

# HALCO

HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario

# news

- HALCO provides free legal services to people living with HIV in Ontario -

## *HALCO news Spring 2013:*



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# HALCO Fundraising News

## HALCO's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Bowl-a-thon a huge success!

On Saturday, November 3, 2012, our fourth annual fundraising bowl-a-thon was held at Bathurst Bowlerama and raised over \$15,000! Thanks to all of those who raised funds, sponsored our bowlers, shopped at our silent auction and bowled the night away!



Congratulations to **Neil Evans** who received the individual award for raising the most funds and to the **Mad Hatters**, the team that raised the most funds. The annual Spirit Award was awarded to two teams this year, **the Spirits** and **Rexdale Community Legal Services**, for their outstanding costumes and demonstration of spirit.

Special thanks to the following individuals and businesses for their generous support of our bowl-a-thon silent auction:

**Admiral Road Designs**  
**Blue Banana**  
**The Beguiling**  
**Best Western Primrose Hotel**  
**The Big Carrot**  
**Patti Blouin**  
**Byzantium**  
**Churchmouse & Firkin**  
**CN Tower**  
**Come As You Are**  
**Christopher Dignan**  
**Peter Gross**  
**Hot Redheads**  
**Laura Hubert**  
**J Company Designs**

**Magic Lantern Theatres - Carlton Cinemas**  
**Manny Machado Designs**  
**Pegasus**  
**Priape**  
**Sauvignon Restaurant**  
**Charlie Seniuk**  
**Starbucks**  
**Heather Stewart, RMT**  
**Stratford Shakespeare Festival**  
**Iner Souster**  
**George Stroumboulopoulos Tonight**  
**Toronto Blue Jays**  
**Trendy Bambini**  
**Wine Rack (Wellesley Location)**

## HALCO Debriefed – A Fundraising Cabaret

*HALCO Debriefed – A Fundraising Cabaret* was held at the Flying Beaver Pubaret on Saturday January 26, 2013, and was a smashing success! Special thanks to the very talented performers who volunteered their time and made it such a fabulous event:

**Donavon LeNabat**  
**Stephen Martin**  
**Mindy Perlmutter**  
**Wayne Sujo**

**Jody Malone**  
**Bill Merryweather**  
**Michael Ruffolo**  
**Kevin Wong**

We are also very grateful to everyone at the **Flying Beaver Pubaret** for their support. Stayed tuned for information about the next HALCO fundraising cabaret!

## HALCO welcomes donations!

HALCO is a registered charity and welcomes donations (tax receipts are issued for donations of \$20.00 or more). Please contact **Bill Merryweather** at 416-340-7790 or toll free 1-888-705-8889, extension 42, or by e-mail at [merryww@lao.on.ca](mailto:merryww@lao.on.ca). You can make a donation at any time by clicking on the **DONATE** button on our website [www.halco.org](http://www.halco.org).

# HALCO Update

**The last few months have been very busy and exciting here at HALCO.**

**Here are a few highlights:**

- Our third intervention, in 2012, at the **Supreme Court of Canada** took place on December 10, 2012, for the hearing of the *Rasouli* case, which deals with consent to treatment.
- The Ontario Court of Appeal released its decision in the *Mernagh* case, in which we intervened, that addresses medical access to cannabis (marihuana). Please see page 8 for more information.
- Staff responded to more than 600 inquiries/requests for service by phone and in person at our office in November and December 2012 (please see back page for more information about getting legal help from us). In all, we responded to more than 4,000 requests in 2012.
- In 2012, HALCO staff conducted more than 135 workshops throughout the province on a variety of legal topics. We conducted 39 workshops in November and December alone. HALCO Executive Director **Ryan Peck** set the record with four events in a single day in communities in south-western Ontario! For more information about our public legal education workshops, please see page 14.
- The seventh and eighth in our ever-popular free public legal education workshop series took place in November 2012 and February/March 2013, in our HALCO Boardroom.
- ***HALCO Debriefed***, our first-ever fundraising musical cabaret, was a huge success (for more information please see page 2). Planning has already started for our next musical event!
- Our fourth annual fundraising bowl-a-thon was held at Bathurst Bowlerama on November 3 and raised over \$15,000! (Please see page 2 for more information.)
- Everyone enjoyed our annual volunteer appreciation evening held on March 7 at The Blake House: camaraderie, delicious food and friendly atmosphere!

