

## .Calendar.

### **XXXXII Meeting of the Advisory Council on AIDS (ACA)**

2:30pm 10 January 2003

### **XXVII Meeting of the Scientific Committee on AIDS (SCA)**

2:30pm 11 March 2003

### **X Meeting of the AIDS Prevention and Care Committee (APCC)**

6pm 14 March 2003

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## E-NEWS

TO keep updated on what's going on in the Council and other arms of Hong Kong's AIDS programmes, subscribe to the Virtual AIDS Office (VAO) e-news VAO at [www.aids.gov.hk](http://www.aids.gov.hk) ▶ ▶ ▶

## 2003

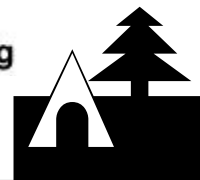
marks the tenth year since *ACA Newsfile* was first launched as the publication of the Hong Kong Advisory Council on AIDS. In January 1994, the Council Secretariat started this project of regularly informing ACA members of the activities of the Council, the HIV/AIDS situation here and around the world, and the global responses which might be of relevance to Hong Kong. Looking back, it was an unbelievable task - the task of getting the newsletter to print every month, the task of being a link not only within the Council but between the Council and people who might be interested in HIV/AIDS in Hong Kong. The internet era had also enabled *ACA Newsfile* to become an electronic newsletter accessible from any corner of the world.

Apparently, what interested members in 1994 might not be the same as the challenges that we are facing today. It's a big contrast! Some nine years ago in 1993 Hong Kong reported a cumulative total of less than four hundred HIV infections. By the end of 2002, it's reached two thousand. Then, HIV/AIDS was simply a foreign word in Mainland China (though the upsurge in Yunnan Province was already evident) - now we are talking about millions. In 1993 the AIDS Trust Fund was established to provide support to HIV infected haemophilia patients - now it's the major funding source for community-based HIV activities. More remarkable was the scientific advances that brought highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) to people living with HIV/AIDS - something unheard of before 1996 but now the standard of care. For the ACA, 1994 was the year that saw the publication of the first policy document. We are now referring to the third document just released in 2002.

With so many changes over the last decade, *ACA Newsfile* has become the quiet witness of the history of AIDS in our home Hong Kong, and a mirror to reflect on what's happening around us. It reported in 1994 the restructuring of the Council, the birth of the new UN programme on AIDS (UNAIDS), lessons from the Yokohama conference (attended by the Secretary for Health and Welfare)...the passing away of Mike Sinclair in 1995, the first Hong Kong AIDS Conference in 1996, the activities of the AIDS Services Development Committee in 1997, the officiation of the opening of the Red Ribbon Centre, the AIDS programme review in 1998, the formation of the new committees in 1999, the community planning process at its climax of activities in 2000...and the United Nations

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**Virtual AIDS Office** of Hong Kong  
**愛滋病網上辦公室**



## Methadone Maintenance as Best Practice Model for HIV Prevention

A **Training Workshop on Methadone Treatment for HIV Prevention** would be held for the first time in Hong Kong, under the auspices of the UN Regional Task Force on Drugs Use and HIV Vulnerability, in collaboration of the Red Ribbon Centre.

The Workshop, scheduled for April 2003, is organised in response to the rising needs of Asian countries in building capacity to cope with the escalating HIV epidemic among drug users. In this connection, harm reduction has long been considered an effective strategy which comprises, among other things, the use of methadone maintenance. With 30 years' experiences in methadone maintenance, Hong Kong is well positioned to share its practice with

countries in South East Asia and the Pacific, including Mainland China, Indonesia, Nepal and India.

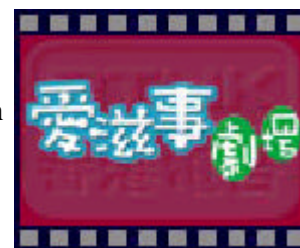
The Workshop is a 3-day event featuring state-of-art presentations, discussions, tutorials and visits to Hong Kong's methadone clinics. Dr Robert Newman, one of the key persons who pioneered Hong Kong's methadone programme in 1972, has agreed to join the faculty of this meaningful occasion.

The Workshop will be held at the Lam Woo International Conference Centre of the Baptist University in Kowloon Tong. The brochure of this Workshop can be downloaded from the Virtual AIDS Office (What's new) at [www.aids.gov.hk](http://www.aids.gov.hk) ⓧ

## In & Around Hong Kong

### Aidsfile on TV

AIDSFILE is a new series produced by the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) that



focuses on misconceptions about HIV/AIDS, and the associated stigma and discrimination. The 5-minute mini-series is screened on TVB-Jade (Sundays 6:20pm) and ATV-Home (Sundays, 3:55pm).

