

Advisory Council on AIDS

Report for August 1995 – July 1996

Hong Kong

Preface

This is the third annual report of the Advisory Council on AIDS compiled by the Council's Secretariat. It is also the final report of the current term ended on 31 July 1996. Established in 1990, the Council has been actively working towards the development of strategies for the prevention, care and control of HIV/AIDS in Hong Kong. It also plays a co-ordinating role in the implementation of the local programme.

1995 marks the beginning of the second decade since AIDS was first reported in Hong Kong. A photo exhibition entitled "10 Years of AIDS in Pictures" was held to coincide with World AIDS Day '95 with the objective of reviewing our development in the past. On November 8 and 9, 1996, the Advisory Council on AIDS will host the first Hong Kong AIDS Conference. This will certainly become the milestone in Hong Kong's AIDS strategy development. To document the progress of Hong Kong's AIDS programme, this report summarises all activities undertaken by the Council and its committees working groups in the past one year. It also gives a brief description of its historical past. As it is a concise report, details of AIDS campaigns, service provision, formulated policies and guidelines are not included. Readers are welcome to contact the Secretariat if these are required.

Finally, the Advisory Council on AIDS invites comments on all aspects of programme development. This report is part of the continuing process of strengthening communication among the Council, government departments and NGOs involved in AIDS prevention, care and control in Hong Kong.

Secretariat
Advisory Council on AIDS
Hong Kong
August 1996

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1. HIV/AIDS Situation in Hong Kong

Introduction

The first case of AIDS in Hong Kong was reported in February 1985. In the same year, 55 persons were found to be infected with HIV when the sero-epidemiological surveillance programme started operation in April. To document the extent of HIV/AIDS epidemic in Hong Kong, three major methods of data collection have since been used :

HIV/AIDS voluntary reporting system
Surveillance among selected groups
Unlinked anonymous screening (UAS)

Voluntary Reporting System

As of 30 June 1996, the cumulative number of reported HIV infection was 702. Among them, 214 have developed AIDS. Of the HIV-infected cases, 68% were Chinese and 84% were in the age range of 21-50 years. The male to female ratio was 8:1. However, more women are becoming affected recently. Of the 78 infected women, 23(29%) were diagnosed in the past one year. Overall, sexual transmission accounted for 81% of all reported infection. The proportion of heterosexually acquired infection has been steadily increasing in the last couple of years (figure). Heterosexual contact has continued to be the most important risk factor for HIV transmission, accounting for 26% of the newly reported cases in the last 12 months. A rising trend of married women infected by their husbands was observed. A girl at the age of 14 was reported to have contracted HIV through sex in the quarter April-June 1996.

Among the reported cases of HIV infection, 9.4% were blood or blood products recipients who acquired the infection before HIV screening of donated blood and heat/detergent treated clotting factors were available in 1985. Injecting drug use accounted for only 2% of all reported

cases. The first case of perinatally acquired infection was reported in June 1994, and the second case in the same month the following year. At present there are 3 reported HIV cases through perinatal transmission, of whom two have developed AIDS.

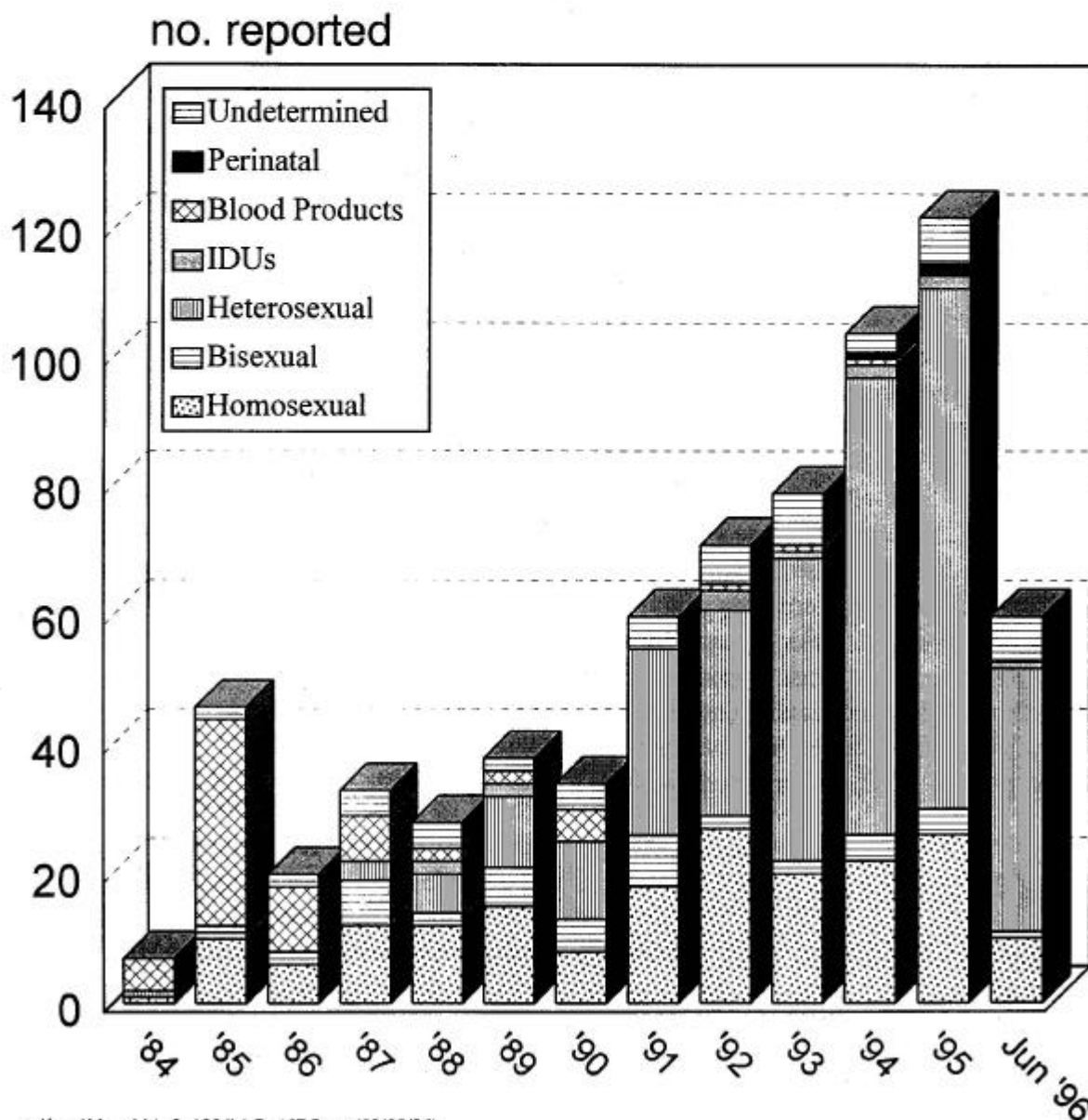
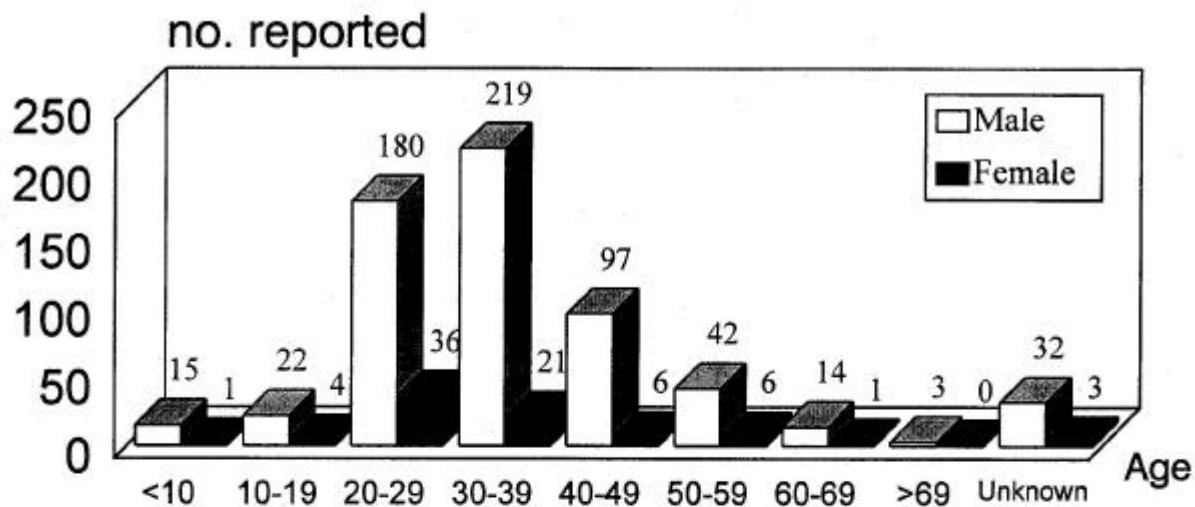
Surveillance in Selected Groups

