

# GMSH

Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance

**SKILLS BUILDING SYMPOSIUM  
MAY 28–30, 2014  
EVALUATION REPORT**

PREPARED BY D. PUGH AND D. GRIFFITHS

To our Skills Building Symposium presenters and participants,

Our sincere thanks for participating in the Symposium from May 28–30th 2014. We are happy to provide you with the following evaluation summary report. Thank you for your time and thoughtful reflection which was provided throughout the evaluation.

2014 marked a turning point in how the Gay Men’s Sexual Health Alliance delivers these annual events which have become known as a Skills Building Symposium. After consultation with our network, working groups and funders the summit moved from a larger plenary focused summit to a smaller symposium format with the intention of raising awareness, developing skills and providing an opportunity to put them into practice for an audience of gay men’s outreach workers in AIDS Service Organizations. Overall satisfaction was very high with 74% of respondents feeling the Symposium had value in their work with gay men. That same number felt that the Symposium provided them with new skills they could use in their HIV work.

The GMSH office remains committed to ensuring that the annual Skills Building Symposium is responsive to meet the needs of our network throughout Ontario.

Best wishes,

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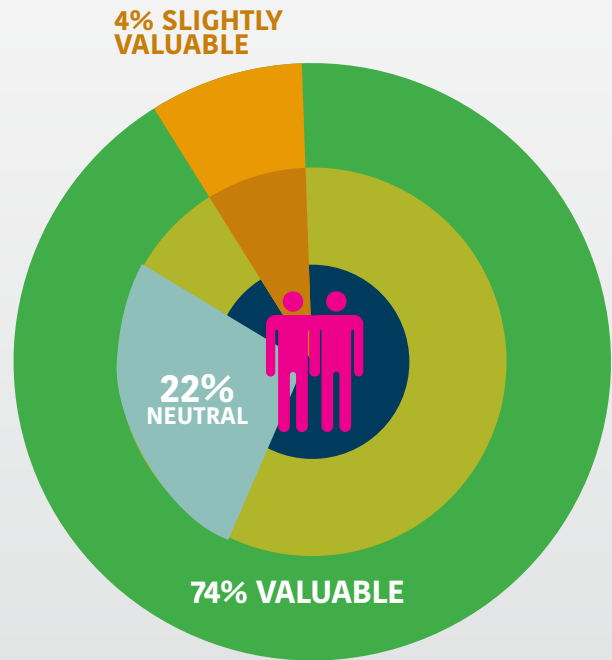
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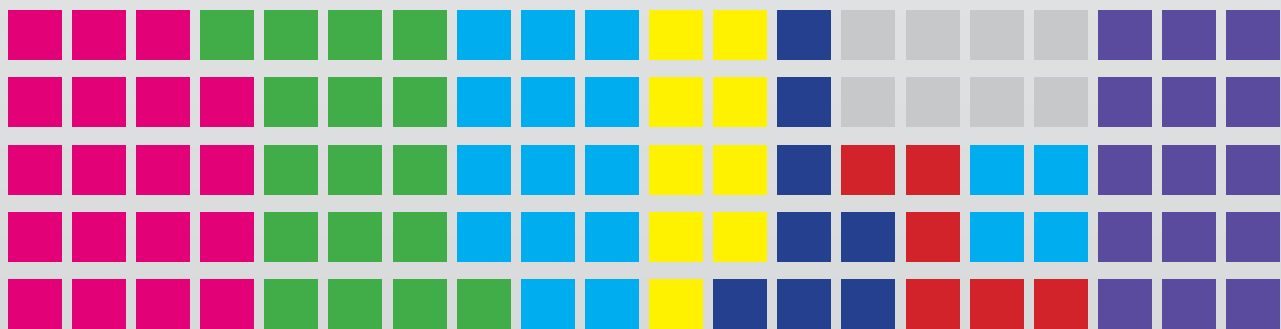
# NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS: 71



