

IN THIS ISSUE

- **ACA Meeting**
- **Open Forum**
- **8th ICAAP**
- Website: <http://www.aca-hk.com>

We have
on page 5 & 6
on pages 6 & 7
on page 8

Schedule

- 58th ACA Meeting on 13 April 2007
- 6th CFA Meeting on 20 March 2007

***Wishing you Peace and Prosperity
in the Year of the Pig!***



Kung Hei Fat Choy!

57th ACA MEETING

The 57th ACA meeting was held on 19 January 2007. There were three major items on the agenda. A summary of the discussion at the meeting is shown below.

The final draft of the **Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong 2007-2011** was presented to members. They noted that the first round of consultation with concerned government bureaux and departments on the draft document was made immediately after the last meeting. After incorporating their views and comments into the revised draft, it was circulated to members for their second round comments on 14 December 2006. The revised draft was then sent to AIDS NGOs, stakeholders and members of the public on 29 December 2006 for their views and comments. The first round of the public consultation culminated with the Open Forum for the discussion of the draft strategy document held on 16 January 2007 at 3:00pm at the Red Ribbon Centre.

The main body of the strategy document comprises an executive summary and five chapters:

- (i) Overview of strategy development;
- (ii) Review of HIV situation and response;
- (iii) Framework for strategies 2007-2011;

- (iv) Priority areas for action; and
- (v) Working towards the common goals;

Under the framework for strategies for 2007-2011, there are four strategy objectives:

- (i) Maintaining low HIV prevalence
- (ii) Reducing HIV spread;
- (iii) Achieving early HIV diagnosis, treatment and care; and
- (iv) Optimising health of HIV/AIDS patients.

and there are eight guiding principles:

- (i) Adopting evidence-based approach
- (ii) Encouraging community partnership and support;
- (iii) Building supportive and enabling environment;
- (iv) Prioritizing funding;
- (v) Integrating monitoring and evaluation;
- (vi) Cultivating expertise;
- (vii) Addressing vulnerability and risk behaviours with intensive coverage; and
- (viii) Enhancing communication and education

After the finishing touch, the final draft will be translated into Chinese and be uploaded on the internet for collecting public's views and comments.

To be continued on page 6



On Prevention and Care of HIV-infected Children – Revisiting Local and International Development, members examined the current situation of prevention and care of HIV infected children in Hong Kong with reference to international developments. Since the implementation of the Universal Antenatal HIV Testing Programme (UAT) in Hong Kong in September 2001, a total of 39 HIV-related pregnancies were detected as at 30 June 2006. One service gap identified was that pregnant women with unknown HIV status were present late at labour ward. Applying rapid test during labour seemed an effective way out. A Task Force on the Implementation of Rapid Test was set up to work towards the introduction of rapid testing in HA hospitals to supplement the UAT programme.

Members were aware that as of 30 June 2006, there were 17 children with HIV infection acquired by mother to child route. Among them, 15 were on HAART and clinically well, two were dead. The following management issues for HIV infected children should be looked at further:

- (i) Integrated care by a comprehensive care team comprising physician, nurse, pharmacist, social worker, clinical psychologist and psychiatrist;
- (ii) Disclosure and psychosocial problems;

- (iii) Growth, nutrition and infant feeding;
- (iv) Paediatric palliative care; and
- (v) Schooling and education

For HIV-infected Haemophiliacs – First Year Case Review Panel Report, members noted the progress on the responses to the Recommendations made in the Report ‘The Forgotten Tragedy, The Unforgettable Trauma – Addressing the needs of people affected by haemophilia and HIV infection in Hong Kong’ published by the Hong Kong Advisory Council on AIDS. They learned that a Case Review Panel (CRP) with the chair from Department of Health (DH) and member representatives from Social Welfare Department (SWD) and Hospital Authority (HA) had been set up to monitor and follow up regularly on the needs of each of the patients and their carers as necessary. Between August 2005 and February 2006, a total of 6 meetings of the CRP were held. In the first year, 28 surviving patients and 6 affected persons consented to be referred to CRP and were reviewed in a standardised systematic way. Members also noted the Case Review Panel’s first year report.



The next ACA meeting will be held on 13 April 2007

Open Forum for the discussion of the draft Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong 2007-2011

The Open Forum for the discussion of the draft strategy document was held on 16 January 2007 at 3:00pm at the Red Ribbon Centre. Over 50 participants actively took part in the discussion. A summary of their views and suggestions are listed below.

Action agenda Many participants expressed a need to translate the 8 targets into an action agenda with timeframe for detailed implementation. Specific suggestions included:

- Stating when, who and how to review ATF funding mechanism for target 4;
- Explaining the meaning of care of international standards for target 7; and
- Stating when and how to establish means to take forward the collaboration between the Mainland and Hong Kong.