HIV antibody tests have been offered to clients of STD clinics (Social Hygiene Clinics) and drug users attending Methadone clinics and other drug rehabilitation services since 1985. The Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service has also regularly screened all donated blood collected since August 1985. The prevalence rates have remained low : < 0.01% among blood donors and < 0.1% among STD patients and drug users.

Unlinked Anonymous Screening

As a supplement to the above two programmes, unlinked anonymous screening (UAS) was introduced in November 1990. To date, UAS has been regularly conducted in the following groups: clients of Methadone Clinics, prisoners, neonates, street drug users, and TB (tuberculosis) patients. As at 30.6.96, a cumulative total of 57,396 UAS tests (37,877 blood samples, 17,924 urine samples and 1,595 saliva samples) were carried out since the introduction of the screening in November 1990. 22 samples (11 blood and 11 urine samples) were found to be positive for HIV antibody. The studies have confirmed that the HIV prevalence in Hong Kong is lower than 0.1%. As a regular exercise, UAS is now implemented under the supervision of the Scientific Committee of the Advisory Council on AIDS.

Reported HIV Infection in Hong Kong 1984 - June 1996



2. Historical Development of Hong Kong's AIDS Programme

The development of the Hong Kong AIDS programme can be divided into the following three phases:

The Initial Phase 1984 - 1986

At a time when less than 15,000 AIDS cases were reported worldwide and before the first AIDS case was diagnosed in Hong Kong, an Expert Committee on AIDS was set up by the then Medical & Health Department in November 1984 to "... discuss and review the medical aspects of AIDS and to work out a plan necessary for monitoring and managing the disease when required." A Scientific Working Group (SWG) was subsequently formed to implement medical, surveillance and public health activities. Between 1984 and 1986, the main emphasis of the AIDS programme was to rapidly establish an infra-structure necessary for the containment of the disease.

The key achievements of the initial phase were:

(a) Safeguarding Blood and Blood Products

The Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service commenced screening of all donated blood for HIV antibody since August 1985. In July of the same year, the Medical & Health Department procured the safer heat-treated blood product to replace all old stock of blood products used in public hospitals, thus eliminating the risk of HIV infection to haemophiliacs through exposure to contaminated blood products.

(b) Initiation of the Surveillance Programme

A surveillance programme was initiated in 1985 to monitor HIV prevalence among certain groups, namely: haemophiliacs, patients of social hygiene clinics, prisoners. The programme was later extended to cover semen donors, clients of drug treatment and rehabilitation centres, and health care workers having sustained accidental exposure to contaminated blood.

(c) Provision of Clinical Service

The Special Medical Consultation Clinic was established in September 1985 to handle enquiries from doctors on matters relating to AIDS and to provide HIV test to clients on an anonymous and confidential basis. A telephone counselling service began operation in November 1985 for persons who believed themselves to be at risk.

(d) Initiation of Awareness Campaigns

Publicity and health education materials were produced to arouse awareness towards the disease and its related risk behaviours. The importance of safer sex and risk reduction in drug use were stressed.

The Intensification Phase 1987 – 1990

The Government felt the need of intensifying the programme, and to pay particular attention to publicity, education and counselling:

(a) Publicity

The *Committee on Education & Publicity on AIDS* (CEPAIDS) was established in January 1987. In the same year,

the *Publicity Working Group* was set up under CEPAIDS to formulate publicity strategies and oversee their implementation. From 1987 to 1990, it produced 10 promotional films for screening on television. It also organized publicity activities at annual World AIDS Days. During the period, a whole range of printed materials including leaflets, newsletters, stickers, posters, comic books etc. were produced.

(b) Education and Training

From 1987 to 1990, 230 talks were delivered to 76,087 students by the AIDS Counselling & Health Education Service of the Medical & Health Department. Seminars were regularly organized for teachers, social workers and staff of drug rehabilitation programmes. Guidelines and information booklets were compiled and distributed to doctors, nurses and teachers.

(c) Counselling

An AIDS Counselling Hotline (2780 2211) was established by the Medical & Health Department for answering public enquiries on all aspects of AIDS. Between 1,000 to 1,600 enquiries were handled per month. A significant proportion of infected persons were followed up at the Special Medical Consultation Clinic.

The Consolidation Phase 1990 – 1995

The expansion of the AIDS programme had led to the call for better co-ordination and the development of a substantive effort towards AIDS prevention and control. With the establishment of the Advisory Council on AIDS (ACA) in 1990, the AIDS programme became streamlined. An increase in community involvement was witnessed.

(a) Streamlined Organization Structure

The ACA was established in March 1990 to review and interpret trends and development

relating to HIV/AIDS, and to advise the Director of Health on all aspects of the AIDS programme. CEPAIDS was put under the ACA, and restructured to incorporate the following working groups: research and evaluation, publicity, training of intermediaries, drug abuse & AIDS, community, schools/students and youth. The SWG became the operational arm of the Council on matters of epidemiology, surveillance, clinical care and guidelines establishment.

At the end of the year 1993, the ACA was restructured and has since been underpinned by three committees, each focusing on a specific aspect of the programme. The three committees are Scientific Committee on AIDS (SCA), AIDS Services Development Committee (ASDC) and the Committee on Education & Publicity on AIDS (CEPAIDS).

(b) Increased Community Involvement

There was a marked increase in community involvement, as evidenced in the following two aspects:

- (i) The Government Programme – There was multi-sectoral representation at the ACA and its committees/working groups to the effect that a majority of the convenors and members were community leaders, professionals and representatives of voluntary agencies rather than government officials.
- (ii) Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) – AIDS Concern was formed in 1990, then the Hong Kong AIDS Foundation in late 1991. By 1993, both had established their status as organizations providing community education as well as counselling and support service to people living with HIV/AIDS. Various new organizations were formed in the following years, including Action for REACH OUT, Society for AIDS Care, AIDS Memorial Quilt Project, HIV Information & Drop-in

Centre of the St. John's Cathedral, TeenAIDS. A Committee on AIDS was formed within the Hong Kong Council of Social Service in late 1994.

