



Editorial Board

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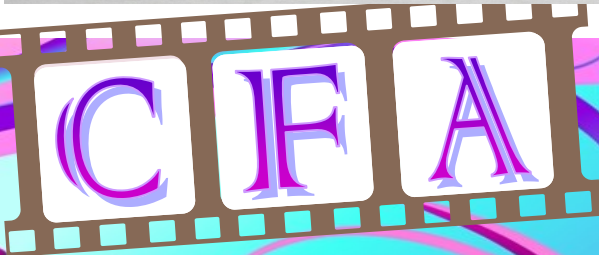
IN THIS ISSUE WE HAVE

- ✧ Photo taken during the 33rd CFA Meeting on 11 June 2014 page 25
- ✧ A Summary of 86th ACA Meeting pages 26-27
- ✧ Other Issues page 28

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**87th ACA Meeting
4 July 2014**

Photo taken during the 33rd CFA Meeting on 11 June 2014



A Summary of 86th ACA Meeting held on 11 April 2014

Findings of a HIV Stigma Watch study on people living with HIV/AIDS

From 2012 to 2013, the Department of Psychology of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and AIDS Concern jointly conducted the first local HIV stigma study among people living with HIV (PLHIV) - *HIV stigma Watch*. It aimed to investigate the effects of stigmas on physical and mental health of PLHIV.

Among 291 PLHIV recruited, around half (49.3%) had internalized stigma, and the condition was more severe in heterosexuals than homosexuals. A higher proportion (74.1%) of those with internalized stigma suffered from poor mental well-being than those without internalized stigma (32.0%), as assessed by the WHO5 Well-being Index. Discrimination, insults or avoidance were found in different social networks and medical settings (3.3% to 37.1%). Only 57% of MSM used condom every time when having anal sex with primary sex partners, which was lower than 84% among heterosexual participants for vaginal sex.

In view of the results, members noted that education on communication skills for front-line health care workers should be strengthened; mental well-being of PLHIV should be enhanced; PLHIV should know about their rights under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance; and health care professionals should make proper referral for PLHIV for different medical problems.

An update on addressing the needs of people affected by haemophilia and HIV infection in Hong Kong

Members were briefed on the latest status of the patients. In brief, HIV-infected haemophilia patients had been receiving on-going ex-gratia payment through the AIDS Trust Fund and medical fees waiving schemes by DH and HA, and their medical and social conditions had been monitored regularly by the Case Review Panel. In 2014, 26 patients were still alive, but nine were suffering from hepatitis C that failed or were intolerant to the current hepatitis C treatment. Although new direct acting antivirals (DAA) were shown to be more effective and tolerable, and had become recommended standard overseas, it was not yet generally available in Hong Kong. At the meeting, members agreed that new DAA would be valuable for these HIV infected haemophilia patients and should be sourced as appropriate for their treatment.



HIV epidemiology in Hong Kong 2013

According to the voluntary reporting system of DH, 559 HIV cases (record high) and 84 AIDS cases were newly reported in 2013, making a cumulative number of 6,432 HIV reports and 1,437 AIDS since 1984. Men who have sex with men (MSM) continued to be the commonest route of transmission, which accounted for 53% of all new HIV cases, and 67% of male cases in 2013. Heterosexual cases remained stable and accounted for 25% (M:12%, F:13%) of all new HIV cases.

The proportion of newly diagnosed cases progressed to AIDS within 3 months had decreased from 19% in 2004 to 14% in 2013, suggesting more HIV infections were diagnosed at an earlier phase. In 2013, 75% of the reported HIV cases had received medical care at public HIV specialist services, which remained stable in the past 10 years.

During the meeting, members suggested to strengthen education to both the general public and health care workers about the importance of early testing and early treatment. Linkage to HIV care system, follow up situation in the private sector and the influence of drugs on risky sexual behaviours should be monitored. While innovative health promotion strategies could be explored, efforts should be maintained on what was known to be effective for HIV prevention and treatment.



Report of the Community Forum on AIDS

Members were briefed on the major discussions of the 32nd CFA Meeting held on 13 March 2014 (and a summary of this CFA Meeting was given in the ACA Newsfile issued in May 2014).



A Summary of the 29th SCAS Meeting

A Summary of the 29th Meeting of SCAS held on 25 February 2014 was tabled at the meeting and the Chairperson went through the summary with the members.

Other issues:

HIV/AIDS Response Indicator Survey (HARiS) 2014

The second round of HIV/AIDS Response Indicator Survey (HARiS) to be conducted in 2014 has started since 1 April 2014. Altogether eight NGOs and twenty-two government clinics including HIV clinics, Social Hygiene Clinics, Chest Clinics, Methadone Clinics, and Elderly Health Centres have participated in this survey. As of 11 June 2014, a total of 794 questionnaires and 510 urine samples have been collected. The field work is expected to be completed in September 2014.

Blood Donation Policy of the Hong Kong Red Cross (HKRC)

During an internal meeting on 3 April 2014, the HA (BTS) Expert Panel on Blood and Blood Products Safety had examined CFA Members' suggestion. It was agreed that both parties should meet to facilitate effective communication.

Mid-term review on the implementation of the Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong 2012 – 2016

A mid-term review on the implementation of the Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong 2012 – 2016 has started since June 2014. Various AIDS related NGOs have been invited to submit relevant information to DH.

Report Back Seminar for the 20th International AIDS Conference (IAC)

Following the 20th IAC held in Melbourne from 20 to 25 July 2014, a report back seminar would be organized by the Red Ribbon Centre in September 2014. NGOs who will attend the Conference have been invited to present and share their learning during the seminar. Detailed information on the venue and date of the seminar will be announced later.

