

Calendar

XXIXth Meeting of the Advisory Council on AIDS (ACA)

2:30pm 16 July 1999

XXXIIIrd Meeting of the Committee on Education and Publicity on AIDS (CEPAIDS)

6:00pm 8 July 1999

Informal Gathering of AIDS Services Development Committee (ASDC)

2:30pm 28 June 1999

XVIth Scientific Committee on AIDS (SCA)

9:30am 25 June 1999

Season for Meetings

IN the coming two months, it will be a busy time for the members of the Advisory Council on AIDS and its Committees - they will be holding the last meetings within the current term of appointment. The ACA meeting will be discussing the future role, structure and operation of Council, as well as reviewing its work in the past three years. Members of the SCA will touch on the revision of the guidelines on HIV-infected health care workers, discuss priority setting for other guidelines revision and formulation, and examine 1998 external quality assessment programme for HIV antibody testing.

The CEPAIDS will be studying the two strategy papers on Youth and Injection Drug Users, after the thorough discussion of the subjects and related ground-work papers in its past meetings.

The ASDC will not be having a formal meeting but instead an informal gathering for exchange of experience and views will be held.



Bilingual Monographs

THE Chinese translation and printing of the "AIDS Strategies for Hong Kong 1999-2001" was completed lately.

This ACA document was prepared after the Review of the local AIDS programme last year, and as a continuation to the Strategies for

prevention and control laid down in 1994 by the Council. Three main objectives - focus on prevention, ensuring quality care and strengthening partnership - were identified to guide the development of the new strategies. Furthermore, ten targets were set to realise the

objectives in concrete terms.

This *AIDS Strategies* shall become the blueprint for focussing our AIDS programme in the next 3 years. Members should have received a copy of the monograph. Those who would like to have additional complimentary copies are welcome to contact the Secretariat.

AIDS Hotline 2780 2211

*Messages, Counselling
HIV Testing*

Legal Protection for PWA in Mainland

THE State Council of Mainland China has released a legislation to specifically protect the confidentiality of patients with HIV/AIDS so as to minimise discrimination. It is stressed that care providers must not disclose the particulars of the patients. In addition, the patients should not be deprived of care and treatment by the medical institutions, as well as be protected with the right to work, study or participate in social activities.

It is expected that other regulations on HIV/AIDS prevention and care will be developed by the Ministry of Health in this year and they will serve to further protect the rights of PWA. In Hong Kong, the rights of PWA are protected under the Disability Discrimination Ordinance. Nevertheless, there is no law that specifically targets the rights of PWA. ♣

UNAIDS Collaborating Centre Seminar

*“Evolving HIV Situation in China -
Need for Expanding the Response”*

by

Dr. Emile Fox

Country Programme Adviser, UNAIDS China

16 June 1999 (4:00-5:00pm)
Lecture Room, Red Ribbon Centre
Wang Tau Hom Jockey Club Clinic
200 Junction Road East
Kowloon

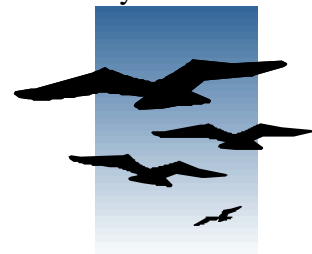
*Members are welcome to contact Ms. Victoria Kwong at
Tel: 2304 6268 for enquires



Inauguration Ceremony


A ceremony will be held on 16 June 1999 for the inauguration of Red Ribbon Centre as the UNAIDS Collaborating Centre for Technical Support. Mrs. Betty Tung, Wife of the Chief Executive of the government of the HKSAR and patron of the Centre, has kindly consented to be the officiating guest for the

event. The ACA Chairman, Dr. Conrad Lam, JP, will be participating in the platform party. All members are most welcome to join the ceremony.



AIDS as the leading infectious killer

THE World Health Organisation announced that, according to the estimates of UNAIDS, AIDS has become the fourth killer worldwide and number one killer in Africa. In 1998, AIDS was the leading cause of death due to infectious diseases in the world, replacing that of tuberculosis which was number one in 1997.

Dr. Peter Piot, Executive Director of the UNAIDS, pointed out that the AIDS threat is unusually catastrophic for two reasons: AIDS targets young adults and the number of deaths are quickly accelerating. We would expect to face the impacts of AIDS for the coming decades even if HIV can be stopped from now in the world. 

ACA and DH AIDS Unit
<http://www.info.gov.hk/aids>

Cumulative HIV/AIDS Statistics in Hong Kong updated 31 March 1999

		Total (AIDS)
Gender	male	1003 (347)
	female	189 (43)
Ethnicity	Chinese	822 (296)
	non-Chinese	370 (94)
Transmission	heterosexual	664 (234)
	homosexual	253 (86)
	bisexual	64 (24)
	injecting drug use	17 (5)
	blood/bl products	67 (16)
	perinatal	7 (4)
	undetermined	120 (21)
TOTAL		1192 (390)

Department of Health, Hong Kong

Thanks & Wishes

DR. JB Hollinrake, the Superintendent of the Shek Kwu Chau (SKC) Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre under SARDA (The Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers) has resigned from the Scientific Committee on AIDS as he retires from his work and will be returning to United Kingdom for good.

Dr. Hollinrake has been providing his expert input, particularly on drug and AIDS, for the past few years of membership at SCA. It was with his efforts that data on the behavioural pattern of SKC inmates can be collected and analysed, which contributed to the overall behavioural monitoring of drug users. Moreover, unlinked anonymous screening has been extended smoothly this year for this target group to better discern the trend of HIV infection. May we thank Dr. Hollinrake for his contributions and wish him joy for his new living.

Apple Tree Project

THE Hong Kong Sex Education Association (HKSEA) and the Red Ribbon Centre has started a new project in May 1999 to enhance sex education for the youth. Labelled as "Apple Tree Project", the project features a model of apple tree with leaves containing common queries on myths of sex, and fruits (apples) with answers to these questions. Some of the material was taken from the frequently-listened messages of the Dr. SEX Hotline developed by the HKSEA and operationally supported by the Department of Health.

Thus far, three secondary schools have staged the Apple Tree by turns. For each school, it was instructed that the Tree with only the leaves on initially would be displayed for several days before they were

replaced by the apples. In addition, a Dr. SEX mailbox was in place for users to put in questions, which will be answered in ink and embodied in the apples when changing over the leaves into fruits.



A preliminary evaluation survey of the project showed that more than 1000 students and teachers of the three schools had used the Apple Tree. Feed-backs from these schools indicated that the tree was attractive for delivering sex education. Its content and format of presentation were appropriate and students actively visit the tree with no undue



embarrassment. One school had actually organised quiz and games on sex education, to tie in with the display of the Apple Tree. The Tree would be further displayed in other schools for the coming months.

It is well acknowledged that quality sex education, especially in the context for students and youth will help the prevention of STD and HIV. Sponsored by the AIDS Trust Fund, the Dr. SEX Hotline was launched in July 1996 with such rationale behind. It features messages recorded in Cantonese, English and Putonghua. Up to the end of 1998, there was a total of nearly 500,000 calls for the Hotline. The most frequent callers belonged to the age group of 11-20, followed by that of 21-30. More than one-third of the callers were female. The phenomenon clearly suggested that the demand for sex education is great among the youth. ☺

Dr Sex Hotline
2337 2121