(c) Expanded Surveillance

The Unlinked Anonymous Screening (UAS) programme was introduced in 1990 to supplement the surveillance system already in force. UAS had been undertaken for neonates, TB patients, prisoners and drug abusers (see Chapter 2).

(d) Structured Educational Programme

Under the CEPAIDS structure, AIDS educational activities were either developed by its working groups or conducted as regular programmes of government departments or voluntary agencies. Essentially, educational programmes were implemented at three levels, namely:

- (i) General Public – through the effort of the *Publicity Working Group* and the regular media events organized by the Department of Health.
- (ii) Community Groups – programmes were designed to tailor to the needs of different community groups. The various working groups of CEPAIDS targeted respectively the schools/ students, health care workers, teachers and other intermediaries, drug users, workforce, students, youth etc.
- (iii) People Practising High Risk Behaviours – through the Department of Health's AIDS Unit (formerly the AIDS Counselling & Health Education Service), and through liaison with special groups, e.g. commercial sex workers, people with multiple sex partners etc and NGOs.

(e) The AIDS Trust Fund

The AIDS Trust Fund was set up with \$350M by the Government in early 1993 to (i)

offer ex-gratia payment to haemophiliacs who became HIV-infected through transfusion of contaminated blood/blood products before August 1985, (ii) finance medical/support service projects, and (iii) support publicity/education projects.

The Current AIDS Programme

The Hong Kong AIDS programme has evolved from a health-initiated programme to a multi-sectoral one involving both government and community efforts. It is overseen by ACA. The operational programmes are delivered by government departments, the Hospital Authority and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Apart from organisations working specifically on AIDS, there are other agencies which have participated actively in the AIDS programme e.g. Caritas, SARDA, Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, Hong Kong Red Cross, the Family Planning Association of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, the Hong Kong Children & Youth Service.

In late 1995, the Council for the AIDS Trust Fund approved a grant to establish an AIDS Education, Research and Resource Centre at the Wang Tau Hom Jockey Club Clinic. Operative under the AIDS Unit, the Centre (called "*Red Ribbon Centre*") will facilitate the conduction of AIDS education programmes in the community. Red Ribbon Centre is scheduled to begin operation at the end of 1996.

In summary, activities provided by the current programme in Hong Kong are enumerated below:

- (a) *Epidemiological surveillance & analysis, HIV reporting, UAS*
- (b) *Development of guidelines for professionals on the prevention, control and management of HIV infection*
- (c) *General (including media) publicity*

(d) AIDS education & training programmes for targeted groups

(e) HIV antibody test, counselling, infoline and hotline services

(f) HIV clinical management and support service, home care

(g) Infection control

(h) Ensuring safety of blood/blood products

3. Advisory Council on AIDS

Introduction

The Expert Committee on AIDS formed in 1984 was transformed into the Advisory Council on AIDS (ACA) in 1990 to better cope with the epidemic. The third term of the ACA came into office with effect from 1 August 1994. The membership of the third term (August 1994 to July 1996) is shown at Appendix A.

With the objective of promoting community participation, ACA's membership has included community leaders, professionals and representatives of voluntary agencies. In July 1994, ACA published its first policy document *Strategies for AIDS Prevention, Care and Control in Hong Kong*. It became the blueprint of Hong Kong's AIDS strategy as endorsed by the Advisory Council. The terms of reference of ACA are:

- (a) To keep under review local and international trends and developments relating to HIV infection and AIDS; and
- (b) To advise Government on effective programmes for prevention of AIDS and support services for HIV-infected persons and on further development of a comprehensive strategy on AIDS.

The ACA is now underpinned by three committees, each supported by working groups and sub-committees. The committees are :

- (a) *Scientific Committee on AIDS (SCA) - the former Scientific Working Group renamed*
- (b) *AIDS Services Development Committee (ASDC)*

- (c) *Committee on Education & Publicity on AIDS (CEPAIDS)*

The third term of the ACA had met three times, during the reporting period as follows :

1. (16th meeting) 9 January 1996
2. (17th meeting) 15 April 1996
3. (18th meeting) 19 July 1996

HIV Infection and the Health Care Workers

Following the self-disclosure of HIV status by a dentist in Hong Kong in November 1992 and the resultant public concern over the possibility of HIV infection in the health care setting, the ACA commissioned in late 1992 a Special Working Group to draw up a set of guidelines on HIV infection and the health care workers. The ACA endorsed the guidelines in January 1994 and had it printed into a booklet. Over 10,000 copies had been issued to the Hospital Authority, medical and dental associations, associations of supplementary medical professions, all practising doctors & dentists in the territory.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Special Working Group, an Expert Panel on HIV-infected health care workers was formed by the Director of Health in March 1994. The Panel serves to advise on the management of HIV-infected health care workers and to consider whether job modification or restriction is warranted, as and when advice is sought by the attending doctor of an HIV-infected health care worker. A case-by-case approach is adopted in considering all factors which may influence the degree of risk and work performance.

The Expert Panel had met to work out procedures on handling of cases. A referral system for attending physicians who take care of HIV-infected health care workers has been established. A meeting would be convened by the Panel within 7 days upon receipt of the referral. As of the end of March 1996, no cases have been referred to the panel for advice.

In mid-1995, letters had been sent to local medical and nursing associations to remind health care staff of the established guidelines and the need of seeking advice from the expert panel. The message was printed in the May 1995 issue of the newsletter of the Hong Kong Medical Association. Similar letter had been sent again in mid-1996.

The guidelines had also been incorporated in the new publication "AIDS Manual for Doctor and Dentists" published by the Department of Health in July 1995. A video on infection control in protecting staff and patients from bloodborne diseases in clinic settings was produced. Another one on dental care is under preparation.

ACA Newsfile

To keep members of the Council posted on the epidemiological trend of AIDS and development of the local AIDS programme, the Council Secretariat has, since January 1994, commenced issuing a monthly newsletter, the *ACA Newsfile*, for the information of members of the ACA and all its committees and working groups. Edited by Consultant (Special Preventive Programme) of the Department of Health, 31 issues have been published up to July 1996.

Other publications distributed together with the ACA Newsfile include: (a) *AIDS Trustnews* - a quarterly newsletter of the Council for the AIDS Trust Fund, (b) *Hong Kong STD/AIDS Update* - a quarterly surveillance report published by the AIDS Unit and the Social Hygiene Service of the Department of Health, (c) *Red Ribbon* - a publication of people living with HIV/AIDS co-ordinated by the AIDS Unit of the Department of Health and sponsored by the AIDS Trust Fund, and (d) a four-monthly *AIDS Bulletin* prepared

by the AIDS Unit for youth, students and the public. The first three are new publications published since early 1995.

Proposed Restructuring

In order to better equip Hong Kong in facing the challenge of the coming years, a working group has been formed to review the existing structure, administration and functions of the ACA, with a view to making recommendations to the Government on how the running of the ACA could be improved in the future. Based on local and overseas experiences, as well as results of a questionnaire survey conducted on members of the Council, its committees and working groups, the working group had compiled its report "A Proposal for Reform", which was endorsed by the Council in January 1996. The proposal had been submitted to the Government for consideration. In summary the following recommendations had been made: (a) that the Council be charged with providing independent policy advice on all aspects on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and control in Hong Kong; (b) that the composition of the Council be revised with wider community participation and the representation of more government departments; (c) that the secretariat be strengthened; and (d) that the working relationship between the Council and NGOs be streamlined. Other proposals were made to improve the image and smooth running of the Council in future.