## REPORTED VALUE OF THE SYMPOSIUM IN YOUR WORK WITH GAY MEN

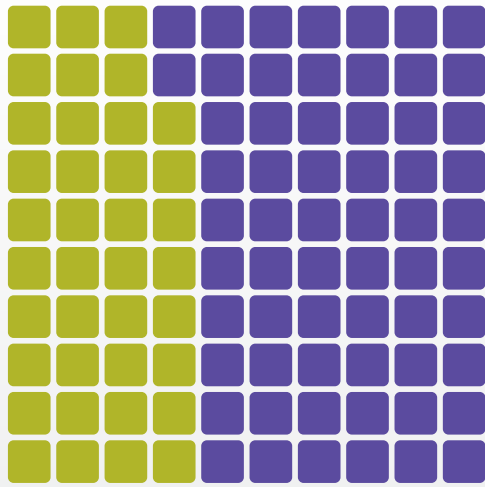


## WHO ATTENDED THIS YEAR?



- EDUCATION AND/OR OUTREACH WORKERS (GAY MEN) = 19%
- PROGRAM MANAGER/DIRECTOR = 17%
- EDUCATION AND/OR OUTREACH WORKERS (NOT SPECIFIC TO GAY MEN) = 14%
- COMMUNITY MEMBER = 9%
- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR = 8%
- SUPPORT/HARM REDUCTION WORKER = 8%
- PUBLIC HEALTH = 6%
- OTHER = 19%

**TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: 120**



# 62%

**OF RESPONDENTS ALSO PARTICIPATED IN LAST YEAR'S SUMMIT. WE ASKED THESE RESPONDENTS HOW THEY APPLIED THEIR LEARNINGS FROM LAST YEAR'S SESSION INTO THEIR WORK WITH GAY MEN:**

- ONLINE OUTREACH EXPANDED INTO MOBILE APPLICATIONS
- BEGAN WORKING MORE CLOSELY WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS WITHIN ASO (SUPPORT, ACCHO, HARM REDUCTION)
- BROUGHT BACK THEORIES OF INTERSECTIONALITY INTO AGENCY DIALOGUE AND WORK
- HAVE CONSIDERED SYNDemics IN OUR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
- MORE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA WITH GAY MEN
- NETWORKING AND REFERRAL CONNECTIONS
- INFLUENCING CHANGES IN AGENCY LANGUAGE



**WE ASKED RESPONDENTS TO RECORD THEIR LEVELS OF AGREEMENT WITH SYMPOSIUM OBJECTIVES:**

THE SYMPOSIUM WAS A SAFE SPACE TO DISCUSS GAY MEN'S SEXUAL HEALTH:

**92%**

THE SYMPOSIUM INCREASED MY UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE ISSUES RELATED TO GAY MEN AND SUBSTANCE USE:

**84%**

THE SYMPOSIUM PROVIDED ME WITH NEW SKILLS THAT I CAN USE IN MY WORK WITH GAY MEN:

**74%**

THE SYMPOSIUM WAS/IS A PLACE FOR ME TO NETWORK WITH OTHER PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH GAY MEN:

**90%**

THE SYMPOSIUM HELPED ME BUILD MY CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF GAY MEN IN MY COMMUNITY:

**82%**

**WE ASKED RESPONDENTS TO RECORD THEIR LEVEL OF USEFULNESS WITH SYMPOSIUM PLENARIES:**



DATA DERIVED DIRECTIONS (NATHAN LACHOWSKY & BARRY ADAM)

**67%**

STATED AS USEFUL

ABORIGINAL, 2 SPIRIT MSM (WARREN GREENE, ART ZOCCOLE, PERCY LEZARD AND ANN BURCHELL)

**46%**

STATED AS USEFUL

CONNEXONTARIO (ANDREW GEORGE)

**32%**

STATED AS USEFUL

CRYSTAL METH AND PSYCHOSIS (TIM GUIMOND)

**67%**

STATED AS USEFUL

HOWEVER, **94%** OF RESPONDENTS REPORTED LEARNING NEW INFORMATION IN THE PLENARY SESSIONS

THAT THEY FOUND HELPFUL IN THEIR SEXUAL HEALTH WORK WITH GAY MEN ABOUT SUBSTANCE USE.

# Additional plenary comments

I LIKED THIS YEAR'S FORMAT AND CONTENT MUCH MORE HANDS ON AND HAD A GREATER TAKE HOME VALUE.

THE USE OF DATA FROM THE SEX NOW ONTARIO SURVEY AND THE WORLD-PRIDE SURVEY MAY ASSIST WITH PROGRAM PLANNING AND CHANGES.

THE NARRATIVES SHARED BY BARRY ADAMS WERE VERY USEFUL AND REFLECTED SITUATIONS A GAY MAN MAY FIND HIMSELF IN REGARDLESS OF AGE OR EXPERIENCE. THE INFORMATION IN TIM GUIMOND'S PRESENTATION WAS USEFUL IN WORKING WITH CLIENTS WHO ARE UNDER THE INFLUENCE - HANDS ON PRAGMATIC BUT INFORMATIVE.

