

## .Calendar.

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

2:30pm 4 April 2003

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

2:30pm 12 March 2003

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

6:00pm 14 March 2003

### **X Meeting of the Committee on Promoting Acceptance of People living with HIV/AIDS**

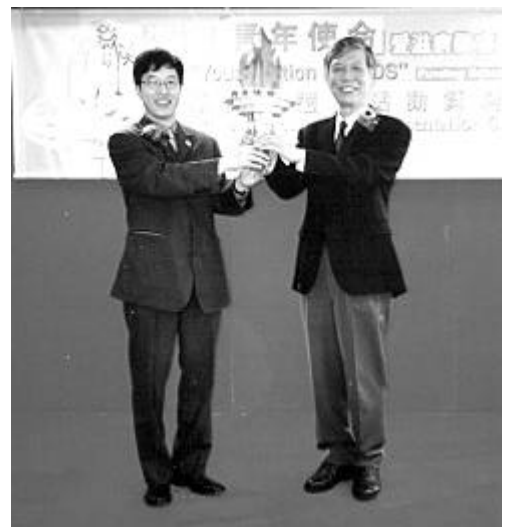
2:30pm 29 May 2003

## Youth Funding Scheme entering new phase

THE *Youth Action on AIDS* Funding Scheme 2002 concluded with a Prize Presentation Ceremony on 22 February at the Red Ribbon Centre. The function was officiated by Mrs Carrie Yau, Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food of the HKSAR Government.

The Scheme has been one of the most popular projects spearheaded by the Advisory Council on AIDS through a Task Force of Youth of the previous Committee on Education and Publicity on AIDS (CEPAIDS). Each year youth groups were sponsored to undertake projects to promote AIDS awareness in young people, and to foster a positive attitude towards people living with HIV/AIDS. In 2002, 13 projects were supported under the Scheme.

With the reorganisation of the Council, the Scheme would fall under the Red Ribbon Centre as an ongoing programme. ⌘ (picture: Mr Billy Ho passing the torch of the Scheme to Rev Chu, Chairman of the Red Ribbon Centre Management Advisory Committee at the ceremony on 22 February 2003)



Virtual AIDS Office of Hong Kong  
愛滋病網上辦公室  
[www.aids.gov.hk](http://www.aids.gov.hk)

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## Honorary Degree on Distinguished Person

Rev. Father. Alfred J. Deignan, SJ will receive the degree of Doctor of Social Sciences honoris causa at the 166th Congregation of the University of Hong Kong on 20 March 2003, for his enormous contributions to education in Hong Kong and Asia.

Father Deignan is no stranger to us working on AIDS in Hong Kong. He was a member of the Advisory Council on AIDS from 1990 to 1996. In 1994, the

Department of Health appointed an **Expert Panel on HIV of Health Care Workers** to provide advice to attending physicians of HIV infected health care workers, a task recommended in the Council's Guidelines formulated in 1994. Father Deignan is the chairman of the Panel and has been actively involved in solving complex issues relating to HIV infection in health care workers for almost a decade. ⌘

## Public Consultation

THE Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) has received a number of inquiries and complaints on insurance practices, mainly on the refusal to provide insurance coverage, charging increased premiums on the ground of sex or disability and exclusion of coverage.

A Discussion Paper has been published by EOC which now invites the public and the insurance industry to provide views on the issues raised by 20th March 2003.

Responses should be directed to:

The Equal Opportunities  
Commission  
Unit 2002, 20th Floor  
Convention Plaza, Office Tower  
1 Harbour Road, Wanchai  
Hong Kong

The Discussion paper can be viewed on EOC's website at [www.eoc.org.hk](http://www.eoc.org.hk)

## New Format of Quarterly Updates

MEMBERS interested in tracking the HIV situation in Hong Kong may wish to note that effective from the beginning of the year, quarterly statistics derived from the HIV/AIDS reporting system would be published in e-version only. The Special Preventive Programme of the Department of Health informed that the new quarterly report has been considerably expanded and can be downloaded from the Virtual AIDS Office [www.aids.gov.hk](http://www.aids.gov.hk). The first report covered the situation as of the end of the third quarter of the year 2002. It's a 46-page e-report with figures and analysis on distribution in age, gender, ethnicity and exposure categories.

