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~ Calendar ~

- The 13th CFA Meeting on 24th March 2009**
- The 66th ACA Meeting on 3rd April 2009**

Annual HIV infection continues to rise



A total of 435 new cases of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) were reported to the Department of Health (DH) last year (2008), the highest annual number ever recorded. The figure showed a five percent increase when compared to 414 reported cases in the preceding year. It was reported that sexual transmission had continued to be the major mode of HIV spread in Hong Kong.

Of these 435 new cases, 131 acquired the infection via heterosexual exposure, 145 cases via homosexual or bisexual contact, 40 cases of injection drug use and three cases of blood/blood product infusion. The routes of transmission of 116 cases were undetermined due to inadequate information.

In the fourth quarter of 2008, 106 people were tested positive for HIV, bringing the cumulative total of reported HIV infection to 4 047 since 1984. Of the 106 HIV cases reported between October and December 2008, 24 acquired the infection via heterosexual contact, 40 via homosexual or bisexual contact and six through drug in-

jection. The routes of transmission of the remaining 36 cases were undetermined due to inadequate information. The 106 cases comprised 85 males and 21 females.

Thirty-two new cases of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) were reported in the fourth quarter of 2008, bringing to 1 030 the total number of confirmed AIDS cases reported since 1985. Fifty-nine per cent of the new AIDS cases were related to heterosexual contact, reflecting late diagnosis of HIV.

In the fourth quarter of 2008, the most common AIDS-defining illness is Pneumocystis Pneumonia (PCP), a kind of chest infection.

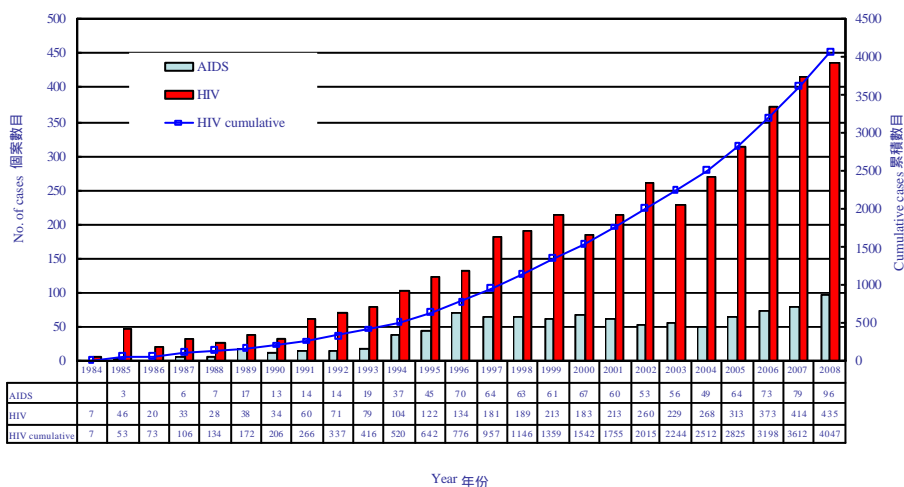
The newly diagnosed cases between October and December of 2008 were reported by four major sources: public hospitals and clinics (37), private hospitals and clinics (23), AIDS service organizations (16) and Social Hygiene Clinics (15). Of the newly reported cases in the fourth quarter, 65 (61.3%) are under the care of HIV specialist services at the DH or the Hospital Authority.

The DH monitors the HIV/AIDS situation through a voluntary reporting system. The first cases of HIV and AIDS were reported in 1984 and 1985 respectively. Members of the public with a history of unsafe sex should go for an HIV test. They could call the DH's AIDS Hotline at 2780 2211 for a free, anonymous and confidential HIV test.

HIV/AIDS STATISTICS IN HONG KONG *updated 31 December 2008*

		This Quarter		Cumulative	
		HIV	AIDS	HIV	AIDS
Sex	Male	85	27	3267	881
	Female	21	5	780	149
Ethnicity	Chinese	65	27	2706	803
	Non-Chinese	41	5	1341	227
Route of Transmission	Sexual Contacts	64	30	3001	887
	Heterosexual	24	19	1866	649
	Homosexual	36	9	973	198
	Bisexual	4	2	162	40
	Injecting drug use	6	0	257	43
	Blood/blood products recipients	0	1	78	24
	Perinatal	0	0	20	6
	Undetermined	36	1	691	70
Total	106	32	4047	1030	

Annual HIV/AIDS Statistics 香港每年愛滋病毒感及愛滋病統計 1984 – 2008, Hong Kong (N=4047/1030)



A Feature on Consultation on Health Sector Response to HIV/AIDS among Men who have Sex with Men

Under the leadership of Dr Massimo N Ghidinelli, the Consultation on Health Sector Response to HIV/AIDS among Men who have Sex with Men was held in Hong Kong from 18 to 20 February 2009 at the Mira Hotel. The Consultation was a



joint meeting organised by World Health Organization Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and Department of Health of HKSARG.

