

Editorial Board

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63rd ACA Meeting Agenda



The 63rd ACA meeting will be held on 4 July 2008 (Friday) at 2:30 pm at the DH Conference Room, 21/F Wu Chung House, Wan Chai. There are three main items on the agenda:

- Syphilis Awareness Campaign in Men who have Sex with Men 2008/09
- An Update on Universal HIV Urine Testing Programme at Methadone Clinics (2004-2007)
- Recapping the Work of Sixth Term ACA and Planning the Way Forward

Interested readers may watch for the next issue of the ACA Newsfile for more details

Guangdong

Macau

Hong Kong

“Health Professionals to Attend Tripartite Meeting on Infectious Diseases”

Medical and public health professionals from Guangdong, Macau and Hong Kong attended the Eighth Tripartite Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases held in Macau from 26 to 27 June 2008.

During the two-day meeting, experts from the three places discussed issues relating to the overall situation of infectious disease, preparedness in handling public health incidents, and collaboration of medical and public health experts in the three places.

Led by the Director of Health, Dr Lam Ping-yan, the Hong Kong delegation included representatives from the Department of Health, Hospital Authority, and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. Officials from Guangdong Province and Macau were led by the Associated Director of the Department of Health of Guangdong Province, Mr Huang Fei and Director of Health Bureau of Macao, Dr Lei Chin Ion respectively.

The **Eleventh** CFA Meeting

A Summary of the Eleventh CFA Meeting Held on 24 June 2008 is as Follows:

1. HIV Testing Services of AIDS NGOs

Members noted that there were three NGOs providing HIV anti-body testing to different target populations in five programmes, 3 from AIDS Concern, 1 from Hong Kong AIDS Foundation and 1 from CHOICE, with funds provided by the AIDS Trust Fund. The 5 community-based programmes conducted 3,050 HIV antibody tests in 2007, with 28 HIV positive cases and an overall positive rate of 0.92%. There was a consensus among members that the Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) provided by NGOs was a very effective platform for reaching the hard-to-reach populations including MSM and sex workers. Data on behavioural characteristics could also be collected in more standardized format for analysis. Noting the effectiveness of the programmes, members generally agreed that with more resources from the AIDS Trust Fund, the programmes could be extended to cover more target populations in wider geographical areas and to render in-depth follow-up counselling to at-risk populations for behavioural change.

2. Syphilis Awareness Campaign in MSM 2008

Members noted the background, objectives and requirements for conducting a Syphilis Awareness Campaign for Men who have sex with men (MSM) in 2008 to be organised by the Red Ribbon Centre. In partnership with the Social Hygiene Services and AIDS NGOs, the campaign aimed to increase the awareness of sexual health in the MSM community, in

particular the prevention and treatment of syphilis, which was a treatable clinical condition and its effective prevention and treatment would significantly reduce the risks of MSM acquiring other STIs and HIV. The nine-month MSM HIV prevention campaign, to be launched in late 2008, would consist of three parts: (a) Syphilis awareness programme, (b) Safer sex promotion, and (c) Syphilis testing promotion. Members supported the initiative and stressed that campaign messages and activities must be sensitive to the MSM culture and acceptable to their community. While the selection of the media agency for implementing the campaign was of crucial importance, members agreed that evaluation of the campaign should be put in place at the planning stage of the campaign.

3. Re-Capping the Work of Community Forum on AIDS

Members noted the work and activities undertaken by CFA in the last three years. There was a consensus that CFA had proved to be a valuable communication channel and interface between ACA and the relevant community organisations and stakeholders, and also served as a neutral platform for brainstorming, discussion, sharing and exchange of views and experience, to work towards the common goal of HIV prevention and control. Looking forward to the ACA's next term of office, members were supportive of the continuation of CFA in the three years to come.

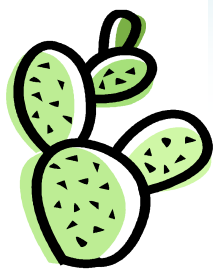
HIV/AIDS STATISTICS IN HONG KONG

updated 31 March 2008

		This Quarter		Cumulative	
		<u>HIV</u>	<u>AIDS</u>	<u>HIV</u>	<u>AIDS</u>
Sex	Male	70	14	2988	814
	Female	19	3	713	137
Ethnicity	Chinese	58	12	2497	739
	Non-Chinese	31	5	1204	212
Route of Transmission					
Sexual Contacts		55	14	2770	822
Heterosexual		27	9	1758	607
Homosexual		25	5	861	178
Bisexual		3	0	151	37
Injecting drug use		10	3	227	37
Blood/blood products recipients		0	0	75	22
Perinatal		0	0	20	6
Undetermined		24	0	609	64
Total		89	17	3701	951

HIV/AIDS Situation

A total of **89 cases** of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) -- the cause of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)--infections were reported in the first quarter of 2008 to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH), bringing the cumulative total of reported HIV infections to **3 701** since 1984. Of the 89 new HIV cases reported, 27 acquired the infection via heterosexual contact, 28 via homosexual or bisexual contact, 10 via injection of drug. The routes of transmission of the remaining 24 cases were undetermined due to insufficient data. The 89 cases comprised 70 males and 19 females.



HIV/AIDS Situation

Seventeen new cases of AIDS were reported in the same quarter, bringing to **951** the total number of confirmed AIDS cases reported since 1985.

The newly diagnosed cases of this

quarter were reported by four major sources: public hospitals and clinics (34 cases), Social Hygiene Clinics (19 cases), private hospitals and clinics (17 cases) and the DH's AIDS Counselling and Testing Service (8 cases). Of the newly reported cases in this quarter, 59 (66.3%) of the patients have received care at the HIV specialist services of the Department of Health or the Hospital Authority. In this quarter, the most common AIDS defining illness was *Pneumocystis pneumonia* (PCP), a kind of chest infection which was closely followed by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* infection (TB).



HIV/AIDS Situation

The predominant route of HIV transmission in the first quarter of 2008 remained to be sexual contact. The importance of using condom and the practice of safer sex in reducing the risk of HIV infection must not be overlooked. HIV is the cause of AIDS and half of the HIV-infected people will progress to AIDS within 10 years without treatment. Members of the public who have a history of unprotected sex should go for an HIV test by calling the DH's AIDS Hotline on 2780 2211 for a free, anonymous and confidential HIV test.