

# Canadian AIDS service organizations join forces for 'A March to Equalize' on December 1

*The UNAIDS "Equalize" campaign urges action to address systemic inequality holding back progress in the global HIV response*

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA,  
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Canadian AIDS service organizations have mobilized to call attention to the HIV and AIDS epidemic. Among the G7 nations, Canada leads in the number of new HIV diagnoses. To mark World AIDS Day, AIDS service organizations in Toronto are coming together for 'A March to Equalize' on December 1. Those wishing to take place in the march can register through [this link](#).



Initialized by UNAIDS, the "Equalize" campaign is a call to action, urging communities to address the inequalities holding back progress in ending the AIDS epidemic.

Steps to address this include:

- increased availability, quality and suitability of services, for HIV treatment, testing and prevention, so that everyone is well-served;
- reformed laws, policies and practices to tackle the stigma and exclusion faced by people living with HIV and by key and marginalized populations, so that everyone is shown respect and is welcomed;
- ensuring the sharing of technology to enable equal access to the best HIV science, between communities and between the Global South and North; and
- communities will be able to make use of and adapt the "Equalize" message to highlight the particular inequalities they face and to press for the actions needed to address them.

WHO

The campaign is helmed by the Toronto People With AIDS Foundation with the Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention (Black CAP) leading the march. [LetsStopAIDS](#) along with 2Spirits, the 519 Community Centre, Action Positive, Africans in Partnership Against AIDS, Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention, Asian Community AIDS Services, Centre Francophone du Grand Toronto, the Committee For Accessible AIDS Treatment, Fife House, LOFT, the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto, Ontario Latinos Positivos, Ontario's Strategy for HIV and AIDS for Aboriginal People, PASAN, the Teresa Group and Toronto Public Health have joined forces for this initiative.

#### WHERE AND WHEN

An Interfaith Service (Wednesday November 30 at 6 p.m.) features participation from different faith groups involved in HIV work. This will be held in person at Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto (MCC) at 115 Simpson Ave, Toronto, ON and over Zoom.

The Laying of the Black Rose (Thursday December 1 at 11:30 a.m.) at the AIDS Memorial. Each member agency will have the opportunity to lay a rose in memory of somebody who has transitioned due to HIV/AIDS complications. This will take place at the AIDS Memorial in Barbara Hall Park, behind the 519 Community Centre. That will be immediately followed by The Interagency March.

The Interagency March (Thursday December 1 at 12 p.m.) will begin at the AIDS Memorial and make its way down Church Street to culminate at the YMCA. Each agency will bring sign boards and messages reflecting their interpretation of "Equalize". That will be immediately followed by An Indigenous Feast.

An Indigenous Feast (Thursday December 1 at 1:30 p.m.) will follow at the YMCA Central at 20 Grosvenor St, Toronto, ON which will pay tribute to persons living with HIV across all generations. Following the feast, we will be screening "Walking in These Shoes", a short film on the tragic death of Derek Yee who was a racialized man living with HIV and a long-time advocate for the rights of persons living with HIV. He gave his all for the community and supporting public health agencies.

#### About LetsStopAIDS

LetsStopAIDS is Canada's largest youth-driven charity focused on HIV prevention and knowledge exchange. Founded in 2004 by then 15-year-old Shamin Mohamed Jr., LetsStopAIDS inspires youth in Canada and globally to play a meaningful role in ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030. Through its numerous programs, LetsStopAIDS inspires young people affected by HIV to take action within their local communities, striving to achieve zero new youth-HIV infections. Learn more at [letsstopaids.org](https://letsstopaids.org).

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