Forgotten Woman, which won the Best Documentary award at the Hollywood Film Festival in 2008.

## The commentators featured in this film are as follows (affiliations current at time of filming):

- Joanna Birenbaum, Ursel Phillips Fellows Hopkinson LLP, Toronto
- Kim Shayo Buchanan, University of Southern California Law, Los Angeles
- Lise Gotell, Department of Women's and Gender Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton

Beri Hull, International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW), Washington, D.C.
Alana Klein, McGill University Faculty of Law, Montréal Lenore Lukasik-Foss, SACHA, Sexual Assault Centre (Hamilton and Area), Hamilton
Elaine Craig, Dalhousie University, Schulich School of Law, Halifax

Darien Taylor, HIV Activist, Toronto

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The Law Foundation of Ontario

- Dr. Eric Mykhalovskiy, Canadian Institutes of Health Research New Investigator Award
- Research Chair in HIV/AIDs and Sexual Health, Concordia University
- The Journal of Law and Equality, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto

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The opinions and views expressed in this film and its accompanying materials do not necessarily reflect the views of the funders. The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network assumes sole responsibility for all related content.

### The Legal Framework: HIV non-disclosure and fraud vitiating consent

In Canadian criminal law, a person commits an **assault** whenever they intentionally touch or apply force to another person, without that person's consent (*Criminal Code*, RSC 1985, s. 265(1)). If the touching is sexual in nature, then the person has committed a **sexual assault**. For the purposes of sexual assault law, **consent** is defined as the voluntary agreement of a person to engage in the sexual act in question (*Criminal Code*, RSC 1985, s. 273.1(1)).

In addition to this definition, the *Criminal Code* explains that there is no consent to sex where

- the consent is expressed by someone other than the sexual partner;
- the sexual partner is incapable of consenting to the activity;

- the person induces the sexual partner to engage in the activity by abusing a position of power, trust or authority;
- the sexual partner expresses a lack of agreement to engage in the activity (through words or actions); or
- after having consented, the sexual partner expresses a lack of agreement to continue to engage in the activity (*Criminal Code*, RSC 1985, s. 273.1 (2)).

There is also no consent where the complainant submits or does not resist because of

- the application of force;
- threats or fear of the application of force;
- fraud; or
- the exercise of authority (*Criminal Code*, RSC 1985, s. 265(3)).



The leading case in sexual assault law is *R. v. Ewanchuk*, decided by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1999.<sup>3</sup> *Ewanchuk* clearly established that absence of consent is purely subjective and determined by reference to the complainant's subjective internal state of mind toward the touching, at the time it occurred.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> R. v. Ewanchuk, [1999] I SCR 330.

It is the **fraud** element that is key in HIV non-disclosure prosecutions. In 1998, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that not disclosing HIV-positive status to a sexual partner before engaging in a sexual activity that poses a **"significant risk of serious bodily harm"** was a form of fraud if the sexual partner would not have consented had they known. Non-disclosure is considered fraud whether the person living with HIV lied about their status or was silent about it. This fraud invalidates consent to sex according to *Criminal Code* s. 265(3).<sup>4</sup>

In 2012, the Court ruled again on this issue and stated that for HIV, the "significant risk of serious bodily harm" standard would mean "a realistic possibility of trans-

**mission.**<sup>75</sup> Therefore, not disclosing HIV-positive status to a sexual partner before engaging in a sexual activity that poses a "realistic possibility of HIV transmission" is a form of fraud that invalidates consent if the sexual partner would not have consented had they known.

In Canadian law, a sexual assault that "wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the complainant" is considered an **aggravated sexual assault** (*Criminal Code* RSC 1985, s. 273(1)). Courts have considered that exposing a person to a "realistic possibility of HIV transmission" endangers life; therefore, people living with HIV accused of HIV non-disclosure are being charged with aggravated sexual assault.

### Definitions

### **Antiretroviral Medications**

Antiretroviral medications (ARVs) are used to treat HIV. Though there is no cure for HIV infection, standard treatment combines several antiretroviral drugs to control the virus and stop it from replicating. In addition to protecting the health of the person taking the treatment, suppressing the viral replication process also reduces the viral load, thereby reducing the likelihood that HIV will be transmitted to another person.