A brand new annual HIV report is being published, which would be released in both hard copy and e-version. ⌘

Council News

## STAFF CHANGE

EFFECTIVE from 24 February 2003, Mr John Yip left the Department of Health for another posting within the Government. His place has been taken up by Mr MK Wong, who would be serving as the Senior Executive Officer of Special Preventive Programme, and the officer in charge of the ACA Secretariat.

ACA Newsfile wishes both of them every success in their new career path. ⌘



### Reported HIV/AIDS Statistics (updated 31 December 2002)

		HIV		AIDS	
		total / Q4 2002		total / Q4 2002	
<b>Gender</b>	male	1637	55	532	5
	female	378	19	81	5
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Chinese	1399	48	478	4
	non-Chinese	616	26	135	6
<b>Transmission</b>	heterosexual	1149	39	406	6
	homosexual	382	12	105	2
	bisexual	94	3	30	1
	injecting drug use	54	2	10	1
	blood/b products	68	0	19	0
	perinatal	15	0	6	0
	undetermined	253	18	37	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2015</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>10</b>

**NOTE:**

The "total" refers to the cumulative total number reported since 1984, under the voluntary HIV/AIDS Reporting System. Q4 refers to the period October to December 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

## CPA meeting

THE Committee on Promoting Acceptance of People living with HIV/AIDS (CPA) met on 25 February 2003 for the first time in the new term of office of the Advisory Council on AIDS (2002-2005).

The terms of reference of the new Committee are, to: (a) recommend measures conducive to promoting acceptance of people living with HIV/AIDS; (b) explore legal and ethical issues of HIV/AIDS and their implications on societal acceptance; and (c) examine and recommend responses to incidents relating to the acceptance of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Apart from studying and proposing to fine-tune the schema of operation, Members discussed about means of translating objectives into action through strategy development, best practice identification, and the recommendation on possible evaluation and research. The Meeting examined a survey report presented by the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, which studied the awareness, attitude and behaviours of social welfare personnel. The Secretariat also prepared notes for discussing on a TV programme (AIDSFILE) recently screened by RTHK.

Members of the new term are drawn from agencies working on AIDS care, academics, professionals, and people reflecting the interest and rights of HIV/AIDS patients in Hong Kong. ⌘

in & around  
Hong Kong

## AIDS in China 2002

WHEN did US President Bush visit China and discussed about collaboration on AIDS prevention and control? How many cases of STD were reported? Were the surveillance systems for STD and AIDS still separate? What is the CIPRA programme? Where and when did UN Secretary-general Kofi Anan visit China and talked about AIDS?

If you are interested in the answers to the above questions, or just about anything that happened in China as regards the country's response to HIV/AIDS, and the situations, you should read the article 2002年中国艾滋病防治大事记 available at the website of the National AIDS/STD Centre of the China Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at [www.chinaids.org.cn](http://www.chinaids.org.cn) Press report on the latest HIV situation in China is also available at the same site. ⌘

## THE Lions Red Ribbon Fellowship Scheme

for the year 2003 is now open for application. The Scheme is a collaborative project between Red Ribbon Centre and Lions Clubs International District 303 Hong Kong and Macao.

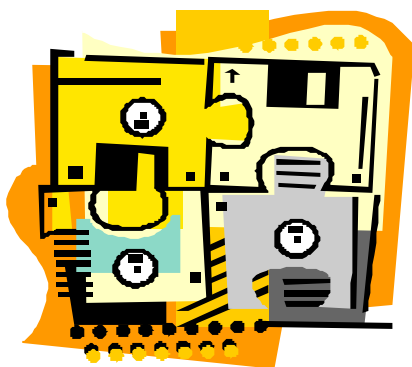
The Fellowship scheme is designed for professionals working on HIV/AIDS in Mainland China, to enable them to further their professional development through the execution of proposed activities, including visits and research. By the end of the year 2002, 15 fellows have been sponsored to Hong Kong for periods ranging from two to four weeks.

Application procedures are available from the Virtual AIDS Office at [aids.gov.hk](http://aids.gov.hk) ⌘

## WHO Election

Dr Jong-Wook Lee was nominated on 28 January 2003 by the World Health Organization's Executive Board for the post of Director-General of the agency. The Director-General is WHO's chief technical and administrative officer and sets the policy for the Organization's international health work.