Programmes in Penal Institutions

In early 1996, the ACA studied the AIDS prevention and control programmes established in penal institutions by the Correctional Services Department. Members agreed to strengthen education and surveillance activities in this unique setting.

Hong Kong AIDS Conference

The Advisory Council would be hosting Hong Kong's first ever Conference on AIDS on 8-9 November 1996 at the Lam Woo

International Conference Centre of Hong Kong Baptist University. The objectives of holding the conference are: (a) to promote education and research for improving the prevention, care and public health control programmes on HIV infection in Hong Kong; (b) to share experience in research on AIDS; and (c) to co-ordinate local efforts on planning and evaluation of programmes on AIDS.

An Organising Committee was formed by the ACA in April 1996. The Committee is chaired by Ms. Carlye Tsui, JP. The theme of the Conference is ***Building New Hope Together***. Mrs. Lavender Patten has kindly consented to be the patron of the Conference and shall be officiating at the Conference in November.

International Conference on AIDS

The XIth International Conference on AIDS was held in Vancouver, Canada from 7 to 12 July. The theme of the conference was ***One World One Hope***. The Chairman and two members of the ACA attended the Conference. A report on the Conference was submitted to the Council for discussion at its meeting on 19 July.

Going Cyberspace

In January 1996, AIDS Unit launched its internet HomePage. The HomePage has included information about the Advisory Council - its structure, membership as well as publications. The ACA Newsfile can also be accessed through the HomePage. So far over 2,500 'visitors' have viewed the HomePage. The address is:
<http://www.info.gov.hk/health/aids>.

4. Committee on Education & Publicity on AIDS

Introduction

The Committee on Education and Publicity on AIDS (CEPAIDS) was first established under the then Medical & Health Department in 1987 for designing and implementing AIDS prevention programmes. It was placed under ACA when the latter was appointed by the Governor in March 1990. CEPAIDS was originally underpinned by seven working groups, namely (a) Publicity, (b) Training of Intermediaries, (c) Youth, (d) Schools/Students, (e) Community, (f) Drug Abuse and AIDS, and (g) Research and Evaluation.

At the beginning of the second term of the ACA, CEPAIDS was restructured to streamline its operation. The Working Group on Research and Evaluation was dissolved. Instead, a Planning and Evaluation Subcommittee was set up to undertake reviews on the local AIDS education programmes and to plan future strategies. It was to act as a 'think-tank' to CEPAIDS. The Working Group on Training of Intermediaries was dissolved. It was considered that the training functions could generally be discharged and co-ordinated by the Department of Health and other professional bodies. The Community Working Group was replaced by the Working Group on Workplace.

The restructured CEPAIDS is now underpinned by a *Planning & Evaluation Subcommittee* and five working groups:

Working Group on Youth
Working Group on Schools/Students
Working Group on Workplace
Publicity Working Group
Working Group on Drug Abuse & AIDS

CEPAIDS has the following terms of reference:

- (a) To coordinate educational and publicity activities on AIDS in the territory;
- (b) To develop appropriate AIDS prevention strategies;
- (c) To implement educational activities which require collaborative work of different organisations and/or government departments; and
- (d) To evaluate the effectiveness of the AIDS educational programme in Hong Kong.

Membership of CEPAIDS, the Planning & Evaluation Subcommittee and the five working groups for the term August 1994 – July 1996 are shown at Appendix A. CEPAIDS has met three times during the last one-year period as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. (20 th meeting) | 26 October 1995 |
| 2. (21 st meeting) | 24 January 1996 |
| 3. (22 nd meeting) | 7 May 1996 |

CEPAIDS, in implementing its publicity and educational programmes, adopts basically a target-oriented approach. The various working groups and the government units/NGOs focus on specific community groups in their conduction of tailored education programmes.

Publicity Working Group

Since 1993, Hong Kong has witnessed a shift in the emphasis of its AIDS publicity campaign from disseminating information to fostering a caring

attitude towards AIDS patients and to tackling the complacency of the public.

In 1995, the campaign took another step forward. A press conference was held on 19 May 1995 to launch a TV API on *The Story of JJ*. It was the first time that a Chinese AIDS patient talked about his feeling about the disease, himself and his family on television. The documentary drew a positive response from the public. To keep up with the momentum, two shorter versions, “*Prevention*” and “*Show care to AIDS patients*” were broadcasted subsequently. JJ, however, sadly died in July after fighting a courageous battle against the disease.

A photo exhibition entitled “*10 Years of AIDS in Pictures*” was organised from 1 to 9 December 1995 at the piazza of the Hong Kong Bank Headquarters. An opening ceremony was held on 1 December to coincide with the World AIDS Day 95. Mrs. Lavender Patten officiated at the event and unveiled a centrepiece statue. The exhibition, in retrospect, reviewed the historical development of AIDS education and publicity programmes in the last decade. The photos on display were reminiscent of the memorable moments in Hong Kong’s long battle against AIDS.

On 1 April 1996, a “*10 Years of AIDS in Posters*” Exhibition was opened at Pao Siu Loong Galleries, Hong Kong Art Centre. The exhibition was a show-case of publicity posters produced by the government and voluntary agencies in the past decade. Five *AIDS Awareness Ambassadors* were appointed at the same ceremony to herald the inception of 1996/97 AIDS Awareness Campaign. The five ambassadors, themselves popular radio programme hosts, undertook to help disseminate AIDS awareness messages through their radio programmes. They would appear in a series of Television Announcements of Public Interest (TV APIs) and participate in promotional activities on AIDS education. At the exhibition viewers were invited to vote for their favourable posters.

The 1996/97 AIDS Awareness Campaign focuses on (a) advising people to practise safer sex, (b) encouraging women to actively protect themselves from being infected, and (c) fostering a more receptive and caring attitude toward people living with HIV/AIDS among the public.

Youth Working Group

Since 1991, the Youth Working Group has been launching annually the “*Youth Action on AIDS*” *Funding Scheme* to encourage and mobilise young people to organize innovative projects on education/publicity on AIDS. The Funding Scheme has been a tremendous success in two aspects. Firstly, the projects which were designed by young people appealed more readily to their peers. Secondly, in the process of implementation, the participants themselves benefited by learning a great deal about AIDS and its impact on the community.

In 1995, 19 youth groups had filed in project proposals for the *Funding Scheme*. Of these, 16 proposals were approved. As in previous years, the Scheme was concluded by an exhibition-cum-award ceremony which was held on 3 March 1996 at the City University of Hong Kong.

The *Funding Scheme* enters the sixth year in 1996. Successful applicants would be given a ceiling amount of HK\$8,000 to implement their proposed programmes, an increase of \$2,000 over the previous years. For flexibility, the *Funding Scheme* has been changed to a year-round exercise and application could be submitted at any time. To widen the base of community involvement, projects directly organised by the organisations instead of youth groups would also be accepted.

To pay tribute to the innovative projects launched under the Scheme in the past years, the working group is in the process of compiling a resource casebook summarizing these projects, and incorporating synopses on the role of young people in the fight against AIDS. The casebook had been edited, pending publication.

The Working Group organised a start-off event cum workshop for the *Funding Scheme* 1996/97 in May 1996. It focused on youth in relation to HIV/AIDS education. A game kit was designed and distributed to each of the participants in the event.