### Autonomy

Autonomy is having the freedom to act and make decisions independently, free from coercion. Protecting sexual autonomy is one of the reasons to have a robust definition of consent to sex.

### Consent

To consent is to give approval or permission. Under Canadian law, consent to sex is required by law; if there is no valid consent, then the sexual act is considered a sexual assault. Consent to sex in Canadian law is subjective; consent is the state of mind at the time of the sexual activity. To be legally effective, the consent must be freely given.

### Fraud

Fraud is a deliberate deception or a false representation of a matter of fact, committed in order to secure an unfair or unlawful gain. With respect to sexual assault law, fraud is a deception or false representation of a significant relevant factor — such as the identity of the partner or the sexual nature of the act.

### **HIV-related stigma**

HIV-related stigma refers to prejudice against, negative attitudes towards and the devaluation of people living with or associated with HIV. HIV-related discrimination follows from HIV-related stigma. It is the unfair treatment of a person because of their real or perceived HIV status. HIV-related discrimination is prohibited by law in Canada. HIV-related stigma and discrimination intersect with other forms of stigma and discrimination such as those based on sexual orientation, race, immigration status, poverty, drug use and/or sex work.

### **Realistic possibility of HIV transmission**

A realistic possibility of HIV transmission is the legal standard by which a person living with HIV is required to disclose their HIV status to sexual partners in Canada. If there is a realistic possibility of HIV transmission and the sexual partner would not have consented to sex had they known about the HIV, then disclosure is required. This standard was articulated by the Supreme Court of Canada in its 2012 decision in the case of R. v. Mabior. In *Mabior*, the Supreme Court ruled that vaginal intercourse required HIV disclosure unless the person living with HIV had a low or undetectable viral load *and* condoms were used during the sexual encounter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> R. v. Cuerrier, [1998] 2 SCR 371.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> R. v. Mabior, 2012 SCC 47.

### Sexual violence

Sexual violence is any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act by violence, force or coercion. This includes not only rape, but also unwanted sexual comments or advances, stalking, and acts of violence directed against an individual because of their sexuality, regardless of the relationship to the victim. Anyone can be a victim of sexual violence but the perpetrators are more often male and the victims are more often female. Sexual violence is pervasive, and it is a violation of women's rights to equality, sexual autonomy and dignity.

### Supreme Court of Canada

The Supreme Court of Canada is the highest court in Canada. All Canadian Courts must apply the law as it has been interpreted and articulated by the Supreme Court of Canada.

### Viral load

Viral load is a measure of the amount of HIV in a person's blood, described as the number of copies of HIV ribonucleic acid (RNA) in a millilitre of blood. The goal of treatment with ARVs is to reduce the viral load to the point of undetectability. "Undetectable" does not mean that HIV has been eliminated from the body but that it is below the level of detection through laboratory testing. Lowering the viral load slows disease progression and reduces the risk of HIV transmission.

### Vitiate

To vitiate is to destroy or invalidate something. Fraud vitiates consent to sex in Canadian criminal law.

### **Statistics and Facts**

- \* 1 in 3 women in Canada experience sexual violence. For men, it's 1 in 6.
- \* There are approximately **460 000** incidents of sexual assault in Canada every year.
- Out of every 1000 sexual assault incidents, 33 are reported to police and 3 lead to a conviction.
- \* The risk of a woman being infected with HIV through unprotected vaginal intercourse with an HIV-positive man is approximately 8 in 10 000 sex acts. The risk of a man being infected with HIV through unprotected vaginal intercourse with an HIV-positive woman is estimated at 4 in 10 000.

- \* **Condoms** are highly effective at preventing sexual transmission of HIV.
- If a person has an undetectable viral load, the research demonstrates that there is an extremely low risk of their passing the virus to another person.
- Over 170 people have been criminally prosecuted for alleged HIV non-disclosure in Canada, including about 15 women.
- \* A conviction for aggravated sexual assault carries a **maximum penalty of life imprisonment** and **sexual offender registration**.

