ACCM is a volunteer-based community organization working to enhance the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS and/or hepatitis C, to prevent HIV and hepatitis C transmission, and to promote community awareness and action.

ACCM envisions a society free from the stigma of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C. We are committed to building a community where all people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and/or hepatitis C receive the support they need. We are dedicated to empowering individuals to make informed decisions related to their health.
Last year, ACCM committed to building our knowledge around issues that were directly affecting the communities we proudly support. On this 31st year of service, we’ve been hard at work nuancing the experience of aging with HIV for men and women; we’ve become solicited experts in the field of chemsex support; we’ve integrated national and regional committees preparing large scale U=U campaigns and we’ve been reaching more queer and trans youth than ever before. Of course, none of this could’ve come to fruition without the commitment and support of our members, volunteers, donors, partners and colleagues. ACCM’s family has proven yet again that by-and-for programming is the most sustainable form of community development. Nothing about us, without us.

At the forefront of member empowerment and life-changing services are our innovative projects. We have started to expand our SextEd program to include anonymous treatment information inquiries for people living and thriving with HIV and/or co-infection. We sought to amplify the resources available to women living with HIV by offering trauma/resilience support. Our 50+ committee has been engaged in decision-making that directly impacts folks affected by HIV and aging, including the grant proposal process. JQY has been empowering queer and trans youth through sports, self-defence and the arts – yes this includes vogueing and kiki balls! In numbers, we’re talking about 21,736 downloads of our Teacher’s ToolKit, 32 kiosks offered by our Education for Prevention Department, 976 visits to our weekly Dinner and Discussion evenings, and 3,693 crystal meth pipes distributed by our Kontak team.

Looking back at this year, we’ve proven ourselves capable of proposing innovative programming, amplifying the voices of our diversified membership and engaging discussions on game-changing issues even in times of limited resources and financial restraint. There is nothing ACCM does better than create delightful lemonade out of lemons, no matter how many lemons are provided to us. We’re pretty resourceful if you ask us!

It is on these positive notes that we would like to welcome you to have a more in-depth look into this year’s highlights in the following annual report. Finally, how can you help? Do not hesitate to assist us in making more lemonade by becoming a monthly donor. Every donation counts.

Patrick & Jeansil
ACCM’s Support Services programs enhance the quality of life of people living with HIV or hepatitis C by providing peer support, personal development and treatment information, as well as addressing stigma and discrimination.

**Support Services**

Women’s Social Group
This year participants learned about skincare with Kiehls, discovered the health and relaxation benefits of essential oils, baked and decorated cookies for the holiday party, and attended exhibits at the Museum of Contemporary Art. This project is integral to ACCM’s meaningful involvement of women living with HIV as it develops their project management skills by providing them with the tools to lead and guide the direction of the group.

Aging with HIV
The aging with HIV committee put forward a series of 5 workshops to address aspects of aging with HIV, such as physical and mental health, housing, law & finance and grieving the loss of a soulmate. We also learned about the different issues our aging membership faces and brainstormed ways to work through some of these challenges. The workshops were a great success, with an average attendance of 10-12 participants.

“’I have been a member of ACCM since it opened 32 years ago. Since then, they have been committed to creating a family atmosphere, breaking isolation, fighting discrimination and facilitating social events.”
- Gregg

Housing Committee
Participants of our Housing Workshop formed a committee with the goal of establishing affordable housing for people living with HIV, as well as educate service providers that cater to seniors about the realities of PLHIV and the LGBT community. Both the Aging with HIV Committee and Housing Committee are always looking for more members to get involved and make a difference in our community.