Through operating the *Funding Scheme* over the years, the Working Group had been able to identify and make acquaintance with a number of youth workers who had shown an interest in AIDS education/publicity work. In an attempt to build up a larger pool of youth workers with such interest, the working group has been publishing a newsletter to network workers in the field. Named *Networking Voice*, the publication features articles on all aspects of HIV prevention and care for young people. Five issues have so far been released since January 1995. In view of the good response, the Working Group had decided that it be published once every four months on a regular basis.

Some members of the Working Group attended the *International Conference on HIV/AIDS and Social Work* held in Copenhagen, Denmark, 16-27 August 1995. A paper prepared for this occasion was presented in one of its workshops. A report back session was held upon their return.

In view of the good response and the usefulness of the workshop on “*AIDS and Safer Sex*”, an event jointly organised by the Working Group and the Committee on AIDS of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, it had been decided that the workshop would be organised as an annual event. The forthcoming one is scheduled to be held in October 1996.

Working Group on Schools/Students

The Working Group on Schools/Students had produced a number of education/publicity materials for distribution to students, teachers and parents in the past years. The more important ones were :

- (a) An information leaflet on AIDS for secondary students and another for primary students were distributed through schools in June 1993.
- (b) A 44-page booklet entitled ‘Facts about AIDS’ for teachers and parents was distributed in September 1993.
- (c) A teaching kit on AIDS for primary schools was prepared and distributed in mid-1994.

To promote dissemination of information on HIV/AIDS, portable exhibition boards have been on loan to schools to facilitate staging of education programmes.

An in-service training course on sex education for teachers, with the inclusion of HIV/AIDS, had been regularly organised twice a year since 1995. AIDS education for teachers would be included in the sex education programme and integrated with life skill courses in the long run.

A circular to spell out Education Department’s policy on issues relating to HIV-positive pupils in schools was issued to schools in February 1994. The circular set out guidelines on education placement, public education and prevention, confidentiality, legal liability and block insurance policy for aided schools.

Ongoing seminars on AIDS have been organized for principals and teachers of secondary schools, primary schools and kindergartens.

To enrich input to the Working Group, representatives of the Hong Kong Institute of Education and the Vocational Training Council had been invited to join as members. TeenAIDS and 2 secondary schools had also been invited as members

Working Group on Drug Abuse & AIDS

In collaboration with the Department of Health's AIDS Unit, the Working Group on Drug Abuse and AIDS has been organizing regular/ongoing workshops and seminars for inpatients of drug rehabilitation centres, half-way house residents, aftercare patients, methadone users, social workers and allied workers (e.g. AMS staff) working with drug users.

Since 1991, the working group has been conducting annual surveys on street drug users with the objective of monitoring their AIDS knowledge, awareness, attitude and behaviour over time. The 1995 survey (361 persons interviewed) showed that 10.5% respondents admitted injecting heroin regularly and sharing needles with others in the three months period prior to the survey. From the four surveys (1992-1995), it was noted that the age of the local addicts had dropped. The majority of respondents acquired AIDS knowledge from the media.

A pilot project was launched in July 1994 to collect abandoned syringes in the vicinity of Shek Kip Mei Methadone Centre. The project was then extended to Tuen Mun and Yuen Long Methadone Clinics. The latest cleaning-up exercise was conducted in Tai Wo Hau Estate in February 1996. The objectives of the project were threefold, namely :

- (a) to organize, as an environmental project, clean up of abandoned syringes which posed a health hazard;
- (b) to educate drug users on the risks of using and abandoning injecting instruments, and needle-sharing; and
- (c) to distribute AIDS prevention leaflets.

Through the collaboration of the Department of Health's AIDS Unit and the Methadone Clinics, condoms have been available for clients of the Methadone Clinics since May 1994. About 5000 condoms are now distributed per month from these outlets.

The Working Group on Workplace

The Working Group on Workplace has been formed to replace the Community Working Group. The first meeting was held in March 1995. The aim of the working group is to promote AIDS awareness in the workplace, and to advise companies/organisations to adopt a non-discriminatory policy towards their employees. Members of the Working Group would be co-operating with the Hong Kong AIDS Foundation in the conduction of AIDS education activities in the workplace.

Planning and Evaluation Subcommittee

In 1995, the subcommittee, in collaboration with Centre for Clinical Trials and Epidemiological Research (CCTER) of Chinese University of Hong Kong, conducted a survey to evaluate the effectiveness and public acceptance of the new series of TV APIs produced by the Publicity Working Group. A document entitled "***Report on Evaluation of TV APIs on AIDS***" was released. The report was a follow-up to another document "***Evaluation of the Effectiveness of TV APIs***" released in 1992.

A press conference to publicise the report was held on 14 March 1996. The study noted that APIs featuring AIDS patients, like the JJ's story, drew strong impact. It also revealed that APIs featured by celebrities were most commonly recalled. The "***Dead Pyramid***", an AIDS logo used in earlier campaigns, was the one among the most commonly recalled TV APIs.

The Hong Kong Community Charter on AIDS

The Hong Kong Community Charter on AIDS is a joint programme developed by the AIDS Unit of the Department of Health and the Lions Clubs International, District 303 – Hong Kong and Macau. The objectives are to enhance

AIDS awareness and to encourage adoption of non-discriminatory policy in the workplace.

Companies and organizations in Hong Kong are welcome to show their support by signing the Charter. Signatories are presented a plaque if they have fulfilled the commitments as stated in the Charter. As of the end of July 1996, 55 companies/organisations involving and estimated 240,000 employees/members have signed the Charter. So far 11 signatory companies/organisations have fulfilled the commitments of the Charter and been presented with a plaque to commend their achievements.

The Secretary for Civil Service signed the Charter on behalf of the government, a major employer in Hong Kong, by the end of 1994. An internal circular on *AIDS - Education and Policy* was subsequently issued to all government departments to spell out the government's approach in implementing AIDS education and policy in the workplace. The AIDS Unit of the Department of Health has been requested to assist in organising AIDS education programmes for government employees and management staff. The response has been very encouraging, and 28 sessions have been organised as of the end of June.

Recently an exercise targeting District Boards has been launched. It is expected that all district boards will become signatories to the Charter.

World AIDS Day 1995 and 1996

Since 1988, the first of December every year have been commemorated world-wide as the World AIDS Day.

The theme of World AIDS Day 95 was "*Shared Rights. Shared Responsibilities*". The theme underlined that everyone with HIV or AIDS should have the right to be treated with human dignity without discrimination and the right to proper health care. Shared responsibility by the Community as a whole was emphasised.

The CEPAIDS had undertaken to co-ordinated World AIDS Day 1995 activities in Hong Kong. Major organisations involved were AIDS Foundation, AIDS Concern, Hong Kong Council of Social Service, HIV Information & Drop-In Centre, AIDS Memorial Quilt Project, TeenAIDS, Lion Clubs International District 303 Hong Kong & Macau, Department of Health and Information Services Department. The major activities conducted were (a) public awareness campaigns, (b) targeted education programmes, (c) seminars/conference, and (d) media events. For the convenience of the public, a joint programme pamphlet indicating activities undertaken by individual organisations on and around the World AIDS Day was published.

The highlight of World AIDS Day 95 was a photo exhibition entitled "*10 Years of AIDS in Pictures*". The opening ceremony was held on 1 December 1995 and officiated by Mrs. Lavender Patten.

