



## Media Advisory

*For immediate release*

### **FORMER PRISONER AND HIV GROUPS IN COURT SUING THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA FOR FAILING TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE PRISON NEEDLE AND SYRINGE PROGRAM**

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, a former prisoner, and three other HIV organizations are suing the Government of Canada over its failure to provide prisoners with easy, confidential, and effective access to needle and syringe programs. Due to the scarcity of sterile injection equipment in prison, people who inject drugs behind bars are forced to share and re-use injection equipment, significantly increasing their risk of contracting HIV and hepatitis C (HCV). We will be arguing in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice that the federal government must meet its legal obligation to protect the health of people in prison. They can do this by introducing an effective prison needle and syringe program in every federal prison.

**WHAT:** Court hearing on Canada's "Prison Needle Exchange Program"

**WHO:** Steve Simons (former prisoner), Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network, Prisoners with HIV/AIDS Support Action Network, and CATIE

vs.

Government of Canada (Minister of Public Safety, Correctional Service of Canada, Commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada, and Attorney General of Canada)

**WHEN:** Monday, December 9, 2019 | Start time 10:00 a.m.

**WHERE:** Osgoode Hall, 130 Queen Street West, Courtroom No. 5, Toronto, Ontario

*Media and public are welcome. Please let us know if you plan to attend and interviews can be arranged.*

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