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about the council

The first meeting of the ACT AIDS Action Committee was held in 1983 when a group of gay men living in the ACT met to respond to the looming AIDS crisis. This group then formalised and established itself as the AIDS Action Council of the ACT in March 1985.

Within a year of being established, the Council recognised the need to work closely with the affected communities. Specific projects were established for gay men, injecting drug users, sex workers and people with haemophilia. Care teams, treatments information and counselling were provided to people with HIV and AIDS and their significant others. From this time also, general community awareness, information and advocacy became vital work for the agency.

With the changing decade it became increasingly clear that most cases of HIV in Australia were the result of male to male sexual contact. Independent services such as ACTIV (ACT Intravenous League), WISE (Workers in Sex Employment) and the Haemophilia Foundation ACT were providing services for their respective peer groups and the Council more clearly focussed its prevention services towards gay and bisexual men. At this time, services were added to deliver broader HIV education and health promotion directly to people with HIV/AIDS.

This year the AIDS Action Council had 147 members and enjoyed the support of 85 volunteers. The Council continues to direct its efforts and resources to meeting the needs of those most affected by the epidemic.

Our strategies embrace both education aimed at preventing further transmission of HIV, and support services aimed at informing, empowering and supporting people with HIV/AIDS.

our vision

To live in a world where people with HIV/AIDS have equality of access to world class treatment, therapy and care - and in which transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is eliminated.

our mission

- Care and support for all people living with or directly affected by HIV/AIDS in the ACT;
- Up-to-date treatments information and advice;
- Advocacy for adequate and appropriate services for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS in the ACT;
- Community education about the prevention of HIV transmission;
- Support to achieve a vaccine for HIV and a cure for AIDS;
- Build a stronger community response to HIV/AIDS in the ACT;
- Oppose discrimination based on HIV status, sexuality or drug use;
- Prioritise the delivery of services to people living with HIV/AIDS, gay men, other men who have sex with men and injecting drug users, within the context of the Fourth National HIV/AIDS Strategy;
- Work collaboratively with other community based organisations working with affected communities, injecting drug users, sex workers and people living with haemophilia.

AIDS Action Council
Strategic Plan, 2002-2005,
page 6

2004/2005

the epidemic in the ACT

Latest figures derived from the Australian HIV Surveillance Report (Vol 21, No 2, April 2005) produced by the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research.

national HIV database

new diagnoses of HIV infection

	1 Jan 03 – 31 Dec 03		1 Jan 04 – 31 Dec 04		– Cumulative to 31 Dec 04		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
ACT	4	1	6	2	247	31	278
NSW	386	32	345	60	697	785	13,746
Australia	771	83	765	120	22,290	1,633	24,245

national AIDS registry

cases of AIDS

	1 Jan 03 – 31 Dec 03		1 Jan 04 – 31 Dec 04		Cumulative to 31 Dec 04		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
ACT	3	1	0	0	92	9	101
NSW	126	1	71	5	5,173	224	5,412
Australia	209	12	142	17	9,005	465	9,500

deaths following AIDS

	1 Jan 03 – 31 Dec 03		1 Jan 04 – 31 Dec 04		Cumulative to 31 Dec 04		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
ACT	1	1	0	0	71	6	77
NSW	43	2	36	1	3,513	125	3,650
Australia	80	9	75	5	6,209	280	6,509

Updates are issued quarterly, in January, April, July and October, and are available online at <http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/nchecr/>

president's message

The AIDS Action Council of the ACT is a community-based organisation providing information, referral and support to people affected by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Our agency strengthens the local response to HIV/AIDS by providing assistance and education to the community. We promote awareness and understanding of HIV and AIDS issues.

The Council's work is a vital component of Australia's overall HIV response.

2005 is the year of the 5th National HIV/AIDS strategy. This strategy comes at a time when increasing rates of HIV infection have been reported in almost every state capital. It reminds us of the reality of a disease that has no cure, a disease that is still affecting men, women and children more than 20 years after the first reported HIV cases.

It has now been four years since the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, and still many of the members states have made little progress in meeting their basic AIDS prevention and care goals established at that historic meeting.

The Asia Pacific region now has the fastest growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in the world. Countries such as Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, China, India, Nepal and Papua New Guinea all now have a serious HIV/AIDS epidemic. This threatens the health of their entire populations and will likely destabilise the economic and social fabric of their communities.

During my involvement with the AIDS Action Council, a period spanning seven years, I have called on Governments at the National and local level to lead with both determination and pragmatism. HIV/AIDS is on the increase once again and it is a sober reminder that the virus and related illnesses have no boundaries. Without an ongoing concerted effort by all levels of Government and the community, HIV/AIDS will once again haunt our communities. It is only through the efforts of a reasoned and responsive approach that we will succeed.

This Annual Report highlights the many achievements of the AIDS Action Council of the ACT. In light of mounting concerns of increases in HIV notifications and a re-emergence on the affects of drug resistances among our community, this Annual Report provides a picture of the incredible support that we garner as a community based organisation.

In 2005, the AIDS Action Council has once again delivered exceptional services in a period of significant change. It has emerged from this period of change a more focussed organization and demonstrated its innate ability to rise to new heights and accomplish responsive services through strong and trusting partnerships with ACT Health.

The Council has continued to strengthen its local partnerships. A good example is the ongoing collaboration with the Canberra Sexual Health Centre and the HIV Project of the ACT Division of General Practice in locally delivering the Partnership Approach to Comprehensive Testing.

2004/2005

This year has once again seen numerous events organised by our large team of volunteers. Our volunteers provided essential services to people living with HIV/AIDS and I am grateful of the many opportunities to be involved in volunteer activities. Without them, our efforts could not reach so many within the community. They remain an integral part of our agency and a fundamental part of the success of our work. I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to each and every one of our volunteers for their generosity, their time and their ongoing dedication to our many causes.

This year has also seen a number of longer term and some new members on the Board of Management. As always, my Vice President John Guppy has shown unrelenting dedication, commitment and vision and I am deeply aware of his energy and enthusiasm and of his thorough understanding of needs of our community. The Secretary/Treasurer, Kevin Playford has provided a level of financial scrutiny that has not only given us the confidence to take on additional tasks but also strengthened our ability to plan well into the future. I can assure all AIDS Action Council members that every board member in 2005 has provided the agency with a level of governance that is strategic and transparent.

Rebecca Davey, our General Manager has been a truly guiding force and provided a high level of support and level-headedness that has nurtured and supported our role as a governing body. As General Manager she has not only put in place a system of support for the agency and clients, but she has developed strong and trusting partnerships and created stability within

the agency. My sincere thanks to her and her supportive family for letting us take so much of her time during and outside of normal working hours.

The AIDS Action Council in 2005 once again rose above all expectations. It was a year that the ACT community can be proud of in terms of achievements and in terms of reaching so many community members. This will be my last Annual Report as President of the AIDS Action Council. I feel honoured to have been associated with an agency in this capacity for the last five years. The position of President has provided me with a multitude of skills, a capacity to comprehend difficult life circumstance and an ability to think with hope even when the odds seems so stacked against us at times. I thank everyone who has held my hand. I thank all those who have challenged me, supported me and sat so patiently through any number of long orations! Finally, I commend this 2005 Annual Report to you. You will once again find it comprehensive, informative, well presented and easy to follow. It documents all of our activities over the past year and gives us strong direction for the years to come.



Joey Tabone
President

general manager's report

Welcome to a new look annual report, which, for those of you who have been around long enough, will know is actually a return to an older format. This year we have commenced a history project, ably being driven by Mr Ian Rankin, to assist in celebrations in 2006 for our 20th/21st/25th birthday celebrations. No matter when one chooses to place a date on the beginning of the Council, be it the first meeting of a group of concerned men in a lounge room in Euree St, the first time the AIDS Action Council opened its doors 'for business', or the date the Council became 'incorporated', next year is a milestone. As part of the lead up to this, we thought we'd return to 'everything old is new', and start reminding you of where we have come from.

