

Editorial Board

Executive Editor: Miss Louisa HUNG, ACA Secretariat

AIDS Hotline: 2780 2211

IN THIS ISSUE WE HAVE

- ✧ Agenda of 115th ACA Meeting.....page 24
- ✧ A Summary of the 114th ACA Meeting.....pages 25-26
- ✧ Community Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting 2021...page 27

~ Calendar ~

115th ACA Meeting
9 July 2021

Agenda of 115th ACA Meeting

Date : 9 July 2021 (Friday)
Time : 2:30 pm
Form of Meeting : Video Conference

Three main items on the Agenda -

- ◆ Analytic gaps in the epidemiological assessment of HIV infection in Hong Kong
- ◆ Hong Kong Viral Hepatitis Action Plan 2020 - 2024
- ◆ A brief overview of the UNAIDS Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026

A Summary of the 114th ACA Meeting held on 9 April 2021

HIV epidemiology in Hong Kong 2020

DH briefed members about the HIV epidemiology in Hong Kong for the year 2020. The number of newly reported cases has dropped for the fifth consecutive year since the record high of 725 cases in 2015. There were 505 cases recorded in 2020. Young MSM still predominated the epidemic.

Members observed that non-Chinese HIV cases had increased in 2020. Possible reasons could be due to a rising number of people with (known) HIV followed up elsewhere entering the local health system due to international travel ban in the time of COVID-19. Also, enhanced social media publicity targeting local Filipinos and Indonesians in Q2-3 of 2020 by the Red Ribbon Centre (RRC) might have increased their awareness to undergo HIV testing.

Members noted the limitations of the current HIV reporting system and understood that the number of new HIV cases being diagnosed would depend on the number of people undergoing HIV testing. On the other hand, the statistics on AIDS might better reflect the health seeking behaviour as patients would seek medical attention and got diagnosed when they developed symptoms. In view of the rising trend of reported AIDS cases in recent years, interventions should be explored to enhance early HIV testing for early diagnosis and linkage to care.

Framework for the formulation of Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong beyond 2021

DH presented the the development of the next Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong beyond 2021. It was agreed to adopt a wide-based approach of engaging different parties, including conducting Community Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting (CCM) and gathering the inputs of individuals, groups and organisations as well as the general public during the consultation.

Apart from the key populations covered in the latest Strategies, namely men who have sex with men (MSM), people living with HIV (PLHIV), female sex workers and male clients, people who inject drugs, transgender people and ethnic minorities, a new priority population - "Adolescent and youth" would be included in the upcoming CCM. The tasks of data collection, recording and drafting report for CCM would be outsourced to a contractor, while ACA Secretariat would conduct research on documents requiring technical assessment, in collaboration with the external consultancy from The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The consultancy would evaluate the current HIV reporting system in context of its function in the HIV surveillance system, construct HIV treatment cascade, and assess the impact of different interventions on local HIV epidemic hence to inform ways to effectively control the epidemic. The progress of consultation and findings from the consultancy will be presented in due course in the upcoming ACA meetings.

HIV treatment and prevention in the time of COVID-19

DH briefed the Members on how COVID-19 pandemic had impacted the HIV services to PLHIV and to individuals at-risk. Relevant service figures and feedback from some frontline NGO staff in provision of services to PLHIV and target populations in the time of pandemic were collected and presented.

Members noted that disruptions to in- and out-patient services for PLHIV had been minimal but community testing services were suspended intermittently hence affecting the overall testing number. There were also observations that some MSM could not get drugs for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) from overseas clinics due to travel restriction.

Regarding COVID-19 vaccination, PLHIV could receive the vaccines at the Integrated Treatment Centre of DH (for ITC clients only) or at the Community Vaccination Centres. The Hong Kong Society for Infectious Diseases and The Hong Kong Society for HIV Medicine had drafted a guidance note on COVID-19 vaccination for PLHIV for reference by frontline healthcare workers, patients and other stakeholders. Together with the other draft guidelines by several profession bodies on COVID-19 vaccinations for patients with different medical conditions as invited by DH, these guidelines would be presented to meetings of the Joint Scientific Committees of Centre for Health Protection together with Expert Advisory Panel on COVID-19 and would be uploaded online for doctors' reference.

Members opined that messages should be disseminated to PLHIV via the clinics and NGOs to encourage vaccination. They also thanked DH and NGOs for carrying out the contingency arrangement and different innovative HIV preventive measures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Report of the Community Forum on AIDS

Members noted the summary report and discussions of the 55th and 56th CFA Meetings held on 18 January and 12 March 2021 respectively. The summaries of these CFA Meetings were contained in the ACA Newsfiles (Vol. 28, No. 3 and 5 – March and May 2021).

Community Stakeholders' Consultation Meeting 2021

The first phase of consultation for the next "Recommended HIV/AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong" by the Hong Kong Advisory Council on AIDS (ACA) now commence!

A series of 7 consultation meetings (CCM) co-organised by the Community Forum on AIDS (CFA) and the Hong Kong Coalition of AIDS Service Organizations (HKCASO) will be conducted from 13 to 18 July .

Stakeholders	Date and Time	Meeting Venue
Female sex workers and male clients	13 July (Tue) 10:30 – 14:00	Red Ribbon Centre *Other venues: Action for Reach Out, The Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention
People living with HIV	13 July (Tue) 18:30 – 22:00	Red Ribbon Centre *Other venues: Hong Kong AIDS Foundation, Society for AIDS Care, AIDS Concern
Men who have sex with men	14 July (Wed) 18:30 – 22:00	Red Ribbon Centre *Other venues: Hong Kong AIDS Foundation, AIDS Concern, The Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention
Adolescent and youth	15 July (Thu) 15:00 – 18:30	Red Ribbon Centre
People who inject drugs	16 July (Fri) 14:00 – 17:30	Red Ribbon Centre
Transgender people	16 July (Fri) 18:30 – 22:00	Red Ribbon Centre
Ethnic minorities	18 July (Sun) 14:00 – 17:30	Red Ribbon Centre

*Red Ribbon Centre is the main venue for meeting, while some participants can join the meetings at the AIDS service organisation venues.

Further details on meeting and enrollment are available at
<https://www.aca.gov.hk/english/strategies/stakeholders.html>.

Registration deadline: 4 July 2021 (Sunday)

Welcome all community members, organisations and general public to support and actively participate in CCM consultation!

ACA has commissioned MOV Data Collection Center Limited to process the registration and logistics arrangement of CCM. Community members, organisations and the general public are welcomed to submit your opinions via email or fax to ACA by 4 August.

Email address: ccm@mov.com.hk

Fax number: 3900 1122

Should you have any enquiry, please contact ACA Secretariat at 3143 7281 (Ms. LEUNG) or aco_spp@dh.gov.hk