**The coming months promise to be just as busy if not more so!**

# Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure

As reported in *HALCO news Autumn 2012*, in October 2012 the Supreme Court of Canada released its decisions in two HIV non-disclosure matters.

The Court found that people with HIV have a criminal law duty to disclose their HIV positive status before engaging in sexual activities that pose a “**realistic possibility of HIV transmission**.” A person with HIV who does not disclose before engaging in sexual activities that pose a “realistic possibility of HIV transmission” may be charged and found guilty of a very serious criminal offence, generally aggravated sexual assault. Aggravated sexual assault is one of the most serious offences in Canada’s *Criminal Code*, and carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment and registration as a sexual offender.

## When is there a criminal law duty to disclose HIV status to a sexual partner?

The Supreme Court was clear that vaginal sex does not pose a “realistic possibility of HIV transmission” when the person living with HIV has a “low” viral load **and** a condom is worn (viral load is the amount of HIV in the blood).

Therefore, a person living with HIV does not have a legal duty to disclose his or her HIV positive status in such circumstances. The court said that a viral load of 1500 copies or less of HIV per millilitre of blood counted as “low” - on the evidence in that case. The court specifically stated that a low viral load is sufficient and that an “undetectable” viral load is not required. An undetectable viral load means 40 or 50 copies or less of HIV, depending on the test used. What the courts will consider to be a “low” viral load may change in the future, so it is important that people have the most up-to-date legal information.

As the facts before the Supreme Court only related to vaginal sex, courts are still figuring out how to apply the “realistic possibility” test to anal sex. Anal sex generally poses higher risks of transmission than vaginal sex, so the duty to disclose is at least as strict as for vaginal sex (above). It might be the case that, as with vaginal sex, if a condom is used and the person’s viral load is low, there would be no criminal law duty to disclose. But at this time, we cannot say for certain if using a condom and having a low viral load will be enough to avoid convictions for non-disclosure before anal sex.

Courts are also figuring out how to apply the “realistic possibility” test to oral sex. Generally speaking, oral sex carries a lower risk of HIV transmission than vaginal sex. So based on the “realistic possibility” test, a person with HIV would not have a legal duty to disclose before giving or receiving oral sex if a condom is worn and the person with HIV has a “low” viral load. Unfortunately, we do not know at this point whether courts will find that there is a duty to disclose before giving or receiving oral sex when a condom is not worn or the person with HIV does not have a low viral load.

We also do not know whether there is a duty to disclose if a condom breaks during sex when a condom is worn and the person with HIV has a low viral load.

*Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure – continues on page 5)*

## **New law unnecessarily strict and out of step with science**

HALCO takes the position that the new “realistic possibility of HIV transmission” criminal law test, which replaces the previous “significant risk of HIV transmission” test, is an unnecessarily strict standard: disclosure is legally mandated when it comes to vaginal sex, unless a condom is used **and** the HIV-positive person has a “low” viral load. This is an extremely onerous standard, and is out-of-step with medical and scientific evidence about the low risk of sexual HIV transmission when condoms are used **or** when the person living with HIV has a low HIV viral load.

## **Impact of the new law**

HALCO is very concerned that the “realistic possibility” test will result in an unfair and overly-broad use of the criminal law in relation to HIV non-disclosure. We have known for a number of years that condom use is a highly effective tool for HIV prevention. When used properly and consistently, condoms are essentially 100% effective in preventing HIV transmission. We also know that anti-retroviral treatment reduces viral loads to levels where the risk of transmission is negligible. Prosecuting people who use precautions to protect their partners, or people who have a low viral load, is not only unfair, but also counterproductive in terms of HIV prevention.

