



National Collaborating Centre
for Infectious Diseases
Centre de collaboration nationale
des maladies infectieuses

OUTREACH PLANNING GUIDE

FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASE PRACTITIONERS WHO WORK WITH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

What is outreach?

Elsabé du Plessis

Project Manager, NCCID

Definitions of outreach

- Many definitions
- In the guide:
 - “The process of locating, contacting, and recruiting groups that are invisible, hidden, or otherwise difficult to engage in a program” (Ford et al. 2007: 174)

and the provision of

- “...information about the nature of the concern, what can be done about it, and how services can be obtained”



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In practice....

Vulnerable population outreach:

1. delivers services to individuals and groups in their natural settings;
2. mobilises and empowers individuals and groups to access mainstream or fixed-site services (e.g. clinics); and,
3. builds community by connecting individuals.



Elements

- Process
- Reaching people
- Delivering “services”
- Distinguishes between risk and vulnerability
- Aim is behaviour change



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What we learned in Toronto

- Definition is fluid
- Core elements
 - For whom
 - To what purpose
 - Where
 - Process
 - Behaviour change



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Process

Behaviour Change

- Invisible, hard to find persons/groups (but not only the disempowered and poor)
- Persons or groups vulnerable to taking a risk, in their natural setting
- Also need for popular education



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Behaviour Change

- Mobilize to access services
- Change behaviours
- Build community and solidarity
- Reduce immediate risk behaviours and situations
- Reduce vulnerability?



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Behaviour Change

- “Where they are at”
- Creating safe spaces
- Virtual settings
- Behaviour varies according to locations
- Can take place inside and outside



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Behaviour Change

- Planned, informed process
- Flexible
- Client involvement
- Distinguishes between risk and vulnerability
- Stand alone or part of comprehensive program



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**Behaviour
Change**

- Debate
- Stages of change
- Changing environment and reducing risks
- Empowering people
- Location



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Other elements

- Respect, spirituality and caring
- Cultural sensitivity
- Communication
- Collaborative



In conclusion

- Defining outreach depends on purpose and context
- Certain elements to consider and think through