**Year in Numbers**

- 34 new member intakes
- 11 Buddy Program pairings
- 45 Dinner and Discussions with 976 individual visits
- 77 members benefitted from Member Activity Fund projects
- 80 support group sessions
- 104 adults and 30 children benefited from Buyers Club services
- Both cis and trans folks benefit from Buyers Club services
- 18 single-parent households benefited from Buyers Club services
Support for GBMSM Who Use Drugs

Due to increased demand, we improved our support for people who use drugs, which included our first French version of the Meth & Sex workshop for gay, bi and queer men wanting to better understand and manage their relationship with meth and its impact on their sex life. Our KONTAK coordinator also co-created and presented a chemsex training for service providers at the Director of Public Health of Quebec.

Access Program

We believe that everyone living with HIV, regardless of their health care status, should have equal access to treatment and follow-up. By building partnerships with health providers and other organizations, the Access Program will strive to make this more of a reality in Montreal. The program will streamline and simplify the process of obtaining effective treatment, help connect folks to ongoing follow-up, and build a community support network for people who have no access to health care coverage.

Youth Group

ACCM has started a group for young people living with HIV, with one social and one support group a month. In the first group we brainstormed activities and discussion topics, and we are looking forward to carrying these out and cultivating a safe space for our members under 35 to support each other, share their unique experiences, and address stigma.

Member Activity Fund

The Member Activity Fund is a grant program that allocates financial support for activities that are initiated by and for ACCM members living with HIV or Hepatitis C. This past year, 35 of our members attended a hat making party, 28 benefitted from art supplies for a series of workshops through Zone+, 7 of our members went to see Cavalia, and 7 went to dinner and a movie.

“Since becoming a member at ACCM, I have found purpose and meaning in my life. ACCM has given me the confidence to face my realities as a person living with HIV and the strength to help others.” 

-Cris
Jeunes Queer Youth

Jeunes Queer Youth formed relationships with three high schools, supported their Gender and Sexuality Alliances (GSAs), and their students attended our Leadership Summits. We also had increased participation in our bi-annual Leadership Summits and funded fifteen incredible projects from queer and trans youth, such as:

- Queer and Trans Muslims of Colour (QTMoC): Art and Hangouts
- ChamPaintMTL!: Painting and LGBTQ+ Sexuality Discussion for People of Colour
- Let’s Talk About Sex Kiki Ball
- Queer Hoops Montreal: A Place for Queer, Trans and Allied Youth to Play Basketball for Fun
- Festival Massimadi: Film Screening of Ariel Nobre’s, “I Have to Say I Love You”
- Black Flag Combat Club Self-Defence Class with ASTT(e)Q

“Volunteering with Jeunes Queer Youth gave me a chance to see the impact youth like myself can have, and the incredible passion and creativity we can bring to activism. I had a chance to interact with a wide range of youth and members of Montreal LGBTQ+ organizations by volunteering at JQY’s summits, and I continue to be inspired by the youth I have met.”

-Sam

LOOKING FORWARD

KONTAK

KONTAK will soon have a new website and promotional material developed with the help of a JOY grant and a dedicated volunteer. These new images will represent the diversity of KONTAK’s clientele with an aim for inclusion and representation. KONTAK will also be developing a workshop series for gay, bi and queer trans men on various topics, including HIV/STI prevention, contraceptives and hormone interactions, sex toy options and maintenance, safe cruising and much more!

SextEd

Based on feedback from some of ACCM’s youth volunteers, SextEd will be launching a new website that’s easier to use, helps people find Montreal-area services, and has a more authoritative look

Jeunes Queer Youth

Jeunes Queer Youth will be developing a larger online presence through its website and social media channels, which will involve collaborating with SextEd to create sexual health Instagram posts for queer and trans youth.

New KONTAK Outreach Worker

KONTAK hired a new outreach worker to connect with transmasculine populations in need of sexual health and prevention support, as well as access to sterile equipment.

Artsida

Our annual fundraising event, Artsida, relies on the phenomenal effort of our volunteer team and this year we had a record number of volunteers participate.

New KONTAK Outreach Worker

KONTAK hired a new outreach worker to connect with transmasculine populations in need of sexual health and prevention support, as well as access to sterile equipment.