There is serious concern that prosecutions against individuals who take precautions will have a disproportionate impact on the most marginalized and vulnerable of persons living with HIV, including those who may not have access to medications or sustained health care, such as racialized newcomers and First Nations persons. Similarly, there is great concern that an application of the “realistic possibility” test without great caution and restraint will have a disproportionate impact on vulnerable women living with HIV who are in abusive relationships and/or cannot safely impose condom use nor disclose their HIV status to sexual partners. More generally, an overly broad use of the criminal law further stigmatizes people with HIV and undermines the public health response to HIV by creating disincentives for individuals to seek HIV testing and to talk openly with health care providers, due to the fear that, one day, their test results and/or discussions with medical professionals will end up as evidence against them in a criminal court.

## **Prosecutorial Guidelines are urgently needed**

In order to bring fairness to the application of the law, it is vital that Ontario’s Attorney General fulfill the promise to develop prosecutorial guidelines for Crown prosecutors handling allegations of HIV non-disclosure.

In December 2010, the then Attorney General agreed to develop guidelines with the input of the Ontario Working Group on Criminal Law and HIV Exposure (CLHE), and share draft guidelines with CLHE. To this end, in summer 2011, CLHE provided the Ministry of the Attorney General (MAG) with a *Report and Recommendations* based on comprehensive community consultations conducted around the province. Unfortunately, the development of guidelines was subsequently suspended by MAG pending the release of the Supreme Court of Canada decisions.

*(Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure – continues on page 6)*

*(Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure – continued from page 5)*

Now that the Supreme Court decisions have been released, we trust that the dialogue between CLHE and MAG will be restored and prosecutorial guidelines developed as soon as possible. We will of course continue to update the community on discussions with MAG.

For more information about CLHE, and its *Report and Recommendations* on prosecutorial guidelines, please visit <http://ontarioaidsnetwork.on.ca/clhe/>.

## Police Guidelines

In addition to prosecutorial guidelines, guidelines are needed for police handling investigations relating to HIV non-disclosure. In February 2013, HALCO and the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network (Legal Network) provided submissions on this issue to the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. We look forward to a response.

The HALCO and Legal Network submissions to the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police can be found on our website at [www.halco.org/2013/news/recommendations-for-police-criminalization-of-hiv-non-disclosure](http://www.halco.org/2013/news/recommendations-for-police-criminalization-of-hiv-non-disclosure).

## Additional Information

The law is changing rapidly in this area. For up-to-date legal information and advice for those living with HIV in Ontario, contact HALCO (please see back page for HALCO information).

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network also has extensive information on HIV and criminal law, at [www.aidslaw.ca/EN/issues/criminal\\_law.htm](http://www.aidslaw.ca/EN/issues/criminal_law.htm).

HALCO staff provide public legal education workshops on the criminalization of HIV non-disclosure. For more information about our workshops, please see page 14.

### Getting Legal Help

**If you are living with HIV in Ontario, please contact us for free legal information and advice.**

**If you are facing HIV-related criminal charges, please call us right away.**

Please see back page for HALCO contact information.

# Right to Housing Charter Challenge

The Right to Housing Coalition includes various people and organizations, including people with lived experience of homelessness or of being inadequately housed, community organizations, legal clinics, advocacy groups and academics.

Current and formerly homeless people applied for a Court declaration that Canada and Ontario have violated their rights under section 7 and section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* by creating and maintaining conditions that lead to and sustain homelessness and inadequate housing. The Coalition has been working on the case for many years.



The Attorneys General of Canada and Ontario recently attempted to have the case dismissed, and five coalitions are seeking to intervene in the case.

The five coalitions are:

- Sistering, ACORN, and Federation of Metro Tenants Association.
- HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO), ARCH Disability Law Centre, the Dream Team, and the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network.
- Charter Committee on Poverty Issues, Justice for Girls, and Pivot Legal Society.
- Amnesty International and the International Network for Economic, Social & Cultural Rights (ESCR-Net).
- The David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights.

The coalitions are being represented by a number of Ontario community legal clinics and other legal professionals. The legal clinics involved in the case include:

- Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario (ACTO)
- ARCH Disability Law Centre
- Hamilton Community Legal Clinic
- HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO)
- Income Security Advocacy Centre (ISAC)
- Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services.

