

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In 1998, the HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic (Ontario) (HALCO) first sought funding in order to produce a lay advocates manual designed to help People living with HIV/AIDS (PHAs) and front line workers in agencies working with PHAs understand more about the legal issues affecting PHAs in Ontario. We were successful in receiving funding from the Trillium Foundation for the first stage of the development of this project.

Our goal in producing this manual has been to improve the capacity of individual PHAs and front line organizations to know about and address many of the most common legal issues facing PHAs. We determined what chapters would have priority based on the kinds of questions we were receiving at HALCO.

In the process of developing the manual project, however, we faced what would be an ongoing struggle. As an organization providing direct legal services to low-income PHAs from across Ontario, in a wide spectrum of areas of law, we struggled to find a balance between writing and developing the manual, and responding to the urgent and immediate needs of our clients. With a staff of only one lawyer, one community legal worker, one articling student (when we could afford one) and our office manager we were unable to produce the manual in a timely fashion.

Over time both our office and our workload expanded and the struggle associated with work on the project continued. The format for the work on the manual changed and we were successful, over the next few years, in securing funding which would help us not only with the production costs of the manual, but enable us to engage writers for the various chapters on contract.

We are most grateful and appreciative of the support and incredible patience of the funders of this project. Their support and flexibility, in addition to the funding itself, has made it possible for us to continue to put our clients first, while working to improve the capacity and knowledge of legal issues in agencies who serve PHAs, and individual PHAs themselves.

We wish to acknowledge all those who have written the chapters you will find in this manual: Ruth Carey (Chapter 1), Michael Bossin and Laila Demirdache (Chapter 2); Rick Lines (Chapter 3); Maureen Brown (Chapter 4); Jane Thurber (Chapter 5); Marian MacGregor and Kristina Brousalis (Chapter 6); and Sharan Parmar (Chapter 7).

Along the way, a number of other individuals have been more than generous with their time in reviewing, editing and reading parts of the manual. We would especially like to thank Eveline Allen, Bruce Best, Sylvie Daviau, Giselle Dias, Darrell Kloeze, Caroline Lindberg, Ryan Peck, Richard Teixeira, Karen Simmers, Dawn Wallace and Tasha Yovetich.

If we have missed anyone, we apologize. So many people have been involved with this project over the years. We sincerely thank each and every person who has been involved in some way with the manual.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of the manual are accurate and the information correct as of September 2004. However, as with all things legal, laws and policies change over time. We hope to be able to provide updates as required, which is why the manual is

being produced in loose-leaf format. There is also a complete electronic version of the manual which is posted to our website at www.halco.org/manual.html. Because the on-line version of the manual is more easily kept current, we would advise users of the manual to consult the on-line version and determine if a more current version of that chapter is available. In addition, because the law may change from time to time, references to specific sections of laws may change. For this reason, we advise readers that reference should always be made to the actual laws and regulations if the reader intends to rely on the sections of the legislation.

If there are errors in the text, we welcome corrections so that we can make amendments in future updates.

We have tried to make the manual as comprehensive as possible in the areas of law it covers. It is not intended, however, to be the last word on these topics. This manual is not legal advice and anyone needing such advice on his or her particular situation should always seek professional assistance from a lawyer or community legal clinic.

We hope that this manual will provide the information needed by PHAs and those who work with them in order to address a number of the issues commonly faced by them. If there are omissions or the user of this manual's question is not answered in this manual, we encourage you to call HALCO at 416-340-7790 or 1-888-705-8889 or email us at talklaw@halco.org to let us know.

Funders

As mentioned above, none of this would have been possible without the incredible support and patience provided to us by the funders of this project. We wish to express our heartfelt thanks to the Ontario Trillium Foundation, to the Community Innovation Fund of GlaxoSmithKline in partnership with Shire BioChem (chapters 2 and 3), and in particular to Lorne Fox, Market Development Manager & Community Relations Manager, and finally to Health Canada's AIDS Community Action Program, (chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7) and in particular Program Consultants Henry Koo and Len Lopez.

The views expressed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official policy of Health Canada.

September 2004