



HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario

August 2014

## **Trans\* Legal Needs Assessment (Ontario)**

### **Legal and Social Service Provider Committees**

The Trans\* Legal Needs Assessment (Ontario) is a three-year province-wide project to 1) assess the legal needs of transgender (trans\*) community members, and the needs of lawyers/legal service providers in serving trans\* clients; 2) conduct education and information sessions with trans\* community members and lawyers/legal service providers in cities around Ontario, and; 3) identify barriers to accessing justice and root causes of injustice, experienced by trans\* communities, and make recommendations for change. While the project is focussed on the needs of the broader trans\* community, a specific component will be dedicated to trans\* people living with HIV. The project is funded by Legal Aid Ontario (LAO), with additional funding provided by the Ontario HIV Treatment Network to better meet the needs of those living with HIV. The HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO) is leading the project, and partners include LAO, The University of Western University and the University of Toronto.

To conduct this project, information will be gathered from trans\* Ontarians as well as from legal service providers through quantitative surveys and qualitative means (interviews, workshops/focus groups). The project will also include the provision of public legal education to trans\* communities (law and legal services “101”) and cultural competency training (trans\* “101”) to legal service providers. It is intended that a second phase of the project will follow that will focus on the implementation of the recommendations developed through the legal needs assessment.

The following project committees will be struck: community consultation and outreach, research, legal service provider, and community service provider. The community consultation and outreach committee, comprised exclusively of trans\* people, will ensure that the project is directly informed by trans\* Ontarians, and the research committee will ensure that the research is effective, rigorous and undertaken in an ethical manner. The service provider committees will ensure that the project achieves results that are useful and can be implemented, both within the legal system, and within community agencies that service client needs that may have legal components.

It is anticipated that the service provider committees will convene on three occasions throughout the project, at the beginning to set the scope and identify issues, prior to data collection to ensure that the data collected will meet organizational needs, and once the data are analyzed in order to interpret the results and identify strategies for change. It is further anticipated that members of the committee will periodically be requested to review materials. For further information, please see attached press release which includes project background, or email [transneedsassessment@lao.on.ca](mailto:transneedsassessment@lao.on.ca).