Recent efforts to deal with COVID-19, AIDS and opioids in Canada has revealed a stark reality. There are deep cracks in the health care network, especially for Canada's indigenous populations. The number of H.I.V. cases has been rising and having a disproportionate impact on indigenous communities. That's why researchers taking part in the 24th annual AIDS conference here in Montreal want a new approach to fighting the 40-year-old disease. Touria Izri reports.

At a gathering of scientists from around the world the focus today is on indigenous peoples in Canada.

We need the global community to stand with us.

Reporter: Doris Pelletier is a researcher and lives with HIV. The communities she works in are battling converging pandemics. COVID-19, AIDS and the opioid crisis.

It's exasperating everything, all those things that have been kind of barriers for us, and it's revealed the cracks.

Reporter: Those cracks are deep. Indigenous peoples living on reserve are three times more
LIKELY TO CONTRACT THE VIRUS.
>> WE HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO DO SURVEILLANCE.
>> Reporter: THE MOST RECENT DATA SHOWS CASES HAVE BEEN RISING ACROSS CANADA. BUT WITH COVID-19 LIMITING ACCESS TO TESTING WE DON'T HAVE AN ACCURATE PICTURE OF THE NUMBERS.
>> THERE IS MANY LINKS BETWEEN HIV AND AT THE CENTRE PEOPLE WHO ARE USING DRUGS AND KEY POPULATIONS SUCH AS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.
>> Reporter: PUBLIC HEALTH EXPERTS POINT TO POVERTY, UNEQUAL ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES AND SYSTEMATIC RACISM.
>> SOME OF THE ROOT CAUSES ARE BECAUSE OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO OUR ANCESTORS ON THIS LAND.
>> THE GAPS FOR HEALTH CARE ARE WIDER FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES LIVING WITH HIV IN REMOTE AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES.
SHE COORDINATES THE COVID-19 RESPONSE IN THE YUKON AND SAYS ONE OF THE BIGGEST BARRIERS IS JUST GETTING TESTED.
>> THERE'S ONE POINT OF CARE AND IT HAS TO BE IN WHITEHORSE OR IN A CENTRAL CITY LIKE VANCOUVER OR EDMONTON AND PEOPLE ARE NOT ABLE TO ACCESS THAT.
>> SHE SAYS LESSONS LEARNED FROM COVID CAN BE APPLIED TO TREATING HIV IN THE NORTH LIKE TELEHEALTH AND VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS.
THERE IS ALSO A PUSH FOR GREATER COLLABORATION WITH THE LAUNCH THIS WEEK OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS HIV COALITION.
>> WE WANT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO BE AT THE FOREFRONT AND TO BE TALKING ABOUT THOSE SOLUTIONS.
>> Reporter: SOLUTIONS TO A 40-YEAR-OLD CRISIS AND RENEWED HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.
TOURIA IZRI, CTV NEWS.
>>> AND AS PART OF THIS FIRST WEEKEND OF PRIDE IN MONTREAL, THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL AIDS CONCERT IN THE CITY TOMORROW NIGHT. SOWL DIVA MICHELLE SWEENEY WILL SING TO CELEBRATE THE RESILIENCE AND DIVERSITY OF COMMUNITIES LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS. SHE'LL BE JOINED BY Dr. JEAN PIERRE ROUTI, LOCAL CO-CHAIR OF THE AIDS CONFERENCE WHO WILL SPEAK AND ASK, WHERE WILL WE BE IN 20 YEARS WITH AIDS. THAT CONCERT AND ADDRESS WILL BEGIN AT 7 P.M. TOMORROW NIGHT IN PARC DE LESPOIRE ON SAINTE-CATHERINE STREET AND PANET IN THE GAY VILLAGE. ADMISSION IS FREE.

>>> DETERIORATING CONDITIONS OF THE NOTRE DAME DES NEIGES CEMETERY, THE LARGEST IN THE COUNTRY, CONTINUES TO DRAW COMPLAINTS. WORKERS HAVE GONE WITHOUT A CONTRACT FOR YEARS AND MANAGEMENT SAYINGS IT'S FACING A MAJOR DEFICIT. MEANTIME, FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOVED ONES RESTING THERE, THE FRUSTRATION AND SADNESS KEEPS BUILDING. IMAN KASSAM REPORTS.