Under the auspices of the Advisory Council on AIDS, Professor James Chin, Clinical Professor of Epidemiology, School of Public Health of the University of California at Berkeley and one of the chief investigators of *AIDS Scenario & Surveillance Research Project*, was invited to speak at a seminar "AIDS in Hong Kong - A Decade in Review" held on 24 November 1995 at the Pacific Place Conference Centre. Another two seminars targeting government directorate staff were held on 28 & 29 November 1995 at the Vocational Training Council. Professor Chin also spoke at a seminar on behavioural surveillance for NGOs on 27 November.

A newspaper supplement featuring the local AIDS situation and roles played by individual NGOs and organisations on HIV/AIDS was published on 1 December 1995 by Apple Daily. A 10 hour phone-in programme on AIDS, jointly organised by Metro Broadcast Channel 997's and Zonta Club, was held on 14 & 15 December 1995.

Arrangement was made with the Post Office for inserting a postal slogan “**World AIDS Day 1 Dec**” on all local mails in the two-week period covering World AIDS Day 1995. Similar agreement has been reached with the Post Office for printing the logo from 25 November to 7 December 1996 on local mails.

A series of activities to commemorate the World AIDS Day 96 will be conducted by various organisations on and around 1 December 1996. The theme chosen by the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) for the World AIDS Day 1996 is “**One World One Hope**”, the same theme adopted for the XI International Conference on AIDS recently held in Vancouver. The theme emphasised the need for people everywhere to put aside their differences and to work together to face the challenge of both slowing the epidemic and alleviating its impact.

5. Scientific Committee on AIDS

Introduction

The Scientific Committee on AIDS (SCA) was renamed from the former Scientific Working Group on AIDS to give it equal status to the other two committees under the ACA i.e. the Committee on Education & Publicity on AIDS and the AIDS Services Development Committee.

The SCA has the following terms of reference: -

- (a) To supervise and evaluate the HIV/AIDS surveillance system in Hong Kong.
- (b) To develop technical and professional guidelines on HIV/AIDS prevention, management and control.
- (c) To recommend and develop training for health care professionals on all aspects of HIV/AIDS prevention and management.
- (d) To recommend and undertake research on the clinical, scientific and epidemiological aspects of HIV/AIDS with special reference to Hong Kong.

The membership of the SCA is at Appendix A. It met two times last year as follows: -

1. (7th meeting) 8 February 1996
2. (8th meeting) 4 June 1996

Guidelines for Health Care Workers

The Scientific Committee on AIDS had, during the period August 1993 – July 1996, formulated or been involved in the formulation of the following guidelines on HIV/AIDS :

- (a) *HIV antibody testing: recommended measures to generate quality results* – This has been printed into a leaflet for distribution to private and public laboratories.
- (b) *Guidelines on management of HIV infection in children* – This was formulated in 1994 and revised in 1995 following new information collected locally and overseas.
- (c) *Prevention and management of tuberculosis in HIV-infected patients in Hong Kong* – The final version has been produced and distributed as an information paper.
- (d) *The choice of safe clotting factor concentrate for treatment of haemophilia in Hong Kong recommended guidelines* - A new set of guidelines has been drafted to replace old specifications.
- (e) *Precautions for handling and disposal of dead bodies* – A proposal was made to the Advisory Council on this issue. An interdepartmental committee comprising the Urban Services Department, Regional Services Department, the Hospital Authority and the Department of Health was formed to establish a new set of guidelines for relevant settings which involved operational procedures in these departments. The final version, published in English/Chinese, has been distributed to related institutes.

- (f) ***Prevention of Transmission of HIV in Health Care Settings - guidelines and practices*** - Formulated in 1990, the guidelines have been revised in mid-1995.
- (g) ***Procedure for Management of Needlestick Injury and Mucosal Contact with Blood or Body Fluids*** - Formulated together with the Department of Health's Scientific Working Group on Viral Hepatitis Prevention in 1992. The guidelines were revised in 1995. A leaflet was published for distribution in March 1996.
- (h) ***Classification System for HIV Infection and Surveillance Case Definition for AIDS Adolescents and Adults in Hong Kong*** - the document was published for distribution in July 1995.

Unlinked Anonymous Screening

As part of an ongoing surveillance programme, unlinked anonymous screening (UAS) was introduced since 1990, the conduction of which was under the supervision of the Scientific Committee on AIDS. Many of the exercises are now conducted on a yearly basis, or that the analyses were made annually.

In late 1995, 4648 neonatal blood samples were tested for HIV antibody under the system and only one showed positive result.

Tests were performed on urine samples of injecting drug users attending methadone clinics. From April 1992 to May 1996, 12,612 urine samples were tested for HIV antibody, a total of three (one positive in 1995) positive cases had been detected. In March 1996, 447 saliva samples were obtained from street injecting drug users and tested for HIV antibody. No positive case was detected.

In late 1995, 2 HIV positive cases were found among 895 urine samples collected from newly diagnosed TB patients.

From March to May 1996, 1,503 urine samples received from Tai Lam Correctional Institutes and Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre were test for HIV antibody. Six positive cases were detected. The Committee has resolved to continue with UAS on different groups on a regular basis.

External Quality Assurance Programme

In 1995, 16 laboratories (2 public and 14 private) participated in the External Quality Assurance Programme for HIV Antibody Testing, administered by the Hong Kong Medical Technology Association, with the technical support of the Department of Health's Virus Unit. All the participating laboratories continued to perform well and results in 1995 were comparable to those obtained in previous years.

AIDS Scenario and Surveillance Research

In the last two years, the SCA has been supervising a new project named *AIDS Scenario & Surveillance Research*. The research project aimed at establishing a behavioural surveillance system to monitor the risk level of Hong Kong in the AIDS epidemic, and to construct scenarios to facilitate policy formulation in its prevention, care and control. The project started operation in late 1994 with the funding support of the AIDS Trust Fund.

The project is a joint programme of Department of Health and the University of Hong Kong. The first scenario report *Estimation and Projection of HIV Infection and AIDS Cases in Hong Kong* was presented by Professor

James Chin at a symposium on World AIDS Day 1994. Professor Chin estimated that some 3,000 persons have been infected by HIV as of the end of 1994. At the end of 1995, with the availability of additional epidemiological data, Prof Chin downward adjusted the estimate to 2000. In the last year report on two qualitative studies were released. They were: (a) Cross-border lorry drivers and commercial sex activities in Hong Kong; and (b) Commercial sex industry in Hong Kong. Field tests of the behavioural surveillance programme is currently being conducted by a research team based at Special Preventive Programme Office of Department of Health.

Advisory Council on AIDS at its meeting on 19 July 1996.

Seminar

To let members of the Advisory Council on AIDS, its committees and working groups know more about the AIDS situation and programme in China, the Scientific Committee invited Professor Zhang Kong-lai, a renowned epidemiologist from China, to hold a seminar "AIDS Education and Research in China" in February 1996. The seminar has met with enthusiastic responses. The general feedback was that more seminars of similar nature should be conducted in future.

Survey on the Training Needs of Health Care Workers on HIV/AIDS

The survey was conducted by the Centre for Clinical Trials and Epidemiological Research, CUHK. The survey explored the AIDS knowledge of health care workers, their attitude toward HIV/AIDS patients and their training needs. It was concluded that AIDS education of health workers need to be enhanced to meet the changing needs of the society. The importance of fostering a supportive attitude towards people with HIV/AIDS was emphasised. It was also agreed that the formats of training should be improved and tailored for different categories of health care professionals in Hong Kong. The report was examined by the SCA and endorsed by the

6. AIDS Services Development Committee

Introduction

In anticipation of an increase in the number of HIV-infected people in the years to come, it was considered necessary to examine how services for HIV/AIDS patients should be developed in the medium to long term. The AIDS Services Development Committee (ASDC) was thus formed in the second term of the ACA and charged with such responsibility.

