

**For immediate release**

April 20, 2015

## **Living Healthy, Fighting Stigma: Positive Living BC Publishes HIV Disclosure Resource**

**Vancouver, BC:** Imagine the stress of living with a serious chronic condition such as cancer, heart disease, or diabetes, and not being able to talk about it to your family, friends, or employer, out of fear. About 13,000 people in BC potentially face this situation because they are living with another chronic condition—HIV/AIDS. The social stigma still surrounding HIV/AIDS is very real and very prevalent, and can make people living with HIV (PLHIV) afraid or reluctant to discuss their medical condition.

The Positive Living Society of British Columbia has just published a resource aimed at helping PLHIV talk with others about their HIV status, and reducing HIV stigma. It is entitled "[Disclosure: Telling Someone You Are Living with HIV.](#)"

Why should people consider talking about their HIV status? As noted in the resource, being open about one's HIV status helps people receive appropriate healthcare and vital support from family, peers and others. Readers are encouraged to assess whether or not disclosing is right for them, whether they are ready to share their HIV status, who they would like to tell, and how disclosing might affect the people they tell. For people who are certain they are ready to talk about their HIV status, a simple message that lets others know they are seeking support can help bring people closer together. This message can be something as basic as, "I am HIV-positive and I am telling you because you are important to me" or "I am going through a hard time right now and could use your support. I was recently diagnosed with HIV."

"Disclosure: Telling Someone You Are Living with HIV" is based on the lived experience of PLHIV and includes:

- benefits and risks of disclosure;
- information on legal obligations to disclose;
- planning for disclosure; and
- provincial resources offering further information and support.

To obtain copies of this resource, or other educational HIV-related resources, please consult the Society's website ([www.positivelivingbc.org](http://www.positivelivingbc.org)) or email: [leahg@positivelivingbc.org](mailto:leahg@positivelivingbc.org).

- 30 -

**Contact:**

Adam Reibin  
Director of Communications  
Positive Living Society of BC  
604.612.0222

*The Positive Living Society of British Columbia exists to enable persons living with AIDS and HIV disease to empower themselves through mutual support and collective action.*