To be continued on page 7



Identification of a lead agency Several participants suggested ACA take the lead among the key players to plan, direct and coordinate all activities in the AIDS programme. It implies that ACA should have greater authority to allocate resources to service providers.

Sex Education The notion of AIDS education as an integral part of sex education was accepted by most participants. The importance of sex education in shaping a child's personal development, attitude towards sex and at-risk behaviour was reinforced during the discussion. Taking to extreme, a participant advocated that the government should make sex education a compulsory subject in primary and secondary schools. Some suggested that the educational reform would be an opportune moment for incorporating sex education as a school curriculum.

Youth Some participants opined that youth as a vulnerable group was not mentioned in the draft strategy document. They proposed to highlight the importance of sex education for youth in schools and include measures to target youth at-risk in the document.

Call for the Community Planning Process One participant commented that the community assessment and evaluation compared less favourably with the Community Planning Process in terms of time and scale in drafting the strategy document. It was suggested that the approach of CPP should be adopted.

Greater coordination between government departments Given different government departments had different priorities, several participants expressed that there would be a need for greater coordination between government departments in their law enforcement action and provision of social

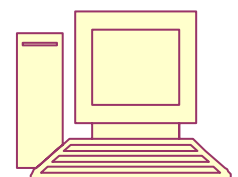
welfare and health care services. The controversy over the use of condoms as evidence for prosecution of vice establishment and sex workers was quoted as an example for the inconsistency of government's effort in promoting the use of condom for safer sex.

People living with HIV/AIDS Several participants reiterated a demand for satisfying the needs of HIV/AIDS patients from their perspective including employment, training and procreation. It was also suggested that more people living with HIV/AIDS should be involved in drafting the strategy in the initial stage.

Targeted Surveillance The threat of TB associated with HIV was growing. There was a suggestion about enhancing the surveillance of HIV among TB patients in Hong Kong. A suggestion was also raised to collaborate with the Mainland authority to carry out HIV infection survey of targeted groups including sex workers and IDUs. Targets prevention could only be made on the basis of accurate and reliable information.

Collaboration in the community level To promote acceptance of people living with HIV/AIDS in the community, it was suggested collaborating with Healthy City Steering Committees set up under the District Councils on projects to fight against discrimination and stigmatization of HIV/AIDS.

Miscellaneous (i) To target mentally handicapped people and under-privileged people to prevent from getting HIV infection; (ii) The SHS to provide free clinical service to sex workers with non-eligible persons status; and (iii) To provide propaganda materials for ethnic minorities seeking assistance to prevent from getting HIV infection.





The 8th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (8th ICAAP) will be held from 19 to 23 August 2007 in Colombo, **Sri Lanka**. The theme of the 8th ICAAP is *Waves of Change, Waves of Hope*. The waves are a mighty and integral part of the host country, the island nation of Sri Lanka.

Waves of Change signify many things happening; many things in motion, while taking into account milestones in the past and creating new ones for the future, new work-plans, timelines and a future for the HIV and AIDS community and the general public. It also implies that there is a mass of activity that needs to be carried out to change the world; creating a ripple-effect that would encompass the whole globe. Like the ebb and the flow of waves, global activity to prevent, control, battle and treat HIV and AIDS could also be adapted to suit each and every society, community, nation or region. Such action like the endless sea could cross continents but at the same time be culture specific, bringing about change, a new vision and victory against this disease.

The colours of the logo represent the different communities in the AIDS response. Deep blue - the scientific community and saffron - the communities that are infected, affected and vulnerable to HIV and AIDS who are grounded in diverse realities. The splashes of colour around the Red ribbon symbolize the synthesized and multi disciplinary nature of the response that is required to achieve a world that is more caring, loving, responsible for one another and willing

to share with each other as an interdependent whole.

The theme in its entirety gives the powerful imagery of a sea of humanity sharing a common vision to create a better world, a world free from AIDS.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF THE CONGRESS

Within the theme "Waves of Change - Waves of Hope" the 8th ICAAP aims - To enhance the local, regional and global response to HIV/AIDS by creating an opportunity:

- to achieve meaningful exchanges of expertise, experiences, advances, lessons learnt, challenges faced and successes achieved in HIV/AIDS programmes
- to form meaningful and sustainable partnerships between stakeholders at all levels
- to showcase achievements and successes and share best practices
- to empower and strengthen political, community and business leadership, adopting a consultative, collaborative and participatory approach
- to ensure that communities that are infected, affected and vulnerable to HIV/AIDS and their families are free from stigmatization, marginalization and discrimination by addressing political, social, economic and cultural barriers and working towards societies in which they can enjoy the full range of human rights and protections as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and associated Protocols
- to promote equal access to prevention, support, treatment and care for all people.

Interested readers can visit the official website at <http://www.icaap8.lk/index.htm> for more details.

❖(Extract from the home page of 8th ICAAP)