The ASDC has the following terms of reference:

- (a) To recommend on the strategy of developing clinical and support services for HIV-infected individuals in Hong Kong.
- (b) To co-ordinate available services and facilitate their access to people with HIV/AIDS and their relatives who require them.
- (c) To evaluate the quality and availability of AIDS services in the territory.

The membership of the ASDC and its two working groups are at Appendix A. The Committee has met three times last year as follows: -

1. (8th meeting) 7 November 1995
2. (9th meeting) 27 March 1996
3. (10th meeting) 2 July 1996

A Review of Services Provided to People with HIV/AIDS in Hong Kong

The ASDC submitted its first review report in July 1994. The report summarized all the accomplishments and constraints of the current system of service provision. It then propounded some basic principles which should be adopted in the planning and delivery of services and came up with 21 specific recommendations (see annual report 93/94) on future development.

In addressing the issues raised in the review, a Clinical AIDS Services Coordination Group, an Evaluation Working Group and an Editorial Board for compiling a manual for social welfare personnel were formed. In its last meeting held on 2 July 1996, members reviewed the progress made in the last two years.

Clinical AIDS Services Co-ordination Group

There have been concern about the insufficient coordination of patient services and their limited access to people with HIV/AIDS. To address these problems, a Clinical AIDS Services Co-ordination Group was thus formed under the ASDC with the following terms of reference :

- (a) to advise on the effective co-ordination of existing clinical services provided in the private and public sectors;
- (b) to identify technical constraints, duplications, and other shortcomings in the provision of AIDS services;
- (c) to improve the accessibility and quality of clinical services to people with HIV/AIDS;

- (d) to promote continuity of care for patients with HIV/AIDS.

The membership of the group comprised representatives from 11 private hospitals, the Hospital Authority, the Hong Kong Medical Association, the Hong Kong Dental Association, the Hong Kong College of Nursing and the Department of Health.

The Co-ordination Group had a series of meetings and finally a joint statement, which reflected the unified stand of all members, was drawn up. It stressed the non-discriminatory principle adopted in the care of people living with HIV/AIDS in Hong Kong. The statement with the names of all signatories was published in the April 96 issue of the Hong Kong Medical Association Newsletter.

Working Group on Evaluation

For the purpose of evaluating the quality and effectiveness of service projects conducted for people with HIV/AIDS in Hong Kong, the Working Group on Evaluation under the auspices of the ASDC was thus established. It has the following terms of reference :

- (a) to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of service programmes and projects developed for people with HIV/AIDS in Hong Kong, as determined by the ASDC; and
- (b) to recommend ways of improving the quality and effectiveness of services delivered to people with HIV/AIDS in Hong Kong.

The Working Group has met twice. It was decided that (a) a stock-taking exercise be conducted to take note of service initiatives developed by various organisations, (b) the 21 recommendations made in the last year's review exercise be studied, and (c) research projects conducted by tertiary education institutes in Hong Kong be collected.

New Services

The needs of people with HIV/AIDS for hospice services have been a subject of concern in the community. Following meetings held by the Committee and other organisations, the Hospital Authority undertook to develop pilot hospice services for people with HIV/AIDS. A home/hospice care team was formed by the Society for AIDS Care. The Committee noted the Department of Health's intention of setting up an integrated day treatment centre for STD (sexually transmitted diseases), skin diseases and HIV/AIDS patients. This integrated day treatment centre will be accommodated in the Kowloon Bay Primary Health Care Centre. The construction is in progress.

Disability Discrimination Ordinance and the Equal Opportunities Commission

The *Disability Discrimination Ordinance* was passed by the Legislative Council on 3 August 1995. The Ordinance provides cover for everyone in Hong Kong against discrimination based on disability. HIV/AIDS has been specifically mentioned in the Ordinance as one form of disability.

Pursuant to the passing of the *Disability Discrimination Ordinance*, the government has endorsed the formation of the *Equal Opportunities Commission* whose main function is to execute the provisions of the Ordinance. The Chairperson of the Commission has been appointed in early 1996 and the Commission will be in full function at the end of the same year. Members of the Committee were worried about the rejection of residents of Richland Gardens towards the Government's plan of establishing an integrated day treatment centre in Kowloon Bay to serve patients with skin diseases, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. On 2 July 1996, the Chairperson of the Commission was invited to brief ASDC members on the role and strategy of the Commission at its Committee meeting.

Manual for Social Welfare Personnel

In order to better prepare social welfare personnel in their provision of services to people living with HIV/AIDS, an editorial board was formed to compile a manual to meet their needs. The completed draft was examined and endorsed by the ACA in July 1995. The manual entitled “Manual on HIV/AIDS for Social Welfare Personnel” and its synopsis were published and distributed subsequently. All local social welfare organisations had received the manual whereas a copy of the synopsis had been sent to individual social workers for personal reference. The documents were well received.

Research Activities on AIDS

A stock taking exercise on local HIV/AIDS research initiatives had been conducted. All the tertiary education institutes in Hong Kong had been requested to provide studies and research items on HIV/AIDS, including those still in progress. Based on the input, a report “*Review of AIDS Research Activities in Hong Kong*” was completed in late 1995 and endorsed by the Advisory Council on AIDS in April 1996. The report contains detailed analysis, which, in part, points out the deficiency in certain research areas that needs to be strengthened. The Group noted the limited amount of local research conducted in the last decade. It called for an emphasis on programme evaluation, intervention activities, behavioural studies and their monitoring. More participation from both the academic and non-academic institutions was proposed.

Appendix A : Membership Lists

Advisory Council on AIDS (Third Term: August 1994 – July 1996)

Chairman : Dr. Margaret CHAN, JP

Members : Dr. the Hon. Conrad LAM, JP

Prof. NG Mun-hon

Ms. Carlye TSUI, JP

Mr. TIK Chi-yuen

(up to June 95)

Mrs. Pamela CHAN, JP

Dr. Margaret KWAN

(up to March 95)

Dr. Susan LEONG, JP

Ms. Esther FUNG

Mr. Timothy HA, MBE, JP

Mr. Walter CHAN Kar-lok

Miss Sally YEH

Sister Maureen McGINLEY, MBE

Dr. Patrick YUEN

Dr. David FANG, JP

Dr. Homer TSO

Mr. LAW Chi-keung

Dr. Lawrence LAI, JP

Mrs. Shelley LAU, JP

(up to July 95)

Mrs. Doris HO, JP

(from July 95)

Dr. LEE Shui-shan

Council

Secretariat : Mr. Aaron KWOK, secretary

(up to Nov 94)

Mr. YAU Sin-ying, secretary

(from Nov 94)