Dr Peter Piot of UNAIDS was one of the two finalists in the election. ⌘



## ICAAP 2003

MEMBERS may wish to note the following deadlines associated with the Seventh International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, scheduled for 27 November to 1 December 2003:

- 1 April: Abstract submission by post, scholarship application, complimentary booth for NGOs.
- 15 April: Abstract application through internet
- 30 June: Early registration with reduced fee

# REFLECTIONS ON THE 10TH CROI

## FEBRUARY 10-14, 2003, BOSTON, USA

*Dr KH Wong of Special Preventive Programme, Department of Health, contributed this article on his participation in one of the most important scientific conferences on AIDS this year.*

THE 10th Conference on Retrovirus and Opportunistic Infections (CROI), the leading scientific meeting on HIV, was held in Boston, USA in February 2003. It was an important occasion for bringing together scientists, clinicians, and researchers to share research experience and deliberate on issues of interest and importance.

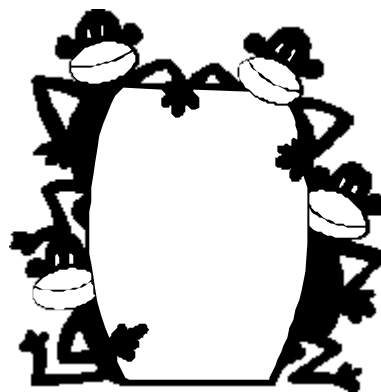
Dr. David Ho, Chair of the CROI, expressed that the purpose of this Meeting was to provide a forum for translating laboratory and clinical research into real life medical applications. The 5-day Meeting featured an opening session, 7 plenary lectures, 10 symposia, 184 oral abstracts and 745 poster presentations (<http://www.retroconference.org/2003/>). Technical though, the Meeting also had a clear emphasis on the community and international dimensions of HIV epidemic.

**Addressing the prevention and care needs of the developing world**  
Sub-Saharan Africa has continued to be the continent bearing the brunt of HIV, with 3.5 million new infections in 2002. New HIV epidemics in Eastern Europe has also been spreading rampantly. More so, treatment remained negligibly accessible in these countries. On the other hand, the provision of treatment in resource-poor setting with good outcome was demonstrated to be feasible in a US-assisted project in rural Haiti, with the approach of

directly observed therapy. It is high time to re-match the intervention tool of treatment to places most in need of it, as issues such as infra-structural health support are really not unsolvable.

### Getting the money and system

To provide a broader perspective for tackling the pandemic in the real world, and a tinge of taste on funding, politics and system, Mr. William Jefferson Clinton, the 42nd President of the



United States, stressed time and again in his Keynote speech on the importance of integrating prevention, care and treatment of HIV/AIDS, and the need of a system in place to carry things forward. He also alleged that evidence should overcome ideology and science should overcome politics in the AIDS response. Furthermore, there was introduction of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in one plenary talk. The availability of more resources for HIV/AIDS response is undoubtedly necessary and desirable; the question remains how the utilisation of various funds could be better coordinated and interfaced.

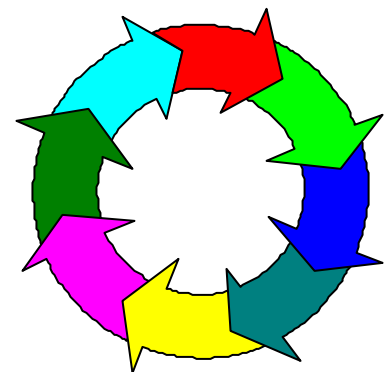
### Advancing scientific frontiers

The Meeting was indeed a good

opportunity to review and present the latest basic and clinical scientific advances in HIV. Cutting across different fields, such as virology, immunology, clinical manifestations, antiretroviral treatment, vaccine development, clinical pharmacology and HIV diagnostics, most presentations are interesting and informative. There were many highlights, including that on HIV evolution and resistance, vif protein, RNAi, immunopathogenesis, immune control of HIV, vaccines, HIV entry inhibitor, hepatitis viruses coinfection, clinical trials, cohorts, maternal-to-child transmission, and treatment interruption.

### Reconciling for Hong Kong

The response to AIDS in Hong Kong has its uniqueness. In the face of the scientific advances, the changing internal and external environments of Hong Kong would also impact on the future path of AIDS programme. Sustaining the prevention-care continuum, breaking the local icebergs of basic and clinical science, interfacing with Mainland's development of prevention and treatment programmes are just some of the whole lot of questions. ⌘



**Focus**