We will soon learn whether the coalitions will be permitted to intervene.

The Attorneys General motion to have the case dismissed will be heard on May 27 and 28, 2013.

You can find more details about the case on the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario (ACTO) website: [www.acto.ca/en/cases/right-to-housing.html](http://www.acto.ca/en/cases/right-to-housing.html).

# Medical Cannabis Court Case Update:

## The more things change, the more they stay the same...

In a decision released February 1, 2013, Ontario's Court of Appeal overturned a lower court decision that found that the federal government's current laws on access to cannabis (marihuana/marijuana) for medicinal purposes violate the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (the Charter).

As interveners before the Court of Appeal in *R. v. Mernagh*, the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network (the Legal Network), Canadian AIDS Society (CAS) and HALCO are disappointed by the ruling, which dismissed a constitutional challenge to the *Marihuana Medical Access Regulations* (MMAR).

In 2011, an Ontario trial judge ruled that the current regime violates the Charter by effectively depriving seriously ill people, such as Mr. Mernagh, of an effective means to access appropriate health care without fear of criminal liability. The Court of Appeal overturned the trial judge's findings, stating that there was insufficient evidence before the courts to justify this conclusion.

The current regulations require a physician to provide a medical declaration to accompany a person's application for a license to possess or produce cannabis for medical purposes. Yet evidence before the courts has shown that many people struggle to find physicians who are properly informed about medical cannabis or who are willing to fairly consider a patient's request. Furthermore, the regulations do not require a doctor to provide any reason for rejecting a patient's request. There is no guaranteed access to a body of medical experts who can decide the merits of a patient's application if the patient cannot find a doctor willing to do so.

A significant number of people living with HIV have found cannabis is critical for managing illness, including dealing with appetite and weight loss, nausea, pain, anxiety and depression.

The Legal Network, CAS and HALCO argued that a proper regulatory scheme would ensure that people could get access to a physician or medical expert committee to make a decision on the medical merits of their case. The current regulations do not ensure this access and too many people are left in limbo. People are forced to choose between breaking the law and accessing their medications.

The regulations are going to be changed soon, but the proposed new regulations do not address this problem either. (See *Proposed Changes to Marihuana Medical Access Regulations* on page 9 for more information about the proposed new regulations).

At the time that this article was going to print, Mr. Mernagh was seeking leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada.

If you are living with HIV, you can contact us for free legal advice about medical cannabis and other legal issues (please see back page for HALCO contact information).



# Proposed Changes to the *Marihuana Medical Access Regulations*

In December 2012, the federal government introduced proposed new regulations on access to cannabis (marihuana/marijuana) for medical purposes.

Under the proposed new *Marihuana for Medical Purposes Regulations* (MMPR):

- Health Canada will no longer take applications for licenses to possess medical marijuana. Under the proposed new rules, a person who needs medical marijuana will get a “medical document,” similar to a prescription, from their doctor or other authorized medical practitioner (in some provinces, nurse practitioners can issue this document).
- Once someone has a medical document, they will be eligible to purchase medical marijuana from a “licensed producer.”
- There will no longer be personal licenses to grow medical marijuana. No new personal licenses to grow will be issued for applications submitted after September 30, 2013. No personal licenses to grow will be valid after March 31, 2014.
- The designated-person producer licenses will also be phased out.

The proposed changes do not address the problems faced by many people living with HIV or other health conditions. It is already difficult to find a doctor who is willing to sign a marihuana medical access application. The new rules do not provide a solution to this problem of access.

The proposed changes will also make medical cannabis more difficult to afford, as no one will be allowed to grow their own medical marijuana or have a designated-person grow it for them (usually the least expensive sources). Many people found Health Canada’s cannabis to be very expensive - at a current cost of \$5 per gram (plus applicable taxes). It is likely the “licensed producers” will charge more for marijuana than Health Canada does.



