

ACA NEWSFILE

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

Editor: Dr S S Lee, ACA Secretary

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**XXVth Meeting of the
Advisory Council on
AIDS (ACA)**
2:30pm 20 April 1998

**XXIXth Meeting of the
Committee on
Education and Publicity
on AIDS (CEPAIDS)**
14 May 1998 (time to be
confirmed)

**XVIth Meeting of
AIDS Services
Development
Committee (ASDC)**
date to be confirmed

**XIVth Scientific
Committee on AIDS
(SCA) date to be confirmed**

World TB Day

THE 24th of March is proclaimed World TB Day by the World Health Organisation. On the eve of this day, 1998, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) called for action to control the spread of HIV and to help control the dual HIV/TB epidemic.

TB is one major complication of HIV infection. A study by the Department of Health's AIDS Unit and TB and Chest Service has recorded a total of 95 cases of TB/HIV infection as of the end of 1997. Though a relatively small number, TB has accounted for 19% of all primary AIDS defining illnesses in Hong Kong. Clinicians would need to be on the alert in the prompt diagnosis and treatment of the dual infection.

Apart from affecting HIV positive individuals, TB can also spread by air to those negative. Globally, the spread of HIV will result in more than 3 million new TB cases among both HIV positive and negative people. Both the UNAIDS and Global TB Programme are worried about HIV multiplying the neglect of TB into a global crisis. DOTS (directly observed treatment, short course) strategy and HIV prevention are the two elements of an effective approach to tackle the dual problem. ❁

Community-based Care

THE XVth meeting of the AIDS Services Development Committee was devoted to the discussion on the role of community-based care in the management of HIV infection in Hong Kong. The discussion also forms part of the review project currently undertaken by the Council. ❁



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Council News / Activities

Antenatal Testing

At the XIIIth meeting of the Scientific Committee on AIDS held on 5 March 1998, members had very useful discussion on the subject of antenatal HIV testing, how that can best be provided, especially in context of new data supporting the effectiveness of antiretroviral treatment to prevent perinatal infection.

Different aspects of the subject were raised, ranging from cost-effectiveness, access to service, provision of counselling, consent, universal versus targeted intervention, and their pros and cons. A situation paper summing the discussion will be presented to the Advisory Council on AIDS for deliberation. ❀

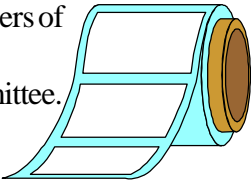
Dr Sex Hot Line
23372121

Conference

HOPE Worldwide is organising a conference on AIDS in Asia, now scheduled for 13-19 November in Hong Kong. As one of the partners of this Conference, Advisory Council on AIDS is providing advice to HOPE Worldwide on the issues relevant to Asia and Hong Kong. Further information about the Conference can be obtained from HOPE Worldwide's Hong Kong office at 2915 3998. ❀

Media Campaign

The Task Force on Media and Publicity of the Committee on Education and Publicity on AIDS is planning to advise on the strategy for the next round of the Government's media campaign on AIDS. Possible themes are STD and HIV, promoting HIV testing, safer sex in young people. A meeting will be held on 1 April to seek further views of members of the Committee. ❀



Quilt

IN a letter to CEPAIDS, The AIDS Memorial Quilt Project informed that it has changed its structure and will continue as a joint project with TeenAIDS, instead of operating as a fully-independent body. The Advisory Council and committees wish the Quilt Project every success in its future work. ❀

BYOL

THE next BYOL Seminar will be presented by Ms Carlye Tsui, JP at the Red Ribbon Centre on 3 April (1-2pm). The presentation is titled *Customer Service: Lessons from the Business Sector*

BYOL (bring-your-own-lunch) is an update continuing education series run on a monthly basis for those working in the field of HIV/AIDS. ❀

