

ACA NEWSFILE

(Publication of the Advisory Council on AIDS, Hong Kong)

Editor: Dr S S Lee, ACA Secretary

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XIVth Meeting of the AIDS Services Development Committee (ASDC)
2:30pm 8 September 1997

XIIth Meeting of the Scientific Committee on AIDS (SCA)
9:30am 25 September 1997

XXIIIrd Meeting of the Advisory Council on AIDS (ACA)
2:30pm 6 October 1997

XXVIth Meeting of the Committee on Education and Publicity on AIDS (CEPAIDS)
5:30pm 22 August 1997

Meeting Highlights

THE XXIIInd meeting of the Advisory Council on AIDS was held on 11 July. With the recent report of a case of HIV transmission through blood transfusion, the meeting began with a thorough discussion on blood safety in Hong Kong. Members were generally satisfied with the current

World AIDS Campaign 1997

THE Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has developed the World AIDS Campaign to signal a shift of emphasis from World AIDS Day in the past. The theme of the 1997 campaign is Children living in a world with AIDS. The definition of a child here is anyone under the age of 18. The campaign will overlap with the one in 1998 focussing on young people.

With the increase in the heterosexual spread of the infection, the focus on children has come rather naturally. The mission statement of the 1997 campaign is "Fewer children infected, fewer children affected, fewer children who are vulnerable to the impact of HIV/AIDS, and an increasing number of girls and boys who are protected in a world that upholds their rights". ❀

blood screening programme implemented by the Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service. They were pleased to note that the Hospital Authority was working on a new advisory mechanism to further safeguard blood and blood products in the future.

The meeting also agreed to change slightly the original plan of conducting a programme review to a dual process of first organising a situation assessment and then a consultancy to

independently review the current programmes in Hong Kong.

Members examined an information paper on the collaboration between Hong Kong and the mainland on various aspects of AIDS prevention and control. It was resolved that the current levels of collaboration be maintained which is perceived to be in the interest of Hong Kong. ❀

**Red Ribbon
Centre
23046268**

Council News / Activities

TB/HIV Registry

ON 7 July, the Scientific Committee on AIDS discussed about the results of a newly established TB/HIV registry system. The idea emerged half a year ago when the Committee raised that the situation with TB/HIV co-infection ought to be studied in greater details. The registry was set up jointly by the Department of Health's AIDS Unit and TB and Chest Service. A total of 55 cases were collected under the new system. The first report concluded that about 10% of the local HIV/AIDS patients have had TB. The meeting resolved to keep the situation under review. ❀

Congress of Sexology

THE Advisory Council on AIDS has been invited to be an Hon Adviser to the XIVth World Congress of Sexology to be held in early 1999 in Hong Kong. The Council will keep members informed of its progress. ❀

BYOL

The Second Bring-your-own-lunch seminar will be held at 1pm on 1 August at the Red Ribbon Centre. Miss Lesley Sinclair of the Society for AIDS Care will be presenting "*Hospice Care for AIDS Patients*". The BYOL series is a monthly programme organised for workers and volunteers involved in any part of Hong Kong's AIDS programme. Interested persons could register with the Red Ribbon Centre (23046268). ❀

The editor apologises for the mistake on the date of the first BYOL seminar in the last issue of ACA Newsfile. It was 4 July instead of 5 July.

.....and more guidelines

THOSE of us who are involved in the clinical management of HIV infection would agree that the number of professional guidelines established by various organisations around the world has grown substantially. The following are some important ones, some of which are 'drafts' awaiting comments:

- British HIV Association guidelines for antiretroviral treatment of HIV seropositive individuals
- USPHS Recommendations for use of antiretroviral drugs during pregnancy for maternal health and reduction of perinatal transmission of HIV-1 in the United States (request for comments)
- Report of the NIH Panel to define principles of therapy of HIV infection
- DHHS guidelines for the use of antiretroviral agents in HIV-infected adults and adolescents
 - Antiretroviral therapy for HIV infection in 1997 - updated recommendations of the International AIDS Society - USA Panel
 - 1997 USPHS/IDSA guidelines for the prevention of opportunistic infections in persons with HIV

More are yet to come! ❀

Elsewhere

Dialogue

On 10 July, Dr Conrad Lam, Chairman of the Advisory Council on AIDS, visited the HIV Information & Drop-in Centre at the St John's Cathedral on Garden Road, Hong Kong. He met with The Very Rev CJ Phillips, Dean of St John's Cathedral, and had discussions with Miss Elijah Fung, the Centre Manager. The following is a brief report of the conversation between Dr Lam and Miss Fung. - editor

THE HIV Information and Drop-In Centre has been in operation for two years, through the support of the Cathedral and the AIDS Trust Fund. In order to keep up with the work, the Centre has recently submitted a proposal to the Council for the AIDS Trust Fund for additional financial sponsorship.

The Centre is now staffed by the manager and a part-time worker. "Volunteers contribute significantly to our work here. We have now about 30 of them helping the running of the Centre and its activities," explained Elijah.

Is the Centre visited by people with HIV/AIDS, or the public? "Both. About 20% of the visitors are people living with the infection." The Centre is now open from 12 noon to 8pm from Monday to

Friday. "We have adjusted our opening hours to meet with the demand of our visitors. Some of them come for information, others for resources, or may want to just drop in for a while."

Are there any new plans for the future? "Apart from running the Centre, we are also reaching out to the community in our work. Some of our activities are held in conjunction with other NGOs. In August, we will be holding an art exhibition for fund-raising."

Elijah considered financial support as one big problem of the Centre. "Not that we need a lot of money, but that it is difficult to make long term plan if regular funding cannot be guaranteed. AIDS Trust Fund is dispersing its assistance on a project basis. Sometimes we have to wait a long time for their reply - that is not always

feasible."

Has the Centre been maintaining contacts with the neighbouring countries? "Yes, we are networking with counterparts in Thailand, Taiwan, Singapore and other countries. We also had very useful experience in exchanging views with the mainland during a meeting in May organised by the Hong Kong AIDS Foundation."

What do you want to see in the local AIDS programme? "I think there should be more work targeting women and middle-aged men..... I hope to see the AIDS Trust Fund further improving its funding mechanism. It is sad if an NGO has to close its doors only because of insufficient funding support." ❀

AIDSUNITON-LINE

<http://www.info.gov.hk/health/aids>

we have been visited over 11000 times since January 1996!!