>> KIRCHMANNN SAYS THE SITE OF HIS FAMILY'S GRAVE IS HORRENDOUS.
>> I FEEL TERRIBLE. I FEEL LIKE THEY'RE BURIED IN AN UNMARKED GRAVE.
>> Reporter: THE GRASS IS SO HIGH HE SAYS HE CAN'T EVEN VISIT HIS FAMILY.
>> MY PARENTS ARE HERE, MY GRANDPARENTS ARE HERE. I HAVE A BROTHER BURIED HERE, OR RESTING HERE. AND I'M A LITTLE ANNOYED WITH THE UPKEEP OF THE GROUNDS.
>> Reporter: HE SAYS HIS CALLS TO MANAGEMENT OF THE NOTRE DAME DES NEIGES CEMETERY GO UNANTICIPATED.
>> THEY PUT ME ON HOLD AND DON'T ANSWER.
>> Reporter: VISITORS COMPLAIN OF OVER GROWN GRASS AND WEEDS, OVERFLOWING GARBAGE, BROKEN TOMBSTONES AND HOLES DUG UP BY GROUNDHOGS.
>> THE FLOORS ARE DIRTY. THERE'S SO MUCH DIRT ON IT THAT IT'S GRANULATED UNDER YOUR FEET, THAT YOU -- SPIDERWEBS, WATER ON THE FLOOR, GARBAGE THAT, YOU KNOW, ISN'T PICKED UP FOR THREE, FOUR WEEKS.
>> Reporter: MARY ICAMPO HAS RESORTED TO CLEANING THE MAUSOLEUM HERSELF.
>> I CRY EVERY WEEK.
SO I DO WHAT I CAN.
AND I BROUGHT MY BROOM, I BROUGHT MY RAKE.
AND I'M GOING TO CLEAN SOME MORE.
FOR ME.
FOR MY PARENTS.
>> Reporter: GROUNDS WORKERS HAVE BEEN WITHOUT A CONTRACT FOR THREE AND A HALF YEARS AND THEIR UNION V.P. SAYS THERE ARE EXTREME STAFF SHORTAGES.
>> WE USED TO HAVE A LOT OF PEOPLE, AT LEAST 20, 25 PEOPLE DOING THE GRASS.
THAT WAS JUST MAINTAINING IT AND WE COULD WORK WITH IT.
NOW THAT WE'RE DOWN FIVE, SIX PEOPLE ON GRASS, SEVEN PEOPLE AND OFTEN ONE PERSON ON THE WEED EATER DOING THE WHOLE CEMETERY, IT'S NOT NORMAL.
>> Reporter: HE SAYS STAFF ARE BURNING OUT AND LEAVING AND HE HAS THE SAME QUESTIONS THE VISITORS DO.
>> WHY CAN'T THEY HIRE MORE PEOPLE?
WHY AREN’T THEY HIRING MORE PEOPLE?

>> Reporter: FABRIQUE, THE NON-PROFIT WHICH OVERSEES THE CEMETERY, HASN’T RETURNED CTV'S REQUEST FOR COMMENT. IN A PRESS RELEASE FROM 2021 IT SAID THE CEMETERY HAD A $100 MILLION DEFICIT AND THAT SEVERAL DIFFICULT DECISIONS WILL NEED TO BE MADE TO PUT AN END TO THE CEMETERY’S ANNUAL OPERATING DEFICIT. AND WE HOPE TO NEGOTIATE AND CONCLUDE NEW AGREEMENTS WITH THE UNIONS REPRESENTING OUR OPERATIONS AND OFFICE EMPLOYEES IN THE COMING MONTHS.

>> BUT 13 MONTHS LATER AND VISITORS ARE LEFT WONDERING HOW MUCH LONGER THIS WILL TAKE.

>> HOW CAN THEY ACTUALLY THINK THAT IT’S RIGHT TO LET A PLACE LIKE THIS GET TO THIS CONDITION?

>> Reporter: THE UNION AND THE EMPLOYER ARE EXPECTED TO BE BACK AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE IN SEPTEMBER.

IMAN KASSAM, CTV NEWS.

CAROL THE COMPANY BUILDING THE REM LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM RECENTLY ANNOUNCED ITS STATE-OF-THE-ART BORING MACHINE HAS TUNNELLED ALL THE WAY TO THE AIRPORT AND ONE MAYOR IS NOW PLEADING FOR IT TO GO JUST ANOTHER 700 METRES. BILLY SHIELDS HAS THAT.

>> Reporter: THE TECHNOPARK STATION IN SAINT-LAURENT WAS THE STARTING POINT FOR ALICE, AN AFFECTIONATELY NAMED AUGER THAT RECENTLY DRILLED A TWO AND A HALF KILOMETRE LONG TUNNEL FOR THE REM LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM TO TRUDEAU AIRPORT. BUT ALICE ISN’T JUST ANY DRILLING MACHINE.