### **Discussion Questions**

The following questions are intended to provoke discussion and help guide your audience through a critical discussion of *Consent: HIV non-disclosure and sexual assault law*. Through discussion, audience members can develop a deeper understanding of the film, the impacts of criminalizing HIV non-disclosure using sexual assault law and how to respond to this complex issue. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers, and audience members may have different opinions about and reactions to the film.

Some of the questions are accompanied by "Some points to consider". These points can be used by facilitators to help stimulate the discussion and address issues that are likely to arise.

### **Pre-screening Questions**

- 1. What do you think of when you hear that someone has been charged with *aggravated sexual assault*? What does aggravated sexual assault imply to you?
- 2. What does *consent to sex* mean to you? What features should the law require in order to recognize consent as legally valid?
- 3. Think about the conversations that people have when they first meet and as they are getting to know one another. How much information about yourself do you reveal to your new sexual partners? What information do you expect your sexual partners to reveal to you?
- 4. Do you know when a person living with HIV is required to disclosure their HIV-positive status under Canadian law?

### **Post-screening Questions**

- 1. What key messages did you take away from the film? Did anything in the film surprise you?
- 2. In what ways did the film challenge or confirm your ideas about the criminal justice system's response to HIV in Canada?
- 3. What do you think you would do if you were living with HIV and were contemplating having sex with a new partner? What might you be worried about?

### Some points to consider:

- Sexuality and sexual expression are important aspects of the human experience.
- Sex is always risky.
- Unequal power relationships between sexual partners are common. Sexual violence is prevalent in Canada.
- HIV transmission is preventable.
- HIV disclosure is difficult, and difficult to prove.

4. What specific concerns or challenges with respect to HIV disclosure might arise for youth? For Indigenous women? For newcomers? For women in abusive or dependent relationships? For sex workers?

### Some points to consider:

- Misinformation about HIV is common. HIV-related stigma takes many forms.
- Many already marginalized and/or stigmatized groups are disproportionately affected by HIV.
- Once a person living with HIV has told someone else about their HIV status, they cannot control what this individual will do with that information or who else they may tell.
- Sometimes, HIV disclosure invites judgement, discrimination, rejection or retaliation.
- Power, access to information and the availability of support have a big impact on the disclosure process.
- 5. Among the many different types of information that people may not disclose to a partner before sex, is there a reason to criminalize non-disclosure of a sexually transmitted infection but not criminalize the others?

### Some points to consider:

- There are many factors that are relevant to some individuals' choices regarding sex; for example, the partner's marital status, their religion, their long-term relationship intentions, their sexuality and/or sexual preferences, etc.
- There are many different types of risks that a person can be exposed to when engaging in sexual activity; for example, unwanted pregnancy, physical injury, broken heart, etc.
- In some places, "contraception deception" has been criminalized (i.e., dishonesty about the use of effective contraception).
- Failure to disclose that a person is transgender has been characterized as a sexual fraud in at least one instance (outside of Canada).
- 6. What role does morality play in the criminal law's regulation of sexuality? How is morality related to sexual autonomy and dignity?

### Some points to consider:

• Criminal law has been used to regulate various aspects of sexual activity throughout history. Some examples include sex work; the age of sexual

partners; same-sex sexual activity; pornography; sexual activity in public spaces; marital status of partners; etc.

7. Sexual assault is generally understood as a crime of power and violence. Is HIV non-disclosure an assertion of power? Is non-disclosure an act of violence?

Some points to consider:

- People living with HIV are not a homogeneous group and allegations of non-disclosure have been made in many different situations.
- HIV disclosure is very difficult, and sometimes it is dangerous.
- Allegations of HIV non-disclosure have been made by women against partners who were abusing them.
- Allegations of HIV non-disclosure have been made against women by abusive partners.
- 8. Commentators in the film note that this issue has been very difficult and that there is not one clear feminist perspective on the issue. Why is this? Why do you think criminalizing HIV non-disclosure has been contentious? Why might some feminists and some HIV activists not agree on the best response?
- 9. How can collaborations be built between those working to end sexual violence and the HIV community? Why are such collaborations important? What are the benefits of working together across sectors to provide services and do advocacy?
- 10. What is the relevance of the science about transmission risk to HIV non-disclosure prosecutions? How should the science be taken into account within the legal system?