The federal government recently accepted submissions respecting the proposed new regulation. The Canadian AIDS Society made submissions that were endorsed by HALCO and a number of other organizations. You can read the submissions on our website: [www.halco.org/2013/news/halco-endorses-cas-submissions-on-proposed-marihuana-for-medical-purposes-regulations](http://www.halco.org/2013/news/halco-endorses-cas-submissions-on-proposed-marihuana-for-medical-purposes-regulations).

If you have a Health Canada medical marihuana license, you can claim the costs of your marihuana as a medical expense on your income tax, but you need to have receipts from Health Canada or your designated producer.

If you are living with HIV, you can contact us for free legal advice about medical marijuana and other legal issues (please see back page for HALCO contact information).

# Immigration Law Updates

## Refugee Law Changes

In previous editions of *HALCO news*, we explained that the Government of Canada was making changes to immigration processes that will have an impact on HALCO's clients, in particular refugee claimants and unsuccessful refugee claimants. Bill C-31, *Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act*, passed on June 28, 2012. The Bill C-31 changes to refugee laws took effect in December 15, 2012.



Bill C-31 has made significant changes to the refugee determination system, including:

- **A new “Basis of Claim” (BOC) document** has replaced the “Personal Information Form” (PIF) that is given to all refugee claimants when they make their claim. Refugee claimants who make their claim at the airport or US-Canada border have 15 days to complete and submit this extremely important and complex document. Refugee claimants who make their claim at an immigration office have no deadline to complete the BOC and other forms, but this should still be done in a timely fashion. We strongly advise people to get legal help to complete and submit the BOC.
- **Refugee hearings will be scheduled when a person makes their refugee claim.** Hearings are being held very quickly: within 60, 45, or even 30 days after the refugee claim is made. It is very important to plan in advance before making a refugee claim, and to act quickly to get a lawyer and to collect evidence.
- **A new appeal process** at the Refugee Appeal Division (RAD) is now available to most refugee claimants who made their claims on or after December 15, 2012, and who are not successful at their hearing. There is a short deadline of 15 calendar days to file the appeal, and a further 15 days to file all evidence and legal arguments. It is very important to have a lawyer represent you in your appeal.
- **“Designated Countries of Origin” (DCO) List** is a list that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration is authorized to create. These are countries that are generally considered to respect human rights, or whose citizens are not often successful in refugee claims in Canada. Citizens of DCO countries: have a hearing 30 days after submitting their refugee forms, cannot appeal to the Refugee Appeal Division, cannot get a work permit unless their claim is accepted, and have very limited health care coverage unless their claim is accepted. The current list of DCO countries is: Mexico, Israel, Croatia, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Japan, the United States, and all European Union countries except Bulgaria and Romania.
- If you have a **criminal record** in Canada, the United States or another country, it is very likely that you are not eligible to even make a refugee claim at all - even if you believe the criminal record is minor. If you are thinking of making a refugee claim and you have a criminal record in any country, you should get legal advice before making your refugee claim.

**If you are living with HIV in Ontario and want more information, please contact HALCO for free legal advice** (please see back page for HALCO contact information).

## Changes to the Interim Federal Health Program

The Interim Federal Health Program (IFH) provides health care coverage to refugee claimants and some refused refugees in Canada.

On June 30, 2012, the Government of Canada made a number of significant changes to the IFH program. **HIV medications, doctor's visits for HIV follow-up and blood work are still covered under the new IFH system.** However, some important non-HIV related health care benefits that were previously covered have been eliminated.

Although the Immigration Canada website tells clients to apply to renew IFH benefits 4 weeks before the expiry date, we are seeing that renewals are taking as long as 12 WEEKS.

**We therefore encourage you to send your IFH renewal application two or three months before the expiry date.**

If you are living with HIV in Ontario, and would like more information about the changes to IFH or if you need assistance to renew your IFH benefits, please contact HALCO for free legal advice and assistance (please see back page for HALCO contact information).



## Immigration Law Public Legal Education Workshops

HALCO staff give public legal education workshops to explain the recent changes to refugee and immigration laws (and many other topics too).