The Volunteer Department recruits new volunteers and finds them fulfilling positions at ACCM that contribute to their personal and professional development. We coordinate intensive orientation sessions throughout the year, ensuring that our volunteers are informed about ACCM’s mission and values.

YEAR IN NUMBERS

8,239 total volunteer hours
2,489 total volunteer hours in E4P (including 1,800 hours for SextEd)
3,387 total volunteer hours in Support Services (including 2,844 hours for Buyer’s Club)
899 total volunteer hours for events (including 786 hours for ArtsIda and 61 hours for the Holiday Party)

Volunteer Orientation

We are now holding our volunteer orientation as a workshop series to make volunteering for ACCM more accessible to those who can’t dedicate two full days for training, or who work in the service industry and aren’t available on weekends.

InterNShips

We’re expanding our partnerships with various educational institutions to develop internships for their students at ACCM. This will ensure that we get help more regularly from people with specialized training, while also helping members of our community acquire experience for their degrees.

“ACCM is like a big family. The members are warm and welcoming, and there is always something to do to help. I came as an intern, and stayed as a volunteer because of the amazing members, staff, and other volunteers, and because the atmosphere really does feel like home.”

-Jennifer
YEAR IN NUMBERS

18,103 visits to the ACCM website
7,290 followers across our social media platforms
$150,000 raised at Artsida9

COMMUNICATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

The Communications Department develops and oversees internal and external communications, as well as branding and messaging for ACCM. It also promotes organizational activities, events, services, and programs, as well as develops ACCM’s media visibility and web presence.

Peer2Peer Engagement
ACCM launched ‘PRIDEwalk’ the first edition of a peer-to-peer fundraiser geared at helping us fund life-changing programming within our support services and education for prevention departments. We chanted for access to treatment for all, echoed the international consensus around undetectability and cried out against the criminalization of members of our communities. Thanks to volunteers and partners, we raised over $7.5K in a handful of weeks and marched with pride!

Artsida9
Nine years flies by too quickly but the butterflies of Artsida are still there. This edition broke prior records and brought in a jaw-dropping $150K. It is with partners, returning and new, that we were able to host a series of beautiful evenings highlighting engaged artists at Epik Hotel, Galerie MX and the Contemporary Art Museum of Montreal. Ready for Artsida10?

Community Leadership
In the fight against stigma and the promotion of sound sexual health information, ACCM has joined a number of National and Regional committees on topics including undetectability, HIV & aging, and the criminalization of HIV non-disclosure. Notably, we were invited to present on our food security and youth engagement programming at the 2018 International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam.

Government Relations
On the federal level, ACCM and our JQY program were handpicked to be profiled by the Public Health Agency of Canada during a media blitz highlighting key game-changers in our field. On the provincial level, we wrapped up a chemsex sub-committee with Regional Public Health tasked with creating trainings for governmental and non-governmental organizations on the topic of drug use, sexuality and GBMSM support. ACCM was also instrumental in the creation of two new provincial subcommittees, one tackling issues experienced by the GBMSM trans communities and the other devoted to tackling institutionalized forms of oppression experienced by people of colour, including migrants and refugees.

LOOKING FORWARD

Artsida Archives
This fall we will be hosting a special Artsida Archives silent auction, where we will be selling artworks from our collection of pieces featured in previous editions of Artsida.

Eat It and Beat It
ACCM is proud to continue the fight against stigma by hosting our very own Drag Brunch this coming Pride season, featuring kitchen staff and servers from the HIV community, including people living with HIV, people in serodiscordant couples, and HIV/AIDS activists. Our drag brunch will challenge stigma and misconceptions around transmission and risk, while promoting increased community awareness and understanding.

“I love using my drag king performance to support ACCM. To me it’s what drag should be about, giving back to the community.”
-Charli Deville

“I was honored to walk with ACCM this year in the pride parade. Reach out to them if you are in need. They are kind and full of love. If you can support them, donations of money are always appreciated in order to sustain their essential services.”
-Uma Gahd