### Some points to consider:

- Whether there is a "realistic possibility of transmission" is a legal test; the judge or jury decides whether a realistic possibility of transmission exists in each case.
- In 2014, a group of Canadian doctors issued a consensus statement on HIV and its transmission

in the context of criminal law. The introduction states: "We developed the present statement out of a concern that the criminal law is being used in an overly broad fashion against people living with HIV in Canada because of, in part, a poor appreciation of the scientific understanding of HIV and its transmission."

- Outside of the HIV non-disclosure context, sexual assault is not a crime of risk.
- 11. If you were drafting guidelines for prosecutors to instruct them on how to apply the law criminalizing HIV non-disclosure in Canada, what factors would you include in your guidelines?

### Some points to consider:

- Prosecutors exercise discretion in deciding what cases to prosecute and what arguments to make in those cases.
- Prosecutors do not have the authority to change the law.
- Prosecutorial guidance in the United Kingdom on "Intentional or reckless sexual transmission of infection" addresses a variety of factors including whether condoms were used, the nature of the sexual relationship, the intention of the accused, and the use of medical records.
- 12. If you were a judge on the Supreme Court of Canada writing the decision in the next HIV non-disclosure case to reach the Supreme Court, what would your decision say? How would it be consistent with, or different from, the HIV non-disclosure cases decided by the Supreme Court in 1998 and 2012?
- 13. If you were designing a campaign about HIV nondisclosure, what do you think the key messages should be
  - for people living with HIV?
  - for sexually active adults?
  - for police and prosecutors?
  - for judges?
  - for health care providers and counsellors?
  - for members of parliament?

# Timeline

# 1985

Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) came into effect, guaranteeing equality rights "without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability."

# 1985

86

The first cases of

Parliament repealed the criminal provision that made it an offence to transmit a venereal disease.

Angeles.

what would later come to be known as AIDS were

reported in Los

# 1992

The *Criminal Code* of *Canada* was amended to re-establish the protections struck down in *Seaboyer*, providing strict guidelines with respect to the use of sexual history evidence at trial. The amendment also refined the definition of consent to a sexual act and restricted the defense that an accused had an honest but mistaken belief in consent.

# 8661

In R. v. Cuerrier, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that people living with HIV may be convicted of aggravated (sexual) assault for not disclosing their HIV status before sexual activities posing a "significant risk" of HIV transmission.

# 2012

In companion cases R. v. Mabior and R. v. D.C., the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that people living with HIV may be convicted of aggravated sexual assault for not disclosing their HIV status before sexual activities posing a "realistic possibility of HIV transmission." In the context of vaginal intercourse (ADD), the Court ruled that there is no realistic possibility of HIV transmission when a condom is used AND the HIV positive partner has a low viral load. However, neither condom use nor low viral load on their own were deemed sufficient in these cases to remove the disclosure obligation.

## 1983

People living with HIV developed the Denver Principles: a statement of self-empowerment, rejecting the label of "victims" and asserting their rights.

# 983

Rape law reform legislation was introduced. The offences of rape and indecent assault were replaced by three new sexual assault offences, with a focus on the violent rather than the sexual nature of the offence. The reform also clarified that both males and females could be victims of sexual assault and that men could be charged for sexually assaulting their wives.

## | 66 |

In R. v. Seaboyer, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the law that limited a defendant's ability to introduce evidence or cross-examine rape complainants about their past sexual behavior as unconstitutional because it violated the right to "full answer and defence" under sections 7 and 11(d) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982).

### - 966

Results of successful clinical trials of highlyactive antiretroviral therapy (HAART) were presented at the 1 1th International AIDS Conference, in Vancouver. HAART revolutionized HIV treatment, suppressing the virus to undetectable levels.

# 6661

In R. v. Ewanchuk, the Supreme Court clearly established that absence of consent is purely subjective and determined by reference to the complainant's subjective internal state of mind toward the touching, at the time it occurred. It also ruled that there is no defence of "implied

## 2014

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network hosted a "Feminist Dialogue" on HIV non-disclosure in Toronto.