Consultation

THE second consultation meeting of the review will be held on 8 April. The Secretariat will update participants of the progress, introduce the framework of the internal assessment report, and highlight areas of concern. ❁

Second Meeting

THE Steering Committee held its second meeting on 19 March. Members examined the progress of the project, and listened to the presentation of Secretariat research staff on the highlights of their draft internal assessment report, as well as the framework on the draft. The meeting also reviewed opinions collected from various organisations, including AIDS NGOs, as well as individuals. A list of areas of concern is being compiled based on the contribution of NGOs and other persons. ❁

ACA and DH AIDS Unit

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

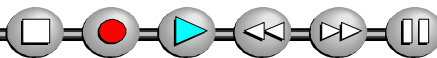
DATA COLLECTION

A total of 129 copies of the review questionnaire have been sent to 41 organisations/units and 88 individuals. The Secretariat is sorting out the returns and put them into various parts of the internal assessment report. Press advertisement had been placed in late February to seek the views of members of the public. Press release was issued concurrently. Three visits were subsequently organised to further exchange views. These were made to Society for AIDS Care, AIDS Concern and Centre for Clinical Trials and Epidemiological Research. ❁

Cumulative HIV/AIDS Statistics in Hong Kong updated 31 December 1998

		total	(AIDS)
<i>Gender</i>	male	829	(278)
	female	128	(31)
<i>Ethnicity</i>	Chinese	656	(230)
	non-Chinese	301	(79)
<i>Transmission</i>	heterosexual	506	(171)
	homosexual	228	(77)
	bisexual	56	(23)
	Injecting drug use	16	(5)
	blood/bl products	67	(15)
	perinatal	4	(2)
	undetermined	80	(16)
TOTAL		957	(309)

Department of Health, Hong Kong



SURVEY ON STD/HIV

Focus

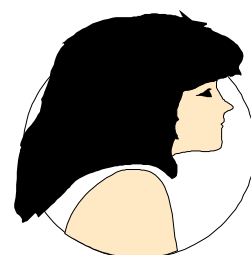
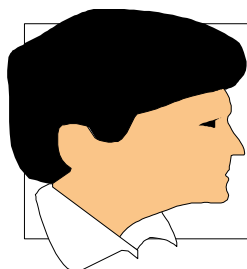
A survey was conducted jointly by the Social Hygiene Service and AIDS Unit, Department of Health, to better understand the epidemiology of STD/HIV in Hong Kong. The data were presented at the last meeting of the Scientific Committee on AIDS on March 5. At the request of the Committee Chairman, a summary is given below for the information of members working on the area. - *the editor*

IN February 1997, a questionnaire survey was administered to all registered medical practitioners to collect data on the pattern of STD (including HIV) in Hong Kong. The questions can be divided under 3 categories: (1) practice and specialty of the respondents, (2) activities relating to HIV, (3) pattern of STDs in the past 7 days.

A total of 7824 questionnaires were sent off, with a return rate of over 20%, 54% were from the private sector. About one-tenth (10.9%) had never given HIV education/counselling, while 28.5% always offered HIV tests to their STD patients. A majority (86.1%) felt that their patients were more aware of STD/AIDS today compared to the situation

in the past.

One-fifth (20.9%) had encountered patients with STDs within the past seven days. From the distribution of these cases, it can be inferred that some



20% of all STDs presented to private doctors in Hong Kong. Doctors working in the following fields accounted for 90% of all consultations: general

practice/family medicine, dermatology/venereology, and gynecology.

A majority of the STD patients presented with urethral/vaginal discharges, while the number of reported cases of genital herpes was disproportionately higher.

The meeting highlighted the following: (a) private practitioners are at the forefront in the delivery of STD services in Hong Kong, (b) a syndromic approach can be adapted for use in the private sector, encompassing both effective treatment and preventive education and counselling, (c) more STDs are known to have been contracted overseas, making contact-tracing impossible. Targeted programmes on behaviour intervention would be desirable. ❁