>> A SUBTERRANEAN INDUSTRIAL PLANT WHERE WE HAVE EVERYTHING THAT WE NEED TO INSTALL ALL THE
ELEMENTS AND ALL THE RINGS THAT MAKE UP THE FINAL TUNNEL.
>> Reporter: ALICE NOT ONLY EXCAVATE BUT IT SUBTRACTS EARTH AND ROCKS THAT CAN BE RECYCLED INTO CEMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION. WHAT'S MORE IT CONTAINS RING SEGMENTS THAT FORM THE TUNNEL IT'S DIGGING OUT. IN OTHER WORDS, IT DIGS AND BUILDS AT THE SAME TIME, 35 METRES UNDERGROUND.
>> FIRST IN QUEBEC. WE NEVER USED THAT KIND OF MACHINE. IT'S A REALLY EFFICIENT MACHINE.
>> Reporter: ALICE RECENTLY MADE THIS LAST SESSION AM JUST BELOW THE RUNWAYS AT THE AIRPORT. THE NEXT STEP IS TO BUILD A STATION THERE, AND, OF COURSE, THERE ARE OTHER ADDITIONS.
>> WE HAVE TO INSTALL THE RAILS AND THE CONTROL SYSTEM, THE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM.
>> Reporter: BUT THE MAYOR OF DORVAL IS CONCERNED HIS CITY'S YEARS OLD IDEA IS GOING TO BE LEFT AT THE STATION.
>> SO THIS IS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO IT. IT'S THE RIGHT TIME TO DO IT. AND I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY WE CAN'T GO THAT EXTRA 700 METRES. IT'S A NO BRAINER. THE DECISION IS SIMPLE. CALLS FOR BUILDING 700 MORE FOR BUILDING 700 MORE METRES OF TUNNEL TO CONNECT THE TERMINAL TO THE DORVAL CIRCLE AND NEARBY VIA RAIL STATION.
>> THE MACHINE IS IN THE GROUND AT THE AIRPORT TODAY. WE'RE READY TO BUILD. THEY'RE READY TO BUILD. THEY COULD BUILD IF THEMED IT.
>> Reporter: THE MAYOR POINTS TO SEVERE TRAFFIC ISSUES AND A
NEED FOR PEOPLE IN DORVAL TO HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSIT.

>> (INDISCERNIBLE) A GOOD COLLABORATOR FOR THAT BUT IT'S NOT JUST A DECISION FROM OUR PART. THERE'S A LOT OF ENTITIES.

>> DORE SAYS RIGHT NOW IT WOULD COST $250 MILLION, WITH PRICE HE SAYS IS A BARGAIN.

>> TAKE THIS OVER 50 YEARS AND $250 MILLION SPREAD OVER 50 YEARS IS INCONSEQUENTIAL.

>> Reporter: BOTH OTTAWA AND QUEBEC ARE LOOKING AT THE PROPOSAL. WHILE THE FIRST TRAIN SHOULD ROLL TO THE AIRPORT BY 2025, IT WILL BE UP TO THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO DETERMINE IF ALICE'S JOB IS DONE OR IF SHE HAS ANOTHER 700 METRES LEFT TO GO.

BILLY SHIELDS, CTV NEWS.

>> Caroline: A FAMILY IN ALBERTA IS LOOKING FOR A STEM CELL MATCH FOR THEIR TWO-YEAR-OLD SON. BECAUSE OF A LACK OF DONORS WITH THE SAME ANCESTRY, IT'S PROVING

>> Reporter: TWO H RE FORM OF LEUKEMIA. HE SPENT THE MAJORITY OF HIS LIFE IN A HOSPITAL BED.

>> DAY AFTER HIS BIRTHDAY, JUNE 27, THEN WE WERE TOLD HIS CONDITION HAS WORSENED, AND SINCE THEN HE'S BEEN IN HOSPITAL ON BREATHING SUPPORT.

>> Reporter: IZREY -- EZRA SPENT TIME AT THE EDMONTON STOLLERY. NOW HE'S LIVING AT THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN CALGARY AND HIS CONDITION IS GETTING WORSE.

>> HE'S GOING THROUGH LOTS OF CHEMOS, I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER THE NUMBER ANYMORE.
HE'S DONE TOTAL BODY RADIATION AND A LOT OF OTHER TREATMENT. ONCE THE NEXT STEP IS TO FIND A STEM CELL DONOR. 
>> Reporter: JACOB HAS ALREADY DONATED STEM CELLS TO HIS SON.