# 2014

The Supreme Court ruled that contraceptive sabotage can amount to fraud invalidating consent to sex in R. v. Hutchinson.

# 2014

To promote an evidence-informed application of the law in Canada, a team of six Canadian medical experts led the development of a consensus statement on HIV and its transmission in the context of the criminal law. The consensus statement was signed by over 75 Canadian medical professionals.

consent."

### **Programming Suggestions**

## Hold a panel or roundtable discussion after viewing the film

People to involve:

- A person living with HIV who may have a personal story about how criminalization affects their life;
- A health care provider or counsellor who has worked with persons living with HIV or other marginalized groups who may be vulnerable to HIV;
- A sexual assault counsellor or anti-violence advocate;
- A lawyer who has a background in criminal cases, law and health or human rights;
- A representative from a local AIDS service organization; and/or
- People of diverse backgrounds and experiences to speak about these issues in the context of their communities.

### Written reflections after viewing the film

• Ask participants to write down what they thought about the criminalization of HIV non-disclosure before watching film and how their opinion may have changed after having seen the film.

- Ask participants to write a letter to the filmmaker, telling her what they thought of the artistic effects used in the film and how they shape how viewers reacted to the film's key messages.
- Ask participants to write about a scene in the film that they found especially moving or disquieting. What was it about the scene that particularly affected them?

### Media analysis exercise

- Analyze the media coverage surrounding a criminal trial for HIV non-disclosure.
- Prepare a letter to the editor in response to an article appearing in a newspaper.

### Possibilities to fix the law

- Discuss how the law in Canada could be changed in order to be more fair to people living with HIV and survivors of sexual violence?
- Discuss how police and prosecutors could adjust their practices to alleviate some of the harms of the overly broad criminalization of HIV non-disclosure?



How have you used Consent: HIV non-disclosure and sexual assault law? We'd love to receive your feedback on the film and an update regarding your screening. Please send your feedback to info@aidslaw.ca.

### **Take Action**

# Share Consent: HIV non-disclosure and sexual assault law and raise awareness regarding this issue

Share this film and related resources with your family, friends, clients, classmates or colleagues. Copies of the film are available in English with or without French subtitles. Visit: http://www.consentfilm.org/.

## Campaign for prosecutorial guidelines in your province or territory

Community-informed, evidence-based prosecutorial guidelines on HIV non-disclosure could help ensure that allegations of HIV non-disclosure are investigated in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. They could help to ensure that any decision to prosecute an HIV non-disclosure case is informed by a complete and accurate understanding of HIV transmission risks.

### Make your voice heard

Write a letter to the editor or an opinion editorial piece ("op ed") for your local newspaper. Participate in advocacy campaigns for legal and policy change. Make a statement against the overly broad criminalization of HIV non-disclosure!

## Work towards the elimination of HIV-related stigma and sexual violence

Support an education campaign. Speak out against discrimination. Change your own attitudes and activities. Support your local HIV service organizations and sexual assault centers.

### Become a member of the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

Membership is open to individuals and organizations that support the goals and activities of the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network. Join us in defending and promoting human rights. Make a donation to support our work, in Canada and around the world. Visit: http://www.aidslaw.ca/site/get-involved/become-a-member/

### **Additional Resources**

### **Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network**

Criminal Law & HIV Non-Disclosure in Canada info sheets http://www.aidslaw.ca/site/criminal-law-and-hiv/

Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure in Canada Video Series https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLuJOHrWHz9 Ac5Ag3ZvGSjf6SR5NYea1k6

Further information on criminalization of HIV non-disclosure www.aidslaw.ca/criminallaw

HIV Disclosure and the Law: A Resource Kit for Service Providers www.aidslaw.ca/community-kit

Women and the Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure info sheet http://www.aidslaw.ca/site/women-and-hiv-womenand-the-criminalization-of-hiv-non-disclosure/ **HIV Justice Network** http://www.hivjustice.net/

# Ontario Working Group on Criminal Law and HIV Exposure

http://clhe.ca/

Positive Women: Exposing Injustice website

www.positivewomenthemovie.org

Visit the Resources and Publications page for more resources:

http://www.consentfilm.org/resources-and-publications/