Miss Windy LAU

Miss Teresa TO

<p>Committee on Education & Publicity on AIDS [CEPAIDS]</p>
--

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 Mr. TSE Wang-lap
 Dr. Joseph LAU
 Dr. James M. N. CH' IEN, *MBE*
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 Ms. Ann LAM
 (up to Feb 95)
 Dr. Margaret KWAN
 (up to Mar 95)
 Mr. Frederick TONG
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 (up to Mar 95)
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 (up to Aug 95)
 Mr. Tony S. F. PANG
 (from Aug 95)
 Mr. Billy HO Chi-on
 (from Mar 95)
 Mr. Graham SMITH
 (up to May 96)
 - Miss Bella LUK
 (from June 95)
 Ms. Melanie ORHANT
 (Nov 94 – May 95)
 Sister Ann GRAY
 (from May 95)
 Mr. Harold YAU
 Ms. Janie ROWE
 (from Oct 95)
 Ms. Paulona TANG
 (from Oct 95)
 Miss Elijah FUNG
 (from Oct 95)

Miss Xanthe WONG
 (from May 96)
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 Mr. A. J. L. DICKINSON
 (up to Mar 96)
 Mrs. Maureen CHAN
 (from Mar 96)
 Miss Esther FUNG
 (form Apr 95)
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 Mr. KWOK Wai-cheung
 (up to Sept 95)
 Miss O. C. LIN
 (from Jan 96)
 Miss Elsa TSE
 (up to Oct 94)
 Miss Tracy WONG
 (Oct 94 - July 95)
 Miss WONG Yuet-wah
 (July 95 - Jan 96)
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 (from Jan 96)
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 (up to Dec 94)
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 (from Dec 94)
 Dr. LAM Ping-yan
 (up to Jan 95)
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 (from Jan 95)
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 Dr. L. C. KWAN

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 Mr. YAU Sin-ying
 (from Nov 94)
 Dr. LO Yim-chong
 (up to Mar 95)
 Dr. Teresa CHOI
 (from Apr 95)

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(up to Mar 95)

Dr. LEE Shui-shan

Dr. LO Yim-chong

(up to Mar 95)

Dr. Teresa CHOI

(from Apr 95)

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(up to Nov 94)

Mr. YAU Sin-ying

(from Nov 94)

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Mr. MA Yun-kwong

(from Feb 95)

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(up to Nov 94)

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(from Nov 94)

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Mr. YUEN Wai-sum

Mr. Larry SO

(July 94 – Sept 94)

Mr. Roger CHAN

(from Sept 94)

Mr. CHAN Chiu-kwong

(from Mar 95)

Mrs. Atty CHING LAI

(from Jan 96)

Ms. Wendy WU

(from Jan 96)

Secretary :

Mr. Leo SIN

(up to Apr 95)

Mr. NG Wai-ming

(from Apr 95)

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Mr. Billy HO Chi-on

(from Mar 95)

Members : Dr. LEE Shui-shan

Dr. LO Yim-chong

(up to Mar 95)

Dr. Teresa CHOI

(from Apr 95)

Mrs. LAM Li-shuet

(Apr 94 – Jan 95)

Mr. CHAN Ping-wa

(from Jan 95)

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(up to Sept 95)

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(from Jan 96)

Co-Convenor:

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(up to Sept 94)
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(from July 95)
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(from Oct 94)
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(from Jan 96)

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(from Apr 95)

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(from Nov 94)

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Resource Mr. KO Chun-wa

Persons : Dr. LEE Shui-shan
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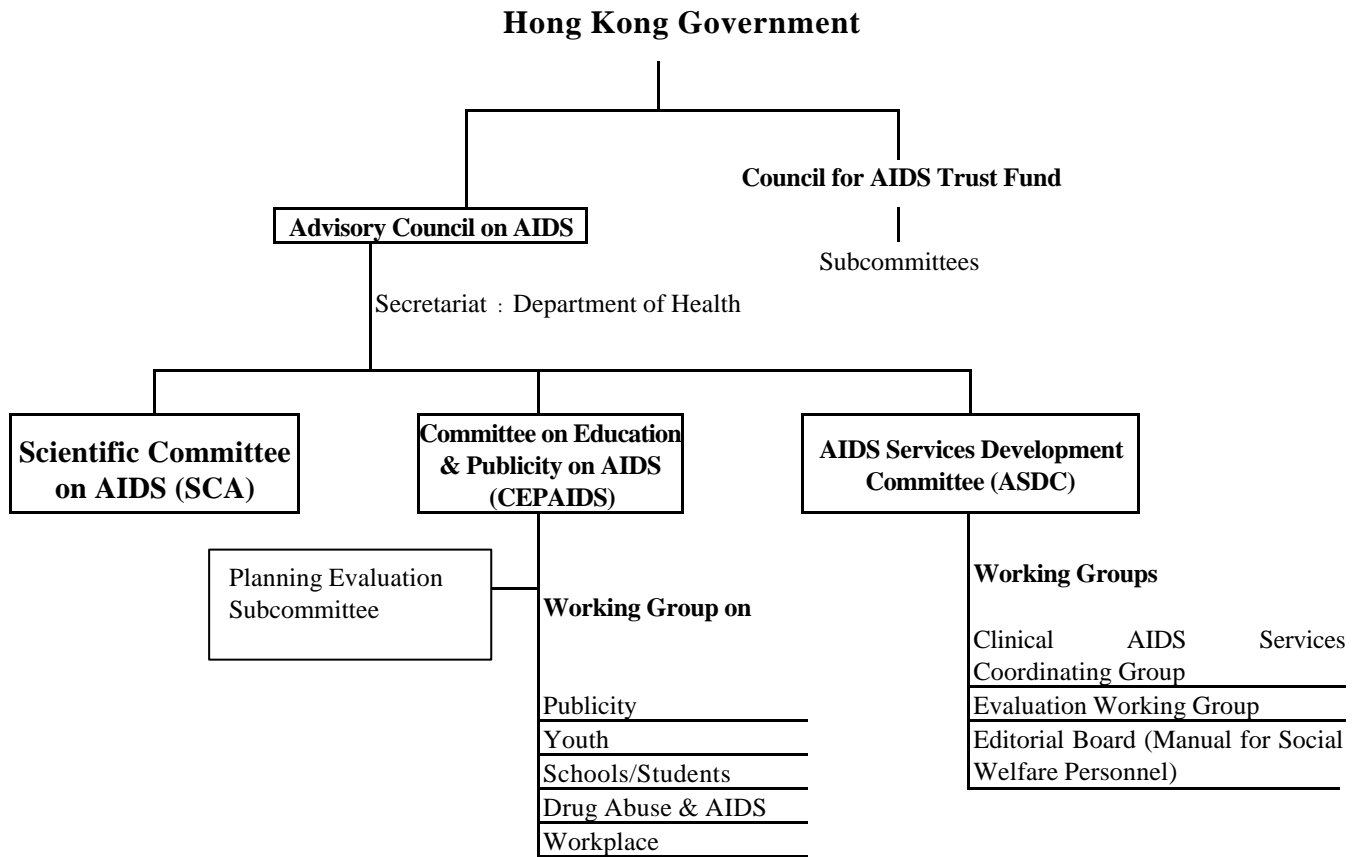
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Ms. Agnes YEUNG
Director of Social Welfare

Appendix B. Organizational Structure of Hong Kong's AIDS Programme



Operational government departments and public organizations (major ones):

Department of Health
Information Services Department
Education Department
[Hospital Authority]
Social Welfare Department
Correctional Services Department

Non-governmental organizations: (on AIDS) :

Hong Kong AIDS Foundation
AIDS Concern
AIDS Memorial Quilt Project
Society for AIDS Care
HIV Information & Drop-in Centre
TeenAIDS
AIDS Project, HK Council of Social Services
Action for REACH OUT

ACA Secretariat

Address : Department of Health
21st Floor, Wu Chung House
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