The programme is re-run on RTHK's website: [www.rthk.org.hk](http://www.rthk.org.hk) ([www.rthk.org.hk/rthk/tv/aidsfile](http://www.rthk.org.hk/rthk/tv/aidsfile)) ⓧ

### Reported HIV/AIDS Statistics (updated 30 September 2002)

		HIV		AIDS	
		total / Q3 2002		total / Q3 2002	
<b>Gender</b>	male	1582	57	527	17
	female	359	21	76	1
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Chinese	1351	53	474	15
	non-Chinese	590	25	129	3
<b>Transmission</b>	heterosexual	1110	42	400	12
	homosexual	367	15	103	2
	bisexual	91	3	29	0
	injecting drug use	52	4	9	0
	blood/bl products	68	0	19	0
	perinatal	15	1	6	0
	undetermined	238	13	37	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1941</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>18</b>

**NOTE:**

The "total" refers to the cumulative total number reported since 1984, under the voluntary HIV/AIDS Reporting System. Q3 refers to the period July to September 2002. The "AIDS" number is a subset of the "HIV numbers" and the two should not be added.

**SOURCE:**

Special Preventive Programmes, Department of Health, Hong Kong SAR Government

## Committees in Action

### 1st SCA Meeting

THE newly constituted *Scientific Committee on AIDS* (SCA) held its first meeting of the fifth term (26<sup>th</sup> meeting) on 10/12/2002. Chaired by Professor YL Lau, the meeting began with an official welcome and then an intense discussion on the future direction of the Committee. Revisions were proposed to the terms of reference to incorporate tasks ranging from advice on HIV surveillance, monitoring of the local situation, programme development, guidelines formulation, setting of research agenda, to the promotion of regional collaboration in HIV research.

Members then focused on the new items for deliberation in the coming three years. A set of revised guidelines on the management of needlestick or mucosal contact with blood or body fluids in Hong Kong was reviewed. This would be further examined by the Department of Health Scientific Working Group on Viral Hepatitis Prevention before final endorsement preceding promulgation. Finally, a framework for evaluating the universal antenatal HIV testing programme was adopted, pending a formal report to be available in the coming months. ⌘



### APCC Preparing for the New Term

THE *AIDS Prevention and Care Committee* (APCC) held an informal meeting with members before going into the new term of office. The meeting, attended by some members of the newly constituted Committee, took place at the Red Ribbon Centre on 6 December 2002.

Mrs Diana Wong, chairperson of the Committee, greeted members of the new Committee. The Meeting went on to discuss about the schema of operation in the new term. Members noted that there would be four 'categories' of members - representatives from agencies working on HIV/AIDS - Society for AIDS Care, AIDS Foundation, AIDS Concern, TeenAIDS and St John's Cathedral HIV Education Centre; persons from the prioritised communities identified in the 1998 AIDS programme review (to be nominated by the Hong Kong Coalition of AIDS Services Organisations), non-governmental organisations not working specifically on AIDS, government departments or units and finally co-opted members.

Members took the opportunity to examine the proposed terms of reference and recommended amendments to better reflect the work of the Committee. While some government departments had declined to join the Committee, it's proposed to invite them to continue as 'corresponding' members so that they could be alerted of the deliberation of the Committee, and therefore be more aware of the needs in the community.

On the subject of membership, it's noted that the Hong Kong Coalition of AIDS Services Organisations (HKCASO) had requested a longer lead time to identify right persons to sit on the Committee. It's resolved to postpone the process of co-opting new members until after the nomination of the HKCASO.

Finally, the Committee also discussed about the key issues for deliberation in the new term. These included: developing an inventory on AIDS prevention and care activities, identifying best practices for sharing, setting up a framework for the evaluation of the programmes in Hong Kong, and supporting and perhaps facilitating a new community planning process where appropriate. ⌘

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General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in June 2001, just two plus months before the 911 tragedy in the same New York.....

The Editor has been encouraged by many who have been reading the *ACA Newsfile* since its birth. In response to their advice, minor changes had been introduced over the years to improve the layout and contents of the humble newsletter. One thing that *ACA Newsfile* cannot do (yet) is to become a bilingual publication.

Unfortunately the capacity of the Secretariat (it's virtual!) is quite limited. It's therefore a balance between a timely monthly publication on one hand, and a popular but less regular communication on the other. The swing is still on the former, and would still be, at least in the foreseeable future.

Enjoy reading the 109th issue of *ACA Newsfile*, and wishing every member a truly fruitful new year.

- the editor

# Where were you on World AIDS Day 2002



## Labelling makes no sense

MR WONG Tsz Wah appeals to the public to drop the 'labels' - an effort to tie in with the theme of this year's World AIDS Day - *Stigma and Discrimination*. The new API (announcement of Public Interest) was produced by Radio Television Hong Kong and has been screened on televisions since 1 December 2002. The API serves as the preamble to a new television 5-minute series (AIDSFILE) on both TVB and ATV. (details on page 2)

## Women & sexual health

ON World AIDS Day, a publicity function was organised by the Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres at the Ma On Shan Plaza in Shatin. Appearing in this group photo on the back row are Ms Chan Yu (first from left) of the Federation and also an ACA member, Dr PY Lam, Deputy Director of Health (fifth from left) and Dr Homer Tso, chairman of the ACA.