**INCREASED MY AWARENESS ABOUT THE KINDS OF SUPPORT NEEDED FOR GAY MEN EXPERIENCING PSYCHOSIS.**

**I HAVE STARTED USING MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI) IN MY WORK WITH GAY MEN.**

THE WORK PRESENTED IN HARM REDUCTION HAS SIMILARITIES TO OTHER PROJECTS. MI IS ALREADY A REALITY IN THIS FIELD. NO NEED TO STRESS THE BASICS OF MI TO THIS AUDIENCE. NO EVALUATION ANALYSES WAS REPORTED FOR WORK PRESENTED. THAT COULD PROVIDE TRENDS AND NEEDS IN THE COMMUNITY.

THE IMPACT OF COLONIZATION, TRAUMA AND SUBSTANCES FOR ABORIGINAL AND 2 SPIRIT MEN AND CURRENT HIV EPIDEMIOLOGY FOR INDIGENOUS MSM IN ONTARIO PRESENTED VALUABLE INFORMATION AS MY COMMUNITY IS REPRESENTED BY A LARGE NUMBER OF ABORIGINAL INDIVIDUALS. THIS INFORMATION HAS PROVIDED BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND KNOWLEDGE AROUND THE IMPACTS.

**INCREASED MY AWARENESS OF THE STIGMA BEHIND SUBSTANCE USE FOR GAY MEN.**

A LOT OF DUDES SHARE EXPERIENCE WITH METH INJECTION USE - I NEED TO CONSTANTLY CHECK MY OWN FEELING AROUND THIS - LET THE STORY BE HEARD IN A FULLY ENGAGED AND PARTICIPATORY WAY. ANY MI TRAINING OR SHARED MI USE HELPS FURTHER CONVERSATIONS.

THE PLENARIES WERE REALLY HELPFUL IN BRINGING TOGETHER THE WHOLE THEME OF THE CONFERENCE OVERALL. THE MOST HELPFUL WAS TIM GUIMOND. IT HELPED ME THINK OF SUBSTANCE USE AND SUBSEQUENT BEHAVIOURS OUTSIDE OF THE "JUST REFER" BOX.

HONESTLY, I BELIEVE THAT UNDERSTANDING ALL THE COMPLEXITIES OF GAY MEN AND SUBSTANCE USE IS INVALUABLE WHEN WORKING DIRECTLY WITH CLIENTS. THE KNOWLEDGE LEARNED PROVIDES US WITH A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF SUBSTANCE USE IN THE GAY COMMUNITY AND WE CAN USE THIS KNOWLEDGE TO HELP GUIDE OUR CLIENTS MAKE BETTER CHOICES.

**MORE CONFIDENT IN HAVING CONVERSATIONS WITH GAY MEN.**

PERSONAL NARRATIVES ARE VERY POWERFUL.

*Overall comments about the new Symposium format*

VARIETY AND SCOPE OF WORKSHOP TOPICS WERE REALLY HELPFUL - BREAKS ARE MOST NECESSARY DURING A THREE HOUR SESSION

MUCH APPRECIATED THE CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES OF HIV

FOCUS ON SKILLS BUILDING WAS USEFUL AND PRACTICAL

WHAT WOULD BE OF GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO ME IN MY WORK WITH GAY MEN.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON SESSION NOT NECESSARY - THREE HOUR WORKSHOPS ARE TOO LONG

**NEW FORMAT ALLOWED FOR BETTER NETWORKING**

SO MUCH MORE ENGAGING!

TOO MUCH FOCUS ON SUBSTANCE USE THIS YEAR, NOT ENOUGH ON MENTAL HEALTH (FOR GAY MEN)

MY LEAST FAVOURITE PART WAS THE CLOSING.

DID NOT FEEL THE CLOSING WAS NECESSARY

**GREAT VARIETY!**

UNSURE WHETHER ALL PRESENTERS KNEW FOCUS WAS ON "SKILLS BUILDING"?

I LIKED THE SMALLER BREAKOUT GROUPS, MADE IT EASIER TO LEARN. I LIKED THAT ATTENDANCE WAS TAKEN - SEEMS LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE DISAPPEARED? PERHAPS CONSIDER A PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT FOR FUTURE SYMPOSIUMS?

IT WAS REALLY BENEFICIAL TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE SPECIFIC WORKSHOPS TO ATTEND - I WAS ABLE TO "FORM FIT" EACH DAY TO

I MISSED THE BREAK-OUT DISCUSSION GROUPS (LIKE 2013) - TWO HOUR SESSIONS WITH ONE HOUR DISCUSSION IS IDEAL

SO MUCH OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCES

**THOUGHTFULLY ORGANIZED**

**GOOD NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES.**

INFORM FRONTLINE WORKERS SO THEY CAN RETURN TO WORK AND TAKE PART IN THE SYMPOSIUM. WE WILL BE PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION TO THE SYMPOSIUM AND WILL BE PROVIDING MEALS AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS. WE WILL BE PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION TO THE SYMPOSIUM AND WILL BE PROVIDING MEALS AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS.

## *Tools and Resources for Substance Use*

**WE ALSO ASKED RESPONDENTS THE FOLLOWING: OVER THE NEXT YEAR, WHAT MIGHT BE SOME ESSENTIAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES THAT YOU COULD USE IN YOUR WORK WITH GAY MEN WHEN IT COMES TO SUBSTANCE USE? BELOW ARE THE COMMENTS:**



- ‘SAFETY’ AROUND SUBSTANCE USE
- SOMETHING SIMILAR TO SERO ZERO’S “DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND GAY MEN”
- MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING ENGAGEMENT TOOL
- SELF-AWARENESS TRAINING/TOOLS
- COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL AND MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES
- SHEIR VERSION 2.0
- SOMETHING WITH A RURAL FOCUS
- CONCURRENT DISORDERS
- SOMETHING THAT ADDRESSES HOW TO DEAL WITH INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE
- HARM REDUCTION FOR CRYSTAL USE
- URBAN WORKING GROUP IN THE GMSH – OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS SERVICE PROVIDERS ISSUES IN URBAN ENVIRONMENTS
- MORE MI TRAINING
- TREATMENT RESOURCES FOR GAY MEN ACROSS ONTARIO
- STIGMA TOOL – SIMILAR TO ISSUES COVERED IN OHSUTP SESSION
- WORKSHOP FOR US TO USE WITH/COLLABORATE/IMPLEMENT AMONGST OUR ADDICTIONS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS, ETC.
- SUBSTANCE USE TOOLS THAT ARE FUNCTIONAL NOT PROBLEMATIC
- SAFER INJECTION/SAFER CRYSTAL WORKSHOPS FOR USERS
- PROVINCE-WIDE TRAINING FOR OUTREACH WORKERS VIA OAN SKILLS BUILDING
- BUILDING OUR CAPACITY WITH HARD-TO-REACH COMMUNITIES
- ASO VOCABULARY/LANGUAGE SENSITIVITY TRAININGS
- SOMETHING FROM A POZ PERSPECTIVE/FRAMWORK
- A TO Z GUIDE OF DRUGS AND SEX FOR GAY MEN

ISSUES, TOPICS OR CONCERNS THAT HAVE BEEN EMERGING IN YOUR WORK – POTENTIAL IDEAS FOR FUTURE THEMES/WORK:



1. REACHING THOSE WHO ARE NOT GAY IDENTIFIED
2. PEP AND PREP
3. ONE THING I DO WANT TO POINT OUT IS THAT THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A SPACE FOR THOSE OF US WHO DON’T WORK IN A TORONTO-CENTRIC OR URBAN ENVIRONMENT. THERE ARE SOME UNIQUE CHALLENGES AND ALSO DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS THAT ARE PARTICULAR TO SUBURBAN AND RURAL GAY/MSM OUTREACH WORK. PERHAPS NEXT YEAR, YOU CAN CREATE A SPACE FOR THESE VOICES TO BE SHARED AND HEARD AS WELL?
4. HIV AND AGING – SOCIAL ISOLATION
5. BODY IMAGE
6. SOCIAL NETWORKING ONLINE – MOBILE APPS
7. ALCOHOL AND SEX
8. A DETAILED EXPLORATION OR RISK OF TRANSMISSION BOTH FROM THE SCIENCE POINT OF VIEW AS WELL AS THE BEHAVIOURAL AND HOW WE SHOULD RESPOND TO THAT KNOWLEDGE IN REFRAMED WAYS.
9. DECISION MAKING AND NEGOTIATION MATRIX/MODELS OR TOOLS – SEX, RISK...
10. TRAUMA – GAY MEN AND WORKERS (VICARIOUS TRAUMA)
11. MENTAL HEALTH, DEPRESSION
12. TECHNOLOGY SKILLS FOR CONNECTING/OUTREACH
13. SERO-DISCORDANT RELATIONSHIPS – ALL ISSUES ENCOMPASSED
14. LIVING LONG-TERM WITH HIV – INCLUDES ALL HEALTH/SOCIAL RELATED ISSUES