



June 29, 2022

Dear Ontario AIDS Service Organizations,

The African Caribbean Council on HIV in Ontario (ACCHO), Prisoner's HIV/AIDS Support Action Network (PASAN), Women and HIV/AIDS Initiative of Ontario (WHAI), Ontario AIDS Network (OAN), and Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance (GMSH) are calling on you to honour **Prisoner Justice Day** (PJD) locally with your community.

PJD is held annually on August 10th. This day initially started after a prisoner, Eddie Nalon, died in segregation at Millhaven Maximum Security Prison in Bath, Ontario. It is a day to honour, remember and bring visibility to those who have died inside Canadian prisons. On this day in 1974, prisoners came together to fast and refuse to work as an act of solidarity. Of note, refusing to eat and work are amongst the minimal tools of protest available to those in prison.

Beyond prison walls, PJD has been a day for allies to stand in solidarity. There is a history of community organizing outside of prisons - or at sites of significance - to raise awareness, remember those who have died, and to engage in noise making to show those confined inside that the community is standing in solidarity with them.

In particular, this is a day to draw attention and raise awareness about the over-incarceration of Black, Brown, Asian, and Indigenous communities. This is particularly true for incarcerated Trans, Non-Binary, Two-Spirited and femme people. We know that incarceration deeply intersects with risk and rates of HIV/HCV, and that people living with HIV/HCV in prison continue to face stigma, discrimination and barriers to medication and quality care. PJD is also a day for us to raise awareness about the deep level of violence and institutional racism against these communities from police, prison guards, and the systems in which they work. As we all collectively work to build community capacity to support each other and prevent the unnecessary and costly incarceration of our community members – this is an important day for us to amplify these important messages.

With these realities in mind, we call on all AIDS Service Organizations across Ontario to engage in PJD organizing and support local events. We encourage you to hold space to raise awareness and stand in solidarity with imprisoned community members. We need to collectively oppose prison and police violence and promote community models of care, support, and healing, while remembering those who have died in prison.

Together, ACCHO, PASAN, and WHAI will be hosting an **Instagram Live** event to raise awareness about PJD. This will happen in advance of PJD, on **Monday, August 8th at 2:00 p.m.**, to raise awareness and encourage community members to learn about PJD and attend events happening in local communities. If you know of events happening, please share this information with us so we can announce it at the Instagram Live. You can do this by emailing **Kristin Boyer, Program Assistant at WHAI, at [kboyer@whai.ca](mailto:kboyer@whai.ca)**.

*Sincerely,*

African Caribbean Council on HIV in Ontario (ACCHO)  
Gay Men's Sexual Health Alliance (GMSH)  
Ontario AIDS Network (OAN)  
Prisoner's HIV/AIDS Support Action Network (PASAN)  
Women and HIV/AIDS Initiative of Ontario (WHAI)