This Technical Consultation was held following a Global Consultation in Geneva last September, and the first regional meeting of such to happen upon the efforts of WPRO. Countries participating in the meeting included Cambodia, China, Fiji, Hong Kong (China), Japan, Lao, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam. Usually a two-member team from the participating country consisted of one government health official and one representative of the civic society. Dr KH Wong and Ms Loretta Wong were representing Hong Kong respectively. There were temporary advisers, observers and representatives coming from various international organizations including ACON, Albion Street Centre, APCOM, Assn of SE Asian N, AusAID, Chinese CDC, FHI TREAT Asia, UNESCO, USAID, the World Bank and many others.

Apart from overseas observers, local observers from ACA, CFA, SCAS, local AIDS NGOs and HIV experts from the universities were invited to join the occasion to share with the rest of the world their experience and insight toward the goal of the consultation: to define the contribution of the health sector in the provision of comprehensive services for prevention, care support and treatment of HIV/AIDS among MSM. The familiar faces of Prof CN Chen, Dr Susan Fan, Prof TF Fok, Prof SS Lee, Prof Joseph Lau, Dr ZW Chen, Dr Samuel Yu, Dr Ferrick Chu, Miss Nora Yau, Mr Tony Pang, Mr Charles Wong, Ms Elsie Chu, Mr CW Ko, Mr Brian



Wong, Mr Barry Lee, Ms YL Yau, Ms Shara Ho and many other were seen concentrating on

the meeting to forge a common consensus and a solution to the problem.

The Consultation went straight to business after the opening ceremony was officiated by Dr York Chow, Secretary for Food and Health, Dr PY Lam, Director of Health, Dr Massimo N Ghidinelli, WHO WPRO Regional Adviser, Mr Edmund Settle, UNDP Asia Pacific Region HIV/AIDS Policy Specialist and Mr Shivananda Khan, APCOM Chairperson. During the 3-day meeting, Dr Thomas Tsang, Controller, Centre for Health Protection besides being the Temporary Adviser of the Consultation, was elected the Chairman of the first day meeting; Dr Wu Zunyou, Director of National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Preventive of Chinese CDC and Mr Cecil Grant Storey, Principal Technical Specialist (Blood) of New Zealand Ministry of Health were the second and third day Chairmen respectively.

To be continued....

ACA NEWSFILE



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Country participants were invited to present the situation of MSM in their countries on the first day and second morning of the meeting, and overseas experts and advisers shared on the latest developments on surveillance information and preventive interventions. In the second day afternoon, all participants, advisers and observers were divided into four groups to discuss key actions and recommendations for follow-up at regional and country levels. The specific themes for discussion for the four groups were:

- Group 1: Strategic information including gaps, data collection and utilization;
- Group 2: Comprehensive Package of Services for MSM, TG and their partners;
- Group 3: Policy and advocacy at central level to support the implementation of programmes for MSM, TGs and their partners; and
- Group 4: MSM work in China and Hong Kong (China).

Prof CN Chen, ACA Chairman, not only actively participated in the discussion of the meeting, but also took up the role as the co-facilitator in Group 4. In addition, Ms Loretta Wong and Dr. Raymond Ho were the Rapporteurs of Groups 2 and 4 respectively. Dr. Ho also served as a secretariat member and the Master of Ceremony of the entire meeting.

The last day of the meeting was devoted to the making of conclusions and recommendations of the Consultation. After rigorous discussion, the meeting drew up draft conclusions and recommendations for health sector response to HIV/AIDS among men who have sex with men. The close of the Consultation was immediately followed by a press conference. Local and international media gathered together once again to report this important and meaningful Consultation. As the Western Pacific Region is among those areas with the largest number of MSM, there is definitely a need for better data to guide delivery of interventions to revert the growing concern of HIV transmission among MSM.

