

For Immediate Release

WORLD HEPATITIS DAY TO BE MARKED AT VICTORIA LEGISLATURE MONDAY JULY 28

Victoria, BC - July 25, 2014 - Know Your Status, Get Tested! Victoria's World Hepatitis Day 2014 Planning Committee announces a free public event July 28th from 4:00pm - 5:00pm in front of the BC Legislature Building. The goal of the event is to raise awareness about Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C and the burden of these diseases in BC.

“Let's celebrate our victories, acknowledge our struggles, and grieve our losses. Let's make our voices heard and increase awareness in our community!” says organizer Hermione Jefferis, AIDS Vancouver Island's Hep C Program Educator.

Members of local healthcare groups HepCBC, Vancouver Island PWA Society (VPWAS), Society of Living Illicit Drug Users (SOLID), and AIDS Vancouver Island (AVI) will gather at 3pm in Centennial Square to walk together to the BC Legislature steps, where they will be joined by Standing Nation Drummers and special guest speakers including Victoria City Councillor Marianne Alto. There will be information about local healthcare resources, including testing and treatment, and a moment's silence for the 1.4 million people worldwide who have lost their lives to hepatitis over the last year.

On Tuesday, July 29, 2014 at 2:00pm, AIDS Vancouver Island is hosting a free screening of the one-hour documentary “Deal With It – Untold Stories of Hepatitis C in Canada”. People with lived experience will be in attendance to answer questions afterwards. Access Health Center, 713 Johnson Street.

The World Health Organization reports that 240 million people around the world are living with hepatitis B, and 150 million are hepatitis C positive. Although treatment is available, in Canada a large proportion of the estimated 300,000 people living with Hepatitis C are ‘baby-boomers’ (born between 1945 and 1965) who may not realize that they have been at risk and so do not seek testing or healthcare. One in five people with hepatitis C do not know it because they have never been tested, hence the message Know Your Status, Get Tested!

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend this free event.

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