

.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

**XVth Scientific
Committee on AIDS
(SCA)**
9:30am 12 July 1999

ASDC Gathering

DR. Homer Tso, Chairman of the ASDC held an informal gathering with the members on 28 June. It was participated by Mr. Brett White of the HKCASO, Ms. Loretta Wong of AIDS Concern, Mr. Frederick Tong of Equal Opportunities Commission, and Mr. Tony Pang of the HKCSS. Members focussed on the recent

Eight Areas for Supporting China's AIDS Efforts

1. To develop multisectoral programme
2. To raise the level of public awareness on AIDS prevention issues
3. To find innovative approaches to interventions
4. To guarantee safety in health care settings
5. To improve care for people living with HIV/AIDS
6. To create an effective, scientific surveillance system
7. To enhance community participation in all aspects of HIV programmes
8. To undertake quality research

These points were excerpted from Dr. Emile Fox's talk "Evolving HIV Situation in China - Need for Expanding the Response" at the UNAIDS Collaborating Centre for Technical Support Seminar conducted at Red Ribbon Centre on 16 June 1999.



progress of the protest of Richland Gardens residents against the Kowloon Bay Health Centre. There has been a lot of media coverage on the incident and the Secretariat has compiled a set of newspaper cuttings for the gathering.

Members exchanged views and noted that the Integrated Treatment Centre which provides services for

patients with HIV/STD/skin diseases has commenced operation since 25 June. In view of the persistent objection from the residents, it is anticipated that the government departments, non-governmental organisations, the community and all related parties would need further efforts to ensure that patients can receive services smoothly without obstacles. ☎

AIDS Hotline 2780 2211 *Messages, Counselling
HIV Testing*

Membership Invited for HKCCA

THE Hong Kong Community Charter on AIDS (HKCCA), a joint effort of Lions Clubs International - District 303 (Hong Kong and Macau) the AIDS Unit of the Department of Health since 1994, is inviting institutions and individual persons to become signatories and ambassadors of the Charter respectively.

In late 1998, three important qualities were identified among the signatories: *leadership, partnership and community support*. With the expansion of the HKCCA to include a new Ambassador scheme, these three qualities became the official values of the Charter embodied in both Schemes. Thus far there were 79 signatories and 7 ambassadors joining the Charter. Any contribution, no matter how big or small, will definitely make a positive impact to the AIDS dimension in workplace and thus the society. Anybody who wants to get more information about HKCCA is welcome to contact Ms. Victoria Kwong at Tel: 2304 6268.




"Antenatal HIV Testing: Assessment of a Routine Voluntary Approach"

A group of doctors in Edinburgh, UK, has examined a routine voluntary approach for implementing HIV testing for antenatal women. They used an opt-out approach which means that HIV test will be done after discussion with the mother unless she declines the offer. The

authors found a much higher uptake rate (88%) compared with their previous study of opt-in approach (35%). Furthermore, the women did not find it difficult to decline a test. The two most common reasons offered for rejecting the test were, "Not necessary as I've no chance of being positive" and "I've been in a stable relationship for a long time."

The authors suggested "that this approach [in which testing was routine unless a woman declined] is more effective than an opt-in

approach, and those who decline testing do not seem to be doing so because of high risk status."

It has been well recognised that selective antenatal HIV testing would miss a great proportion of at-risk mothers who are potentially infected with HIV. The mothers are often reluctant to accept/request a test because of the stigmatisation associated with it when the method is selective. The article appeared at the British Medical Journal 1999;318:1660-1661. 

Meeting Postponed

THE 16th meeting of the Scientific Committee on AIDS has been postponed to 12 July 1999. The Chairman and the Secretariat apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Focus/Surveillance


(continued from Page 28) satisfying and productive ones in terms of our collaboration with countries. Moreover, as a member of the Programme's Coordinating Board, China has been steadfast in its encouragement of UNAIDS' global efforts. But if we are to deal effectively with the epidemic in the long term,

in China and globally, we know that we must not only maintain the current level of commitment to addressing AIDS but seek to raise it even further.

So, how can the Red Ribbon Centre play its part in the collective effort? Let me return to the image of Hong Kong as a gateway and a window on China, because it reminds me so very well of the five images that our

China team conjured up in 1996 to describe what UNAIDS was about - *window, bridge, magnet, catalyst* and *spring*. The Red Ribbon Centre, I believe, can be all of these, not just with respect to community responses and HIV/AIDS in China and its neighbours, but also with respect to the immense diaspora of Chinese-speaking communities in Asia and all corners of the globe.

As a UNAIDS Collaborating Centre, some of your major roles will be in building national and regional capacity for effective HIV prevention and care programmes, in documenting and disseminating best practices for Chinese-speaking communities, and in facilitating local and international partnerships. As such, you can be a *window* on best practices, a *bridge* between China and all Chinese communities, a *magnet* for technical resource and for networks that will in turn serve as *catalysts* and *springs* for broader and stronger AIDS prevention and education efforts throughout the region, and wherever Chinese communities thrive.

This is the extent of your challenge. We look forward to many years of learning together and of fruitful collaboration in support of a strong response to AIDS. 

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

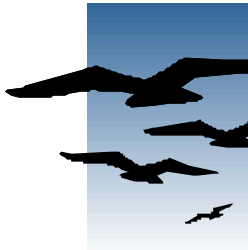
Cumulative HIV/AIDS Statistics in Hong Kong
updated 31 March 1999

		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

Video Speech by Dr. Peter Piot

The following is a speech delivered by Dr Peter PIOT, Executive Director, UNAIDS, at the Inauguration of the Red Ribbon Centre, Hong Kong, as Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Collaborating Centre for Technical Support on 16 June 1999



IT gives me great pleasure to offer my warm congratulations to the Red Ribbon Centre on this inauguration as a UNAIDS Collaborating Centre, the more so since I had the opportunity to visit the Centre in May last year and to witness first-hand the excellence and range of facilities that it offers.

The establishment of this Centre in 1997, at a time when the AIDS situation in Hong Kong

could so easily have given rise to complacency, is remarkable testimony to the authorities' foresight and wisdom. In the short space of time since, the Centre's dynamic team has spared no effort in fulfilling its main objective of facilitating the community efforts on AIDS education in Hong Kong.

1997 also marked in other ways a watershed in Hong Kong's rich history. But the return to Chinese sovereignty merely reasserted Hong Kong's unique position as both a gateway and a window between China and the world. And so it is proving too...this time in the area of AIDS prevention and care. Like you, I have no doubt that the Red Ribbon Centre has the potential to contribute even more to meeting some of the growing needs for AIDS education and technical know-how in Hong Kong and in mainland China, as well as in the region. Hence our firm support for the Centre's request last year to be designated as a UNAIDS Collaborating Centre.



I need not remind you of the challenges that AIDS presents to us all, and to this region in particular. We all know all too well the epidemiological facts, and I shall not dwell on them today. Suffice it to say that, in Hong Kong, you have clearly shown your determination to address the many issues related to HIV early and forcefully. But the challenges are as numerous as they are complex. Allow me to single out one which has been very much a priority concern for many of you and which, to your great credit, you have consistently upheld, namely the importance of a supportive environment for people living with HIV and their families. We cannot over-emphasize the importance of confronting and overcoming the issues of stigma and discrimination related to HIV. and we must seize every opportunity - as you have done recently - to advocate the acceptance and support of those living with HIV.

UNAIDS' association with China has been one of the more
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Dr Sex Hotline
2337 2121