

Poster presentation

## **PI5-23. Community engagement strategies in the Canadian HIV vaccine initiative**

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### **Background**

The Canadian HIV Vaccine Initiative (CHVI) is a five-year initiative between the Government of Canada and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and it represents a significant Canadian contribution to the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise that seeks to accelerate the development of safe, effective, affordable and globally accessible HIV vaccines. Through its Community and Social Dimensions program area, the CHVI has implemented strategies to engaging community-based AIDS organizations (CBAO's) through dialogue/consultation and a new HIV vaccine Community Initiatives Fund.

### **Methods**

Face-to-face and on-line consultations were held with representatives of CBAO's to determine the most effective method of their engagement in the CHVI.

### **Results**

The consultations identified key considerations including: the importance of supporting innovative strategies of community engagement for HIV vaccines, the need to build on existing activities related to new prevention technologies, the value of domestic-international collaborations and linkages, and the inclusion of a global dissemination and access component.

### **Conclusion**

The consultations informed the development of a new funding program launched in winter 2009 to provide funding support to CBAO's in policy development, legal ethical and human rights, and community awareness and

preparedness. This milestone signals the commitment of the CHVI to ensure the engagement of vulnerable communities in HIV vaccines work in Canada. In addition, the CHVI is considering other strategies to engage communities such as developing knowledge resources for front-line AIDS and public health organizations, the support of community-based networks and the inclusion of HIV vaccines new prevention technologies in upcoming Canadian skills building and other HIV/AIDS research symposium.