The new calendar year was met with the news that the building that is Westlund House is to be demolished as part of the City West Plan, and a technology centre of sorts is to replace our building. For us this means another move. However, unlike the move from Lonsdale St which was brought about by an eviction notice delivered on World AIDS Day, this time we have a chance to plan, to seek appropriate accommodation, and to keep everyone informed of the process. Regular updates will be delivered to members and clients over the next period of time. At time of print it seems we will be unlikely to be moving before the end of 2006. However, stranger things have been known to happen!

For those who know the Council, you know that 'events' are very much a part of what we do. This year World AIDS Day and International Candlelight Memorial have once again been major events on the calendar. It was heart warming to see so many attend the Candlelight Memorial this year, even with the absence of the Qwire as they toured Paris in the Gay and Lesbian Choir Festival. The church service was well attended with a sermon that was particularly thought provoking as Rev Theresa Angert-Quilter from St Ninnians spoke of the need to de-stigmatise same sex attracted individuals. The actual Candlelight Memorial, held once again at the National Museum, was moving as we looked at the history of HIV/AIDS as it has impacted upon us in Canberra, through the Council and as individuals. The Police Scouts were in attendance and assisted in a moving tribute to those whom we have lost to HIV/AIDS through the unfurling of a red ribbon inscribed with their names.

World AIDS Day (or AIDS week as it is for us) was again a flurry of activity, beginning with the Chief Minister's Breakfast and culminating with 'Positively Red', hosted by Cube. The highlight of this week had to be the opening of 'Reflections', a presentation of 20 years worth of HIV activism in the form of posters and other memorabilia. This exhibition ran for 2 months at the Canberra Museum and Gallery, and then a smaller version was taken on to the Australian Health Promotion Conference held in Canberra in March.

This year saw sporadic activity on the finalisation of the 5th National HIV/AIDS Strategy, and then suddenly, with no warning to the sector, it was released on 18 June 2005. This was disappointing to say the least, not to be included as partners in the fight against HIV/AIDS. It must be noted that no one other than the Commonwealth knew of the release until the last moment. We are not complaining that we finally have a new strategy, albeit disappointed to some degree in its lack of challenge, just in the manner in which it was released to the community who work to it.

It has been a year and an annual report in which we are looking back to look forward, I give my thanks to all who have contributed to the Council again this year. Thank you to the community who are always there when we need them, to All Saints Anglican Church who have stepped in at the last minute with all manner of requests for help in the past year, the Bears, and Champions who allow us so much of their space and access to their clients, so often. To ACT Health, thank you for continuing to support not only the work we do, but to your commitment to the community sector as a whole. To the staff, once again thanks for another year of commitment and hard work above and beyond the call of duty, and to the volunteers of the Council whose ranks seem to have swelled remarkably as the year has drawn to a close, my utmost thanks. And finally to the Board, and especially the Executive who continue to meet with me on a weekly basis, thank you for your support to me personally, and your commitment to the Council, clients, and the work we do.



Rebecca Davey
General Manager

the council at work



Tony Blattman, Education Officer with Roslyn Dundas MLA at the launch of 'A Positive Journey' exhibition in July.



Julie McCrossin facilitated the GLBTI Health Consultation in November.



World AIDS Day was launched on December 1 with the Chief Ministers' Breakfast.



Reflections: 20 years of HIV Education and Activism exhibition was launched in early December to coincide with World AIDS Awareness Week, and concluded in January.



The CEHPU displayed the AAC collection of HIV Education resources at the 20/20 Vision Conference in March.



May saw the Council head back to the 50's with a retro Tupperware Fundraising Party.

2004/2005

building and maintaining partnerships

The Council is able to expand its range of service delivery in the ACT and region by working in partnership with many other government, non-government, educational, community and commercial organisations.

This year this has included, but is not limited to, the following agencies and services.

National HIV/AIDS Organisations

Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)
National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA)
National Centre for HIV Social Research
National Centre for HIV Clinical Research and Epidemiology

Australian Federal Police, Gay & Lesbian Liaison Officer's Program

National related peak bodies

Australian Intravenous League (AIVL)
Australian Hepatitis C Council
Scarlet Alliance
Inter-Governmental Committee on AIDS, Hepatitis and Related Diseases (IGCAHRD)

Interstate HIV/AIDS organisations

AIDS Council of New South Wales
Victorian AIDS Council
AIDS Council of South Australia
Northern Territory AIDS Council
Western Australian AIDS Council
Queensland AIDS Council
Tasman Council on AIDS, Hepatitis & Related Diseases
NSW Health Multicultural HIV/AIDS & Hepatitis C Service

ACT gay, lesbian, transgender & bisexual groups

Gay and Lesbian Qwire
Bears Canberra
Tennis Club
Reading Group
SpringOUT Festival
Chrysalis

Secondary Education Institutions

High Schools and Colleges

Tertiary Education Institutions

Australian National University
University of Canberra
Canberra Institute of Technology
Australian Defence Force Academy

ACT Government Departments & Authorities

ACT Health
Dept of Justice & Community Safety
Dept of Disability, Housing & Community Services
Dept of Urban Services
Healthpact
Canberra Museum and Gallery
Canberra Tourism and Events Corporation
WorkCover

ACT Government Advisory Structures

Ministerial Advisory Council on Sexual Health, AIDS, Hepatitis and Related Diseases
ACT Health Council

Other

National Museum of Australia
Merck, Sharpe & Dohme
Anex

ACT HIV/AIDS related organisations

Directions ACT
Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation & Advocacy (CAHMA)
ACT Haemophilia Foundation
ACT Hepatitis C Council

ACT HIV/AIDS Clinical Sector

Canberra Sexual Health Centre
The Canberra Hospital
Clare Holland House
ACT Division of General HIV Project
Interchange General Practice
Winnunga Nimmityah
Various local GPs

ACT health organisations & groups

Carers Association
Chronic Conditions Alliance
Health Care Consumers Association
Queer Coalition
Gender and Violence Educators
Health Promotion Network
The Junction
Mental Health Community Coalition
Sexual Health & Family Planning ACT
Service Assisting Male Survivors of Sexual Assault
SHOUT
Youth in the City

ACT sex industry

Champions
Club X
AXIS
all brothels through the Sex Worker Outreach Project

Other ACT community organisations

ACT Council of Social Services (ACTCOSS)
Care Financial Services
Lifeline
Volunteering ACT
AXYS Youth Service
Ainslie Village
Havelock Housing



contracted outputs

ACT Health purchased the following services:

Output 1: Provide a range of information, education, training and health promotion initiatives which support the first goal of the 4th National HIV/AIDS Strategy “to eliminate the transmission of HIV”.

Output	Contracted	Actual
AIDS Action Council		
Hours of education and/or training	250	288
Information resources distributed	5000	10030
Hits on website	2000	85465
Calls on telephone information lines	800	1434
Safe Sex packs distributed	8000	17400
Education Resources distributed	8	9
Newsletters produced	12	18
Report on education/prevention activities and issues	1	1

Sex Worker Outreach Project

Hours of information, education, advocacy and referral	1000	1272
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Output 2: Provide a range of services which support the second goal of the 4th National HIV/AIDS Strategy: “to minimise the personal and social impacts of HIV infection”.

Output	Contracted	Actual
AIDS Action Council		
Hours of professional counselling	400	349
Positive education projects	3	5
Clients accessing vitamin/supplements service	30	31
Complementary therapies clinics	40	53

PLWHA ACT

Hours of peer support	750	745
Peer support activities	20	75
Newsletters produced	12	12
Report on PLWHA activities and issues	1	1

2004/2005

organisational services unit providing agency-wide administrative support and financial services

The commencement of the 2004/2005 financial year saw an extremely busy time for staff of the administration unit. In the first half of the financial year staff facilitated the installation of a new computer system, a new server, new hosting arrangements for our websites, a new Management Information System, implementation of a new auspice arrangement with the Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy (CAHMA), relocation of the Sex Worker Outreach Project from Braddon to Westlund House and an internal re-organisation of the unit.

During the course of the year a new look Administration Unit has evolved to deal with the increased financial responsibility and the Board responded by approving to amend various position descriptions to reflect a Manager's role, Administration Officer, Receptionist and Volunteer and Events Co-ordinator.

The major focus over the coming year is to consolidate into our new structure, complete the policy and procedure review and continue to strive towards smarter ways of providing administration and financial support to the agency.

finance

This is the third year in a row an increase in banking fees has been reported! Our bank has commenced charging an access fee for using its online banking system. The Unit has a substantially increased transactional volume dealing with payroll and financial requirements of CAHMA and the existing Council business. A result of the increase in size and complexity saw our auditor suggest a new accountant. Everalls DFK Pty Ltd have been appointed by the Board as our new accountants and are providing quarterly reviews and advice as well as preparing our end of year financial statements.

administration

During a management retreat attended by all managers in April 05 a decision was taken to revisit all our policy and procedures. The administration team is now conducting a review of all policy and procedures. Our aim is to provide all staff with easy ready access to policy and process using an Intranet.

Throughout the year, the administration team has provided support to all areas of the Council, SWOP and CAHMA. This includes premises maintenance, stationery, stock levels, database development, IT issues, financial and cash needs, desktop publishing, office equipment maintenance and postal requirements. Administration staff consistently provide various support functions at most Council events.

building

Last year we reported that the ACT Government's plans for City West marked Westlund House for replacement with townhouses. Things change so rapidly! A new deed of agreement between the ACT Government and the Australian National University (ANU) will see the land Westlund House occupies (and other land in the precinct) transferred to the ANU and used for a technology park. The deed particularly refers to community agencies within the precinct and states that each agency will be duly accommodated within the precinct.



it systems

The Council is very grateful to ACT Health who made it possible, through a one off grant, to purchase new desktop computers and a server to replace the old system which was beginning to show signs of failure. Council staff now have the latest XP operating system and Microsoft Office software to assist in their day to day work. After much consideration the Council opted for a Linux based server, and now runs its own mail server, and hosts a number of the Council websites.

The Council has also invested in creating a new Management Information System designed to record all staff, client, volunteer and membership information through a secure web interface. The new system replaces various databases and spreadsheets with one tool.

front office volunteers

The number of volunteers for the Front Desk waxed and waned throughout the year, due to volunteers finding full-time employment or other circumstances. Currently there are no volunteers for the Front Office. A special thank you to all volunteers who gave their time to assist in the running of the reception area.



Andrew McLeod
Manager



Mandi Collins
Reception



Valan Phoenix
Administration
Officer



Leonie Campbell
Volunteer and
Events Coordinator

2004/2005

secondary needle exchange

The number of people accessing the Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) from the Council has grown considerably. Collection of statistics reporting has been changed. The Council has been operating a 24 hour sharps disposal bin, located outside the front of Westlund House since August of 2003. Because the bin is operational 24 hours a day, it became impossible to keep an accurate record of returns, as most returns were outside of the Council's normal operating hours. The return of used injecting equipment is now based on net weight.

Directions ACT approached the NSP staff at the Council to help distribute resources on a new local safe disposal campaign, launched in November 2004. Resources were displayed in the reception area and brochures on safe disposal were dispensed with an explanation about the campaign.

The ACT Government initiated a trial on syringe vending machines in the ACT in February 2005. Four syringe vending machines and disposal bins have been installed at Community Centres in Belconnen, Civic, Woden and Tuggeranong.

Council Statistics

Distribution of needle packs (4 and 8 packs): 167

Returns (individual needles): 500
(other return statistics unavailable)*

Visits: 132

Male: 30

Female: 5

Under 25 (male and female): 4

Over 25 (male and female): 29

* Taking the 24 hour disposal bin at the Council into consideration, the number of returns would look considerably lower than in previous years. It should also be noted that people who access the Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) from the Council, do so on a repetitive basis.



Syringe vending machine located at the rear of the City Health Building - one of four syringe vending machines installed in the ACT.



The Volunteer Service of the AIDS Action Council

'Links' activities this year included:

Client Support

- Care and support
- Transport
- Mowing lawns
- Peer Support Dinners
- Positive Women's Group

Administration

- Safe Sex packs
- Co-facilitation of training course
- T-shirt cataloging
- SWOP

Fundraising

- Sale of red ribbons
- Quiz Nights
- Tupperware Party
- Positively Red

Events

- SpringOut Fair Day
- International Candlelight Memorial
- Worlds Aids Day
- Positively Red

During the year to the end of June 2005, over 156 instances of volunteer service were recorded, totaling over 1328 hours.

We rely on the commitment and support of our volunteers who make it possible to offer our range of services. We would like to thank all our wonderful volunteers who give so selflessly and freely of their time and skills.

volunteer meetings

The Council is continuing the monthly volunteer meetings, with the addition of including a light dinner for those in attendance, a good way of encouraging people along. The newsletter assists with keeping the volunteers up to date with what is happening, current needs of our clients and any other information that they may require.

volunteer training

The AIDS Action Council has seen a steady increase of new volunteers in the 2004/05, with over 20 new volunteers. The AAC held the Core Training Module twice in the last financial year, and in March 2005 the telephone support service training for Telephone Help, Referral and Information Bureau (throb) and Women's Information and Support Help line (wish). It was exciting to see a number of volunteers being trained in this vital area of support.

volunteer involvement

The volunteers of the AAC have been busy this year with an average of 1328 hours over the twelve months, and at \$25 per hour that's \$33, 200 conservative value to the community. The Council looks forward to continuing its association with volunteers and clients.

2004/2005

special events

annual general meeting and celebration

The 2004 Annual General Meeting was held at the Red Belly Black Cafe, Hobart Place, Civic. The meeting was attended by 45 members, volunteers and guests.

The Annual Peter Rowland Address was given this year by Professor Frank Bowden.

In keeping with tradition, the Board made the following awards to recognise contributions to the Council and to HIV/AIDS issues:

President's Award:

Canberra Gay and Lesbian
Liaison Officers (GLLOs)



Prof. Frank Bowden giving the Annual Peter Rowland Address.



David Widdup Award recipients Allison (left) and Megan (right) with Anabell Thoener (fmr Volunteer and Events Coordinator, centre).

Community Award:

Bit Bent

David Widdup Awards:

Graeme Anderson
Allison Gordon
Megan Hansford
Richard Allen



Paul (left) and Nick (right) from Bit Bent, recipients of the Community Award.



Our new Fabulous Member, Alex.

Fabulous Membership Awards (lifetime membership):

Alexander Hood

president's picnic

Around 60 people were in attendance for the Council's premier event of the year, the President's Picnic, in February. Special guests included Brendan Smyth MLA, Deb Fosky MLA, Jacqui Burke MLA and representatives from various organisations including ACT Health, Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Haemophilia Foundation ACT and the Canberra Sexual Health Centre.

The event was also well attended by many members, volunteers and clients of the Council. The purpose of this function is to inform other agencies about the Council's plans for the year.

The Picnic also serves as a launching platform for a new campaigns. This year saw Kenn Basham receiving an Award of Recognition for his presentation at the Reflections exhibition, in which he accounted many personal details about his life.

candlelight vigil

The 22nd International Candlelight Memorial was very successful. Starting at All Saints Church for the Ecumenical Service, it was attended by over 70 people, including several MLAs.

The Candlelight Memorial Ceremony followed at the National Museum of Australia. Minister for Health, Simon Corbell MLA, gave an address to the people in attendance. Once again we had panels of the Australian AIDS Memorial Quilt unfolded – very moving, and for something different this year we had a red ribbon framing the quilts that included the remembrance names.



Minister for Health, Simon Corbell MLA, lighting a candle for lives lost to HIV/AIDS.



A view of the lighted candles from the NMA.



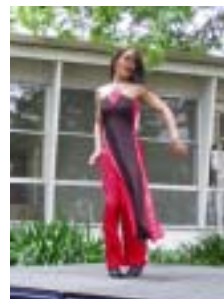
Volunteers preparing to unfold a panel from the Australian AIDS Quilt with the Police Scouts framing the panels in a Red Ribbon.

community fair day

The Springout Fair was held mostly inside Westlund House this year due to the rain. There were a number of retail and community stall holders, drag queens and Simon Corbell, Minister for Health launched 'The Living Quilt' book.



Minister for Health, Simon Corbell MLA, launching 'The Living Quilt' at Fair Day.



Sydney drag performer, Mystique, entertaining the Fair Day crowd.

2004/2005

world AIDS day 2004

national campaign resources

The theme for World AIDS Day 2004 was 'Women , Girls and HIV and AIDS". Resources included a range of posters, postcards, T-shirts, magnets and Red Ribbon confectionery.



chief minister's breakfast

World AIDS Day 2004 started with the Chief Minister's breakfast at the Kurrajong Hotel with over 60 people attending, including the AFP GLOs, representatives from ACT Health, Canberra Sexual Health Centre, and other various organisations. Members of the Legislative Assembly in attendance were, Jon Stanhope (Chief Minister), Mary Porter MLA, Steve Pratt MLA, John Hargreaves MLA, Deb Fosky MLA and Jacqui Burke MLA.



world AIDS day 04

Following the Chief Minister's Breakfast, the World AIDS Day Fair was held in Garema Place. With the theme for WAD focussing on women and children, NAPWA President Gabe McCarthy, addressed the public, emphasising the impact that HIV/AIDS has had on women and children with Katy Gallagher MLA also giving an address and assisting in the unfolding of panels from the Australian AIDS Quilt. To further promote HIV/AIDS awareness in the wider community, the Council placed an advertisement on the back of Canberra Milk's 1 litre milk cartons. This advertisement ran throughout the World AIDS Awareness Week.



Images from top left: Katy Gallagher MLA assisting in the unfolding of the Australian AIDS Memorial Quilt, NAPWA President Gabe McCarthy addressing the public, stalls and milk carton advertisement.

ecumenical church service & twilight remembrance picnic

In keeping a strong partnership continuing, the Ecumenical Church Service was held at the All Saints Church, Ainslie and was organised collaboratively between the Church, Council staff and volunteers.

positively red

The Positively Red fundraising party was initially tied in with the World AIDS Awareness Ride and Bikes & Bands events, which unfortunately due to the weather, had to be cancelled. A number of local and interstate performers were booked for the above mentioned events, including ACT Australian Idol finalist Hayley Jansen, Sophie Serafino and Band, Hello Penny, Changeable Dan and Little Smoke. Thank you to the performers who gave of their time freely for this cause.

Positively Red continued, however, at Cube nightclub with the generous sponsorship of The Eros Foundation, Jeans West, What Joe Say's Clothing, TransACT, Canberra Milk, Breville and Cube Nightclub. A number of performances were held including Sophie Serafino and Band and Sydney Drag guests Portia Turbo and Tess Tickle.

The event raised over \$2000 for the Trevor Daley Fund.



the red ribbon campaign

Red ribbons were distributed to numerous organisations and businesses throughout Canberra and the surrounding regions in the lead up to World AIDS Awareness Week. Volunteers also assisted in the making and selling of Red Ribbons at the WAD Fair in Garema Place and other events.

community support services unit

providing social, practical and emotional support to people living with HIV/AIDS.

While the overall picture for people living with HIV/AIDS in Australia has improved, there remain major issues of concern with regard to health and social disadvantage. Problems such as co-morbidity, mental health issues, poverty, drug side-effects and resistance and treatment failure reflect the fact that HIV/AIDS remains a serious chronic condition with clinical and social implications.

The primary role of the Community Support Services Unit is the provision of high quality care and support services for people living with HIV/AIDS, their partners, families and significant others. Since its inception in 2001, the Unit has provided a multi-disciplinary team environment for staff to work together rather than in isolation.

Stephanie Buckle who has been the AAC Counsellor for many years went on six months leave from July to December with Sue Driscoll filling in for her during this period. Sue is a registered psychologist in the ACT who has diverse counselling experience and we look forward to future association with her at the Council.

Mark Appleford commenced duty as the Health Maintenance and Treatments Officer in March. Mark is from Scotland and has a background in mental health nursing. Many thanks must go to Lisa Henry who assisted by coming into the Council on Wednesdays for much of the year. Mark has settled in well and has linked up with the Australia-wide Treatments Officer Network (TON) as well as attending a course in HIV Medicine.

Thanks also to Mick Doring who filled in as the PLWHA Support Worker while Marcus was away at the XV International AIDS Conference in Bangkok and subsequent holidays.

While women living with HIV/AIDS have many common experiences as men, there are many fundamental differences. Issues such as childbearing and rearing, disclosure, relationships and community involvement do have different meanings and priorities for women. The established Positive Women's Group continued with a great pot-luck dinner (Christmas in July) at Westlund House, lunch at Floriade, a Christmas luncheon and a women's retreat held at Batemans Bay. In addition two women attended the HIV Rural Forum in Mudgee both reporting it to be of great benefit. All of these events gave women the opportunity to meet others living with HIV/AIDS, share mutual experience and learn from each other about the management of their illness. In order to provide up to date information, a new feature in the Positively newsletter was introduced this year with a regular article of relevance to women.

The AAC has negotiated with ACT Dental Health for the implementation of a Special Needs Dental Program for people living with HIV/AIDS who are in receipt of Centrelink benefits or hold a Health Care Card. The need for such a project became clear following a Dental Needs Survey that was conducted the previous year. Following consultation with stakeholders a Memorandum of Understanding between the two agencies was drawn up. Clients can be directly referred to

ACT Dental Health and be prioritised for assessment and a treatment regime at low cost. Those clients who have difficulty with payment may apply for assistance through the Trevor Daly Fund.

The need for information, support and advocacy to locate appropriate, affordable and stable housing has remained great. The unit has strong links with ACT Housing and the Havelock Housing Association that were utilised in assisting a number of clients who were homeless, at risk of homelessness or inappropriately housed. In one situation, a successful appeal was lodged with the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

The Community Housing Project in partnership with Havelock Housing Association has moved along with properties recently purchased. There are a number of potential residents registered and the first tenant will be moving in this month. Three separate tenancies will be provided and residents will undoubtedly benefit from the secure and stable environment and will be able to focus on their health and wellbeing. Following careful consideration, the project has been named 'The Williams Housing Project' after a much-loved client of the service who passed away last year. A launch will be conducted in the near future.

Following a submission to Healthpact, a grant was received to fund an Arts and Crafts project and exhibition for people living with HIV/AIDS for the 2005-06 financial year. Ideas for the project are currently being sought.

Due to co-morbidities and associated issues faced by people living with HIV/AIDS, it is increasingly important that HIV services work in an integrated way with other services, both

government and non-government. The Unit has continued to forge cross-sectorial links, particularly in the areas of mental health, drug and alcohol and medical services. Staff also continued to work effectively in partnership with other external agencies in the HIV/AIDS field. This was clearly evident by the success of the retreats held at Batemans Bay in February where AAC/PLWHA staff were joined by staff from the Interchange General Practice and the Canberra Sexual Health Centre.

Given the changing nature of the epidemic in this country, the care and support needs of people living with HIV/AIDS have also changed. No longer is there a great need for the intensive care teams of the past. Rather, companionship, transport, gardening and domestic assistance are required, particularly during periods of illness. For this reason, the Care and Support Module of the volunteer training is currently being reviewed and revamped. CSSU staff, together with PLWHA would like to take this opportunity to thank the volunteers who assisted in this area over the year.



Nada Ratcliffe
Manager
2004/2005

2004/2005

counselling service

The AIDS Action Council continues to provide a free counselling service. Although the service primarily targets HIV positive people and their partners and families, it is also used by many HIV negative gay men, lesbian, transgender and bisexual people, and people concerned about HIV transmission and testing issues.

The current counsellor, Stephanie Buckle, took long service leave for six months from July to December, and the position was filled in her absence by a registered psychologist, Sue Driscoll who stepped into the position with no trouble and provided counselling to existing and new clients.

It was an appropriate time to review some aspects of the service. A client survey was done, by questionnaire, with a large number of clients participating. The responses were almost universally positive, clients expressing themselves well satisfied with the counselling service.

The AAC Counselling service is the only dedicated, free, professional counselling service in the ACT, which targets gay men and women, and is specifically gay friendly. It continues to bring people into the agency who may not otherwise know about our services, or the issues we represent. The capacity to provide specialised counselling in sexuality and gender issues results in referrals from a wide range of areas, including medical practitioners, mental health services, drug and alcohol services, school counsellors, (particularly from the private sector), and many community agencies.

Clients have brought a wide range of issues to counselling this year. For many HIV positive people, the challenges are about re-defining

goals and shaping a new future for themselves. Dealing with issues associated with poverty, unemployment, social isolation, and discrimination, remain high on the list. Many clients have mental health problems, particularly depression and anxiety. The counselling caseload can be very complex, and many clients have a dual diagnosis. Significant numbers of clients present with gender dysphoria, sexual abuse, and domestic violence issues.

A comprehensive referral service is provided for clients, the counsellor maintaining links to a wide community network. The service plays an active role in supporting the work of the Community Support Services Unit, particularly in relation to its direct client work, and also has a role supporting other programs of the agency. A significant amount of time is spent contributing to the Council's advocacy work with clients, especially in the provision of reports for legal purposes, and letters of support for housing and social security.

Maintaining the accessibility of the counselling service remains a high priority. Home and hospital visits continue to be offered where appropriate. Increasingly, a significant number of clients use the service by email and through telephone contact.

a total of 57 individual clients accessed the AAC counselling service

Stephanie Buckle
Counsellor



living well services

health maintenance and treatments information

The Health Maintenance and Treatments Information Officer provides treatments and health related information, resources and support to HIV positive people, their partners, family and friends. Face to face contact is utilised as well as outreach and education activities, and consultation through email and phone contact. The Health Maintenance and Treatments Information Officer has strong links with health and medical services across the ACT and region and advocates for improved service provision for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Mark Appleford joined the AAC in the role in March this year. Mark has a background in Mental Health Nursing and has worked extensively with injecting drug users and sex workers. His most recent position was working as an Outreach Development Worker in a harm reduction setting in Edinburgh, Scotland to minimise the transmission of blood borne viruses. The AAC would like to thank Lisa Henry for her contribution and continued support over the year.

vitamins and supplements service

The AAC Vitamin Service offers vitamins and dietary supplements to PLWHA, volunteers and members of the council. The AAC would like to thank Hilton Lifestream Pty Ltd and Traditional Medicines Supply Pty Ltd for their continued support over the year. Vitamins and supplements were provided to 21 people living with HIV/AIDS.

treatment officers network (TON)

The National Treatments Officer Network meetings are generally held in Sydney four times a year with participants from all states and territories and representatives from New Zealand HIV/AIDS organisations. However, the first TON meeting for the year was hosted by AAC in Canberra in conjunction with the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM) Conference. The meetings provide an opportunity for Treatments Officers who work in isolation to exchange information and gain support from their peers. They are also a valuable forum for continuing education on treatments and health issues relating to HIV/AIDS with information disseminated on a national level. The AAC was represented at the last TON meeting in June by Mark who found this very useful to re-establish new and old working relationships.

other activities

Nutrition for Life Project

This is a project that provides people living with HIV/AIDS with up to date information and education around diet and eating habits to optimise health and ageing. There were regular clinics run at Westlund House until December 2004 when Dr Marijka Batterham BSC (Biochem), MSC (Nut/Diet) Phd took maternity leave. Jenny McDonald, Australia's leading HIV nutritionist has agreed to take over and run some sessions that will commence in early September. This will be sponsored by Merck Sharpe & Dohme (MSD) Pharmaceuticals to whom we offer our thanks for their continued support in this area.

Massage

A popular weekly massage clinic provided by Wholistic Bodywork has continued throughout the year. This offers a range of therapeutic massage styles and professional advice on complementary therapies. This year, a total of 205 individual services were provided to clients. The program has been well coordinated by the PLWHA Support Worker.

liaison with other agencies

There has been a continuation and re-establishment of old and existing networks. Regular network meetings have been attended including the HIV Inter-Agency Network Group (HIVIAN), Clinical Care Meetings and the Treatments Officers' Network. Mark has been establishing professional relationships with Phillip Habel (Practice Nurse, Interchange General Practice), Clare Holland House and multidisciplinary staff at the Canberra Sexual Health Centre.



Mark Appleford
Health Maintenance and
Treatments Officer



It has been another year that People Living with HIV/AIDS ACT (PLWHA ACT) and its members can be proud of. Members of the Workers Reference Group (WRG) continue to work together to address issues that effect all people living with HIV and AIDS within the ACT

During the past twelve months PLWHA ACT has assisted its members in many ways. Advocacy is one of the areas that we must continually look to and keep an open dialogue with other agencies that we work with. The number one advocacy issue continues to be access to affordable housing. We continue to work with the ACT Government and the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services to achieve the best outcomes. During 2004-05 we took positive steps to address these issues through a partnership with the AIDS Action Council (AAC) and a community-housing organisation, Havelock Housing Inc, to purchase two properties that meet our client needs through the "Williams Housing Project". If all goes well and more funds are available, this project may be expanded to purchase further properties in the years to come.

In February 2005 we held a positive men's retreat followed by a positive women's retreat over a week long period in conjunction with the AAC. We invited other service providers, ACT Division of General Practice (ACT DGP) and the Canberra Sexual Health Centre (CSHC) to assist by providing workers to attend.

With the evaluations from both retreats, we have made a commitment to continue the ongoing partnership to meet the identified needs of the positive community.

Peer Support continues with our weekly lunches and fortnightly dinners.

The 2004 ASHM Conference held in Canberra allowed positive people from the ACT to experience the wealth of research being carried out both in Australia and overseas and opened a window to the broader community with considerable interest shown by the local newspaper and television stations. We also encouraged the participation of local PLWHA at the NSW HIV Rural Forum, 'The Mudgee Muster' with five local/regional people attending.

Socially PLWHA ACT continues with many peer activities including gallery viewings, garden walks, movie nights and much more. Once again this year we have continued our very successful Happy Hampers programme at Christmas time, providing food hampers by way of gift certificates for supermarkets. A big thank you must go to all the members who took part in peer activities and the many fundraising activities throughout the year.

On the 13th of November PLWHA ACT with the assistance of Simon Corbell MLA, ACT Minister for Health, launched the publication of short essays, speeches and stories titled:

The Living Quilt
Canberra Reflections on Life
with HIV/AIDS

This publication has been several years in the making and has had a number of people take the project on and move it forward. This reflects the cooperative nature of the community that we work in and the diversity of stories written.

We hope that 'The Living Quilt' forms a unique record of the community response to the epidemic outside the larger metropolitan areas, specifically in the ACT and region.

Many of our activities would not be possible without the assistance of the AAC and we continue to look forward to an effective working relationship for years to come. To assist with this we are currently completing a new Memorandum of Understanding.



Marcus Bogie
PLWHA Support Worker

advocacy service

Staff of the Community Support Services Unit advocate and facilitate self-advocacy on individual client issues. The PLWHA Support Worker is involved in direct advocacy and provides peer support on advocacy issues. Advocacy is also delivered in response to group issues affecting all or groups of HIV positive people, such as dental services, access to housing, accommodation and income support and access to clinical trials.

A total of 30 clients received advocacy over 104 contacts in the period 01 July 04 – 30 June 05.

Advocacy Issues on behalf of individual clients (issues and outcomes)

Housing

Applications for early allocation public housing for homeless clients or those at imminent risk of homelessness;

- Support letters
- Attendance at interview
- Attendance - Housing Review Committee
- Attendance - Administrative Appeals Tribunal

Applications for early allocation for clients inappropriately accommodated eg. client with deteriorating health having to manage large number of stairs;

- Support letters and liaison with housing authorities need for emergency housing
- Support letters and liaison with Ainslie Village and Havelock Housing Association

Welfare and Benefits

Clients have needed assistance in accessing appropriate Centrelink benefits;

- Assistance provided, often involving accompanying client to Centrelink offices
- Letters of support

Dental Health

Emergency treatment required;

- Information, assistance and financial support provided through Trevor Daley Fund to access dental services.

Treatments

Client wishing to access ARV (medical practitioner not convinced of need);

- Liaison with medical practitioner
- Client unhappy with current prescribing doctor;

- Support to access and liaison with alternative practitioner

Client wishing to have an increase in anti-depressant medication;

- Liaison with counsellor /medical practitioner

Drug and Alcohol

Client with urgent need to access detoxification services;

- Advocacy to gain priority access

Immigration

HIV positive client seeking family reunion with children;

- Support role with DIMA adoptive parents seeking to bring the HIV positive sibling of their adopted child
- Ongoing support role with DIMA

Discrimination in the Workplace

AAC client taunted in the workplace over sexuality;

- Advice provided on legal options

Legal

HIV positive client appeared in court on criminal matters;

- Liaison with defendant's solicitor
- Letters of support to court
- HIV positive client in poor health and with depression refused early allocation housing
- Supported at Housing Review Committee hearing
- Represented at Administrative Appeals Tribunal

Group Advocacy Issues Housing

Long waiting lists for early allocation housing; Inappropriate housing – eg. excess stairs. People rehabilitated after substance misuse problems then housed in areas with high criminal activity;

Preserving confidentiality of HIV status;

- Raised with ACT Housing
- Raised at SHAHRD
- Joint submission for Community Housing Project
- AAC/Havelock Housing Community Housing Project being implemented – 'The Williams Housing Project'

Dental Health

Special dental needs of PLWHA coupled with; Unaffordability of emergency or preventative dental care for HIV positive people;

2004/2005

- Special Needs Dental Scheme for PLWHA negotiated with ACT Dental Health Program
- Access to financial support for dental treatment through Trevor Daly Fund
- Raised at SHAHRD

Clinical Trials

General access for ACT residents in trials available in NSW;

- Raised through Treatments Officers Network
- Consultation to encourage nationwide trials

General Services and Discharge Planning

Difficulties with co-ordinated service delivery and discharge planning;

Lack of knowledge re Post Exposure Prophylaxis by Accident and Emergency staff and Healthfirst;

- Resource directory "Getting It Together! A Directory of Health and Support Services for HIV positive People in the ACT and Region". Currently being updated
- Advocacy through HIV Interagency Network Meetings and HIV Medicine Special Interest Group

Medicare Bulk Billing

Reduced access to bulk billing and increased co-payments impact on low-income HIV positive people;

- Access to financial assistance through TDF or other agencies
- Liaison with medical practitioners
- Advocacy through HIV Interagency Network meetings and

HIV Medicine Special Interest group

Mental Health Services

Lack of services for clients that do not fit criteria for hospitalisation or crisis team support;

Lack of clarity about referral mechanisms to appropriate services and role of Crisis Team;

- Advocacy through membership of Mental Health Community Coalition (MHCC)

Protocol in relation to ACT Public Health Act

Management of HIV positive people who may put others at risk;

- Concerns re delay of protocols within ACT Health raised at SHAHRD, HIV Interagency Network (HIVIAN)
- Joint letter sent to department through HIVIAN

GLBTI Law Reform

ACT government reform to remove discrimination against GLBTI within existing laws;

- Response prepared to Government issues paper
- Facilitated community forum in conjunction with Good Process ACT Media

GLBTI Health Issues

Need to address GLBTI broader health issues in the ACT;

- GLBTI Health Issues forum held at National Museum of Australia and facilitated by Julie McCrossin – report furnished to ACT Government.

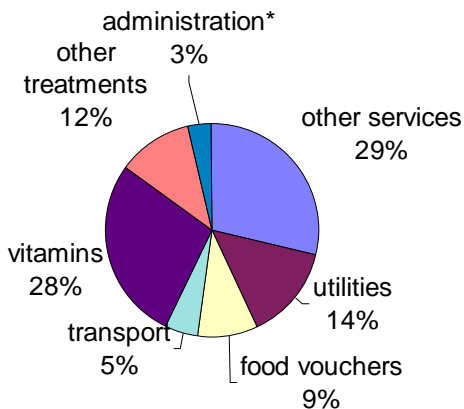
Trevor Daley Fund

providing financial support to people living with HIV/AIDS

Financial hardship continues to be one of the main issues facing people living with HIV/AIDS. The Trevor Daley Fund (TDF) assists people living with HIV/AIDS in the Canberra region to maintain adequate living standards. It relies entirely on public donations and fundraising efforts - particularly activities surrounding World AIDS Day. Donations to the fund are tax deductible.

The Fund helps in a variety of ways, including subsidy of utility bills, treatments related expenses, emergency food vouchers, accomodation and travel for treatments. ACTION bus tickets and subsidised vitamins and supplements are also provided. All applications for help are handled in the strictest confidence.

The Fund was maintained with an income of \$8,926. This included donations of \$1,463 and \$2,401 from the Red Ribbon Campaign. The Fund received only \$1979 from the AIDS Trust of Australia in this financial year. Further funding from this source remains unclear. The fund continues to provide a subsidised vitamins and supplements service with income received from clients retained for the fund. Income for vitamins was \$1317. Interest income was \$864.



* includes red ribbon expenses and bank charges

Fund expenditure totals \$9,354. Allocation of that expenditure is illustrated in the chart above. Treatments and vitamins account for the majority of expenditure.

A tightening of allocations shows a decrease in expenditure, necessitated by the lower income from donations and unclear continued funding from the AIDS Trust of Australia.

Our continuing thanks to all our donors and fundraisers. TDF depends on you.

Andrew McLeod
Finance and Administration Manager

community education and health promotion unit

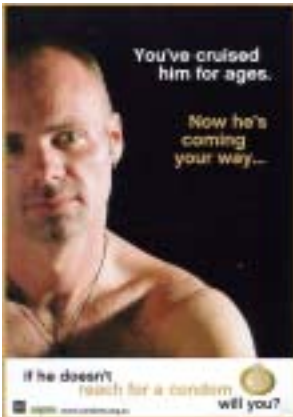
delivering prevention strategies, information and education about HIV/AIDS to people at risk, to HIV positive people and to the general community

Good news arrived in May, when NSW Health announced a 4 per cent decrease in HIV notifications in NSW, including a significant drop in the number of new cases reported among gay men.

The ACT situation has remained stable, but the changing dynamics of the epidemic leave us no reason to be complacent. The 'PACT' project (Partnership Approach to Comprehensive Testing) has become core business for the Unit during this period.

Highlights of the year included:

- Reflections Exhibition: CMAG (Canberra Museum and Gallery)
- CYIC goes to Bangkok
- Expansion of the PACT project
- Increased activity on the www.qnet.org website
- Upgrade of AAC and QNET websites
- Increased volunteer involvement on our telephone helplines
- Education collaboration with Indigenous service providers
- GLBTI Health Consultation/ Julie McCrossin
- Library/t shirts/archiving/ workshops
- Action research: Gay Men and Decision Making project
- GLLO collaborations
- Launch of 'The Living Quilt'
- Launch of the Canberra 2003 Gay Community Periodic Survey Report



2004/2005

condom miranda

Miranda has made a number of public appearances this year, including the ASHM Conference, Canberra, September 2004, the Australian Health Promotion Association, 20/20 Vision Conference, Canberra, March 2005, and the Reflections Exhibition at the Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG) in December 2004 to January 2005.



Condom Miranda, greeting visitors to the Reflections exhibition held at CMAG.

cover yourself in canberra

CYIC was accepted as a poster presentation at the XV International AIDS Conference in Bangkok, July 2004. Kevin Schamburg and Marcus Bogie received two of only 1200 scholarships awarded world wide by the conference organising committee. ACT Health and several drug companies also gave grants to cover the costs involved in attending the conference. Some countries are now producing similar images.



Cover Yourself in Canberra, and in Hong Kong.

The CYIC contract with the cinema was completed in September 2004.

canberra gay community periodic NCHSR survey 2003

The survey was launched in September with workshops conducted by research staff from the NCHSR for AAC staff and an evening workshop for men who had participated in the survey and were interested in the results. A problem in collating the data by NCHSR resulted in a five month delay in receiving the final survey and this was only achieved after many discussions with the NCHSR to resolve the matter.

73.3% of participants who completed the survey recognised the CYIC resources, one of the highest figures ever recorded by the NCHSR for resource recognition in a survey.

The survey plays an important role in the strategic planning from the unit.



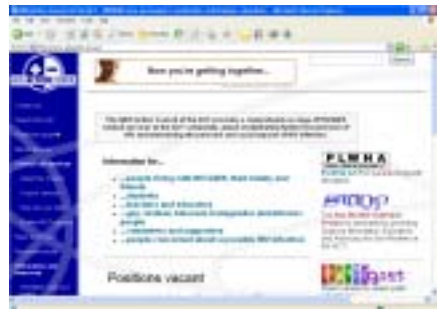
AIDS action council and qnet websites

During the last year, the Unit has kept the websites updated with current and relevant information about HIV/AIDS and related topics. The websites are an important vehicle for education campaigns, as more people use the Internet for information about health and sexuality. In the period from 1 July 2004 to the 30 June 2005, the AIDS Action Council website received 33, 504 visits, and the Qnet website received 35, 992 visits.

Qnet is an online project to provide a safe space for same-sex attracted youth (SSAY) in the Canberra region to form support networks and access and share information. It recognises the particular difficulties experienced by this group in an often homophobic world and that relatively few safe spaces exist in Canberra where SSAY under 18 could safely meet and access resources. The server the Qnet site was located on was the subject of an

attack by 'hackers' during the second half of 2004, and almost all the data, content and members were lost.

Membership and visits have slowly picked up after a number of promotional activities. Three young users of the site have been appointed as volunteer 'moderators' in order to facilitate a feeling of community ownership of the project. The articles and resources on the website are currently being updated, as well as the general appearance.



post exposure prophylaxis (PEP)

Results of the NCHSR Canberra Gay Community Periodic Survey 2003 indicated a lower awareness of PEP than men in Sydney but higher than other states among HIV-negative men. The Unit responded to this by increasing our distribution of PEP education material to venues and other agencies and ensuring that PEP is highlighted in all of our programs.

national campaigns

the 5th national HIV/AIDS strategy 2005 - 2008

The Fifth National Strategy was released in June 2005 and sets out broad principles for our work for the next three years. Men who have sex with men, PLWHA and indigenous people remain high priority areas for our work. The strategy asks for an increased connection with issues such as STI, Hepatitis C and Indigenous sexual health. The Unit will continue to maintain a high level of involvement in these areas.

Several campaigns under the title of 'rise in new infections' (RINI) due for national distribution in early 2005 by ANET (AFAO/ NAPWA Education Team) have, been delayed by the approval processes. Some of these campaigns will be launched in late 2005 and form part of our 2005/ 2006 initiatives.

the gay men and decision making project

The Education Unit has been actively engaged with this project. It was conducted nationally in early 2005 in conjunction with the AFAO/NAPWA Education Team (ANET) and the National Centre in HIV Social Research. Its aim is to collate qualitative data about the sexual

practices of gay men, via extensive one to one interviews. We expect the research findings to be available in late 2005. ANET hopes to use this research to produce a safe sex campaign called 'Better Sex' in 2006.

information and resources



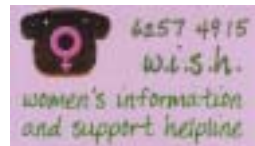
t.h.r.o.b (telephone help, referral and information bureau)

w.i.s.h (women's information and support helpline)

The 'throb' and 'wish' helplines took approximately 1000 telephone calls during the year. These were taken directly by volunteer operators and through our computerised menu system.

The level of volunteer coverage for the phone lines had dwindled earlier in the year as some volunteers moved interstate or took up other commitments. A

training program for new volunteers was conducted during April, 2005, and nine new trainees have commenced working on the telephone lines. Volunteer coverage has now increased dramatically. We're very grateful to our willing band of volunteers who make such services possible.



positive education



the living quilt

David Mills assisted PLWHA ACT to finalise the production of the book and it was launched at the SPRINGOUT Fairday 2004. The Unit has worked closely with PLWHA during this year on several projects including the retreat.

reflections: 20 years of HIV activism and education

The exhibition opening at the Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG) on the 3rd December 2003 was attended by over 100 people. The exhibition closed on the 23rd January 2005. Kenn Basham was an invited guest speaker to CMAG on Wednesday 8th December. His presentation titled "Reflections" provided an insight into activism, social justice and twenty years of HIV positive life. This was a very moving experience for over 50 people who attended.

Records from CMAG indicate that 5668 visitors viewed the exhibition.

Comments in the visitor's book included:

"I liked the AIDS exhibition ... we have come a long way."

"The AIDS exhibition was a moving chronicle of education in Australia"



Volunteer Project Workers Allison Gordon and Megan Hansford at the opening of the Reflections exhibition.



A sample of the ACTUP resources on display.



Kenn Basham giving his presentation on his life with HIV, and his involvement with the activist group ACTUP.

2004/2005

community development out there & doing it, looking out and stepping out

These workshops aim to empower and promote health, happiness and community in the GLBTI community, and are an important part of our community development and capacity building work.

The Council's workshops were the first workshop-based program for gay men in Australia. They remain popular, and are continually updated with relevant information and resources by the Education Unit.

Out There and Doing It was run in April 2005 for men under 25, and Looking Out was run in July-August 2004 for men over 25.

Stepping Out, our workshop for women attracted to women, is another very important part of our community

development program. The workshop was run successfully in October 2004 and April 2005.

The workshops were co-facilitated by Vince Barbatano, Mike Wight, John Guppy Peta Cox, Megan Hansford and David Mills.

Feedback from the participants was positive. Although many of the participants found the content of the workshop challenging, they also report feeling 'empowered', 'exhilarated' and 'rewarded'.

We acknowledge the continued commitment of our volunteer facilitators.

Stepping Out



springout

SpringOUT gives the CEHPU the opportunity to distribute information and resources to the community whom we may not have contact with at other times during the year.



taking HIV education into the community

This year we provided a range of services to the community including training programs to schools, tertiary institutions, the drug and alcohol sector, youth services, refuges, other health service providers and community groups. The PACT partnership has been conducting a program with

Connections a peer based Indigenous program in the ACT.

We thank ACTQueer and Jellybabies, as well as Q Radio who help us deliver our messages to a diverse community.

other initiatives

backpacker initiative

Research presented at the ASHM conference in September highlighted extremely high levels of high risk sexual behavior in backpacking environments. Many backpackers arrive in Australia fresh from unprotected sexual adventures in high HIV prevalence countries. Many do not know their own HIV status, yet they are relatively likely to engage in unprotected sex. Following the research, we have entered into partnership with two Canberra backpacking establishments to provide safe sex messages and supplies at their premises. Our 'Cover Yourself In Canberra' resources are particularly well suited to this task because they have a strong tourist theme. Our involvement with this will be ongoing.

NLA community heritage grant

The Preservation Needs Assessment on the library collection was conducted by Conservatrix and they have also given us a recommended work plan for the preservation work. Volunteers have attended workshops on preserving textiles and started making the hangers for the T-shirt collection. The T-shirts have now all been photographed and coded thanks to Ian Rankin.



Kevin Schamburg with the Conservatrix team Debbie Spoehr and Sharon Towns, at the Reflections exhibition opening.

AFP GLLO (gay and lesbian liaison officers)

We continue our work with the AFP GLLO network, with several workshops having been conducted. The Beats Forum was seen as a success with some 20 men attending. No one attended the Women's Forum the following evening. The Crystal Meth evening had 8 in attendance.

Kevin and David received Certificates of Appreciation for their presentations at the GLLO network training.



2004/2005

glbti health consultation

The consultation was held at the National Museum of Australia on Monday 1st November, hosted by Julie Mc Crossin with 165 people in attendance. The notes of the meeting have been transcribed and passed onto ACT Health so that a report can be produced to present to the Minister for Health, Simon Corbell MLA. The Health Minister stayed for the duration of the consultation. The feedback on the evening was extremely positive and we received 116 completed evaluation forms and 53 people left contact details for future information and forums.



Panel members of the GLBTI Health Consultation, hosted by Julie McCrossin (front centre) with Minister for Health, Simon Corbell MLA (front second from left).

20/20 vision: the australian health promotion association, 15th national conference march 05

The AAC was very well represented at the conference. Kevin Schamburg acted as a Session Chair during the conference and presented a paper titled: "Resurrecting The Condom Image In HIV Prevention Campaigns".

Tony Blattman gave a presentation on PACT with Elissa O'Keefe from Canberra Sexual Health Centre titled "PACT PROJECT: A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP MODEL FOR OUTREACH SEXUAL HEALTH PROMOTION FOR AT RISK GROUPS".

David Mills presented on the Qnet website "Claiming Our Space: Challenges of using the Internet to empower and support same-sex attracted young people"

The conference was very different from HIV/AIDS focussed conferences, and looked critically about the meaning and direction of health promotion in Australia.

The AAC displayed part of the Reflection Exhibition at the Conference and this was well received by the attendees. Condom Miranda made an appearance on the first day and managed to distribute some 400 condoms to the delegates in about 15 minutes.



The AAC displayed part of the Heritage Collection at the 20/20 Vision Conference.

other resources obtained



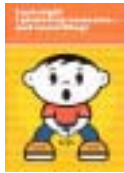
condoms.org.au
Produced by AFAO



Safe Sex. No Regrets.
Produced by NSW Health



HIV/AIDS and Us Mob
Produced by ANET



Last night I picked up someone...and something!
Produced by AFAO



Mates look after each other
Produced by ACON



Condoms: a user's guide
Produced by WAAC



'A Positive Diagnosis'
Produced by ANET



On any street
Produced by Lesbian & Gay antiviolence project, ACON, NSW Police, Marrickville Council, CPD and Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras



Having a Life
Produced by ANET



Another Closet
Produced by ACON



Kevin Schamburg
Manager



Tony Blattman
Education Officer



David Mills
Project Officer



Sex Worker Outreach Project

Early in the new financial year SWOP moved permanently to Westlund House. This allowed for stronger networking with staff from other areas of the Council, and access to extra administrative support for the SWOP workers.

SWOP worked closely with other sex worker organisations, particularly the Scarlet Alliance. SWOP also worked with other community organisations in the ACT, including Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT to ensure free access to sex workers for pap smears; with the Canberra Sexual Health Centre in putting together resources for sex workers; and with the ACT Hepatitis C Council to provide information to sex workers on issues surrounding hepatitis C.

swopshop

The SWOP Sexual Health Outreach Project, which runs as part of the Partnership Approach to Comprehensive Testing (PACT) Program, has continued this year with a good uptake of both sex workers and their clients. SWOPSHOP has been held in a variety of locations this year including locations in Fyshwick which has also assisted to build the uptake of the service.

staffing

This year saw the resignation of Aveline Rubinshteyn who had been with SWOP for almost 2 years. Tarquin McPartlan remained with us for the entire year.

outreach

Outreach has continued throughout the year, with a review of how outreach could be tailored to better meet the needs of individual brothels undertaken towards the end of the financial year. The main role of outreach is to provide information and resources on safe sex practices, as well as deliver any new campaigns.



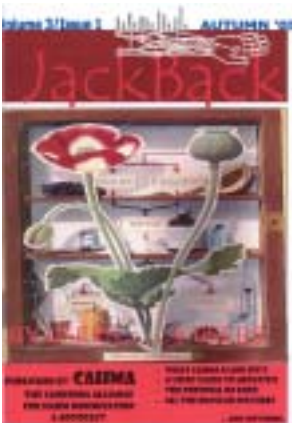
committee representation

CAHMA represents drug users on a number of external committees, including:

- CADA ACT (Coalition of Drug & Alcohol Agencies ACT)
- SHAHRD (Sexual Health AIDS Hepatitis & Related Diseases)
- TOP (The Opiate Program)
- ATODS (Alcohol Tobacco Other Drugs Strategy) Implementation and Evaluation Group
- TRG (Territory Reference Group) joint ACT & Commonwealth committee overseeing Illicit Drug Diversion funding
- OTAC (Opioid Treatment Advisory Committee)
- AIVL (Australian Injecting Drug Users League) managers forums
- SWRG (Sex Workers reference Group)



A sample of national resources available from CAHMA.



Jackback magazine produced by CAHMA.



From left: **Nicole Wiggins** (Manager), **Kim Moran** (Treatments Support Officer) and **Micky Barry** (Health Promotion Officer)

strategic framework for action

The Strategic Plan (July 2002 - June 2005) was developed through a consultation process, involving volunteers, members, clients and external key stakeholders. The process was steered by Joey Tabone and Daniel Coase. It was launched by Kerrie Tucker MLA at the Annual General Meeting in October 2002

This report highlights actions completed towards implementation of the Strategic Framework for Action.

council planning processes

the strategic framework for action

This document outlines five key focus areas together with associated improvement indicators. It is the highest level planning document for the organisation. Progress towards achieving the indicators is reported each year in the Annual Report.

the board work plan

The Board Work Plan establishes a calendar of actions for the Board itself. In this plan the Board focuses on issues where overall policy and strategy are involved, or where the Board can assume a developmental and leadership role.

annual board planning day

The incoming Board meets with staff shortly after the Annual General Meeting and elections and is informed about current and emerging issues, both external and internal. The Board then meets to determine shorter term priorities for the organisation. These priorities are allocated either to the Board Work Plan or the Organisation's Operational Plan.

the operational plan

This plan is determined by managers and staff and sets out priorities for the coming twelve months. The plan contains detailed strategies linked to timelines and budgets. The plan also places these actions in the context of other relevant documents, including the Strategic Framework for Action and external documents such as the 4th National HIV/AIDS Strategy and the contract with the ACT government.

2004/2005

Key focus area 1

World class treatment, care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS in the ACT.

Point 1

- Ongoing distribution of treatments information and HIV related health information
- Individual and community treatments information developed and distributed
- Increased access to treatments advice
- Ongoing HIV dieticians clinic
- Ongoing Massage and complementary therapies programs,
- Treatments breaks forum conducted in conjunction with AFAO/NAPWA
- PLWHA Men's and Women's retreat conducted in February 05

Point 2

- Partnership approach with Canberra Sexual Health Centre and Interchange General Practice
- Development of Community Housing Program in partnership with Havelock Housing Association
- Continuing support and membership of the HIV Network and HIV Medicine special Interest Group
- Development of special needs Dental Program in partnership with ACT Dental Health Services
- Individual support for PLWHA attending interstate treatment trials
- Ongoing liaison with relevant government agencies and community organisations
- Continuing liaison with ACT Mental Health Services
- Financial support to PLWHA through the administration of the Trevor Daley Fund
- Maintaining strong links with ACT Hepatitis C Council and the Haemophilia Foundation of the ACT

Key focus area 2

Provision of timely and targeted HIV/AIDS education and health promotion.

Point 1

- Continued distribution of 'Cover yourself in Canberra' and 'Condom Miranda' campaigns
- Condom Miranda personal public appearances
- Restructured qnet.org.au
- Ongoing promotion of messages through ACTQueer, Jelly babies and Q Radio
- Reflections exhibition
- 'A Positive Journey' photographic exhibition
- 'Looking out' and 'Out there and doing it' workshops for Men.
- 'Stepping Out' workshops for Women

- National and International exposure of 'Cover Yourself in Canberra'
- Ongoing activity of t.h.r.o.b and w.i.s.h telephone services
- Continuing development and maintenance of aidsaction.org.au
- Distribution of resources through GLBTI events and general community
- GLBTI Health Forum
- PACT ACT (Partnership Approach to Comprehensive Testing in the ACT)
- Continuing information sessions to Colleges, Schools and Tertiary Institutions
- Distribution of National campaigns and resources

Point 2

- Gathering of information needs of PLWHA through the Retreats
- Positive Women's program maintained and enhanced
- Proposal for Arts and Craft activities submitted for HealthpACT Funding
- Sponsorship of PLWHA to ASHM and Mudgee Rural HIV Forum
- Increased access to internet for PLWHA

Key focus area 3

Policy and advocacy to ensure a framework which assists the delivery of services and the prevention of HIV transmission.

Point 1