**If you would like to arrange a HALCO workshop for your community, please contact us** (please see page 14 for more information about our workshops).



# Special Diet Allowance Updates

## HIV and the Special Diet Allowance

Since our last newsletter article, there have been some developments with respect to the HIV-related Special Diet Allowance (SDA) appeals that we have been pursuing for clients.

We continue to have 24 appeals at the Social Benefits Tribunal (SBT). However, we have filed two representative applications at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO). The appeals at the SBT have been stayed (put on hold) until the applications at the HRTO are resolved.



We chose to bring applications to the HRTO because of its expertise in human rights, and its decision-making powers.

The HRTO is an expert Tribunal that has a depth of knowledge and expertise in relation to human rights in Ontario. It also has the jurisdiction and authority to make a ruling that a regulation or government policy is discriminatory. This type of ruling would apply to all people affected by the regulation or policy – in our case, all people living with HIV in Ontario and receiving Ontario Disability Support Program benefits.

If we are successful with our applications to the HRTO, the HRTO decision would benefit individuals living with HIV in Ontario who are not even aware that they can challenge the reduction or elimination of their SDA that resulted from the changes made in 2011. We do not know how many people there may be in this group, but we believe that every person in this situation should get equal treatment and equal benefits.

We have submitted our medical expert witness testimony and we are waiting for a response from the provincial government. We will continue to keep the community informed about this very important issue.

## Three new medical conditions added to the Special Diet Allowance (SDA)

The Ontario government recently added three new medical conditions to the Special Diet Allowance:

- Chronic hepatitis C with a body mass index of less than 25 (added in January 2013)
- Chronic renal failure with unintended weight loss (added in December 2012)
- Prader-Willi Syndrome (added in December 2012).

Also, in April 2012, the government put out a bulletin to say that pre-diabetes is included in the SDA definition of diabetes.

If you have any of these conditions and you are receiving Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) or Ontario Works (OW) benefits, you should apply for the SDA as soon as possible. Or, if you have any of these conditions and lost your Special Diet Allowance after the government changed the list of SDA eligible medical conditions in 2011, you should re-apply. Contact your ODSP or OW worker to request an SDA application form.

*(Special Diet Allowance Updates – continue on page 13)*

***(Special Diet Allowance Updates – continued from page 12)***

For more information about the three new SDA conditions, you can visit the Income Security Advocacy Centre website: <http://incomesecurity.org/SpecialDietChangesFeb2013.htm>.

For more information about pre-diabetes and the SDA, you can visit the ISAC website: [www.incomesecurity.org](http://www.incomesecurity.org) (scroll down to “pre-diabetes eligible for the Special Diet Allowance”).

You can find the updated list of SDA conditions on the Ontario government website: [www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/social/sda\\_medical\\_conditions.aspx](http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/social/sda_medical_conditions.aspx).

If you are living with HIV, you can contact us for free legal advice (please see back page).  
If you are not living with HIV, you can contact your local community legal clinic: [www.legalaids.ca/clinics](http://www.legalaids.ca/clinics).

## Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit Update

As we reported in our last newsletter, the Community Start-Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB) ended on January 1, 2013. CSUMB was a benefit for people receiving social assistance benefits from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works (OW).

Half of the money from CSUMB is being distributed to municipalities. The other half is being cut by the province of Ontario. On December 27, 2012, the Ontario government announced \$42 million in one-time funding for local housing and homelessness initiatives to help municipalities through the transition.

Through its Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, the Ontario government is changing the way that housing and homelessness programs are provided. Programs are being consolidated over the next three years. Municipalities will be given the money for these consolidated programs to fund services for low-income people in their communities, not only for people receiving social assistance.

Municipalities across Ontario are developing and implementing Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) plans as the first stage of consolidation. Five programs are being combined:

- Emergency Hostel Services
- Domiciliary Hostels
- Emergency Energy Fund
- Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program, and
- Rent Bank.

Programs will vary from municipality to municipality. You can find more information on the Income Security Advocacy Centre (ISAC) website: <http://sareview.ca/isac-news/update-csumb/>

# HALCO's website: [www.halco.org](http://www.halco.org)

Our **What's New** website sidebar helps keep you up-to-date on current issues, announcements, events, and more.

Our **Areas of Law** pages include information about many different legal topics: [www.halco.org/areas-of-law](http://www.halco.org/areas-of-law).

You can apply to become a member of HALCO or to renew your HALCO membership on our website: [www.halco.org/getinvolved/membership](http://www.halco.org/getinvolved/membership).

If you have any questions about our website, please contact us! Please see back page for HALCO contact information.



## HALCO's Public Legal Education Workshops

As always, our staff continue to provide legal education workshops for groups and organizations at events and conferences across Ontario.

Please contact us or visit the **Public Legal Education** section of our website for more information about our workshops:

[www.halco.org/our-services/public-legal-education](http://www.halco.org/our-services/public-legal-education).

**Our workshop legal topics include:**

- **Criminalization of HIV Non-Disclosure**
- **HIV Legal Issues Overview**
- **HIV and Immigration Law**
- **HIV and Privacy Law**
- **HIV and Private Insurance**
- **HIV and Employment Law**
- **Planning for illness: legal information for people living with HIV in Ontario**
- **Powers of Attorney and Advance Care Planning**
- **Government Sources of Income for Individuals and Families**
- **Ontario Disability Support Program**
- **Disability Tax Credits and Registered Disability Savings Plans**
- **Ontario's Drug Benefit Programs**
- **Your Rights as a Tenant**

**Please contact us if you would like to request a workshop or our participation in an event** (please see back page for HALCO contact information).

# HALCO

HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario

## HALCO Board of Directors

HALCO relies on its skilled and dedicated volunteer board members to oversee our governance.

Our HALCO board members are:

- **Mark Blans**
- **Michael Capp**
- **Eric Cashmore**
- **Frederique Chabot**
- **Tracy Gregory**
- **Peter Gross**
- **John McCallum**
- **Eric Mykhalovskiy**, and
- **Barbara Ncho**.

For more information about our board and board committees, please contact us or visit **Get Involved** on our website: [www.halco.org/get-involved](http://www.halco.org/get-involved).

## HALCO Students

We are very fortunate to have the assistance of enthusiastic and committed law students. They help us to be able to do much of the work that we do!

HALCO welcomes **Dharsha Jegatheeswaran** and **Sarah McLeod** who are students with Pro Bono Law Ontario and working with us on an immigration law project during the 2012-2013 school year.

**Lesley Freiberg** is our articling student for 2012 - 2013 and an extremely valued member of our staff team.

**Marcus McCann** is a law student who has been volunteering to help with immigration issues since the autumn of 2011.

We were pleased to have the assistance of **Sarah Sproule**, a lawyer who volunteered with us until she returned to Ottawa to work on a project with several Ottawa legal clinics.

## HALCO Staff

Our invaluable HALCO staff are vital to our services:

- **Renée Lang** (staff lawyer)
- **Rhonda Major** (admin. assistant)
- **Bill Merryweather** (director of admin.)
- **John Norquay** (staff lawyer)
- **Amy Wah** (staff lawyer)
- **Rick Lobodzinski** (admin. assistant)
- **Jill McNall** (community legal worker)
- **John Nelson** (staff lawyer)
- **Ryan Peck** (executive director/lawyer)
- **Kevin Wong** (staff lawyer)

### **HALCO provides free legal services for people living with HIV/AIDS in Ontario.**

We provide intake for new inquiries on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (not Wednesdays). A HALCO caseworker is assigned to deal with new inquiries each intake day.

**HALCO is a “scent-reduced environment”** so please avoid wearing scented products when coming to our offices. Help us to make HALCO more comfortable for everyone!

HALCO is a registered charity funded by Legal Aid Ontario, the AIDS Bureau of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and other sources including corporate, foundation and individual donors.

We welcome **donations** and tax receipts are issued for donations of \$20.00 or more. If you would like to make a donation to support our work, you can call us toll-free at 1-888-705-8889 or make an on-line donation through **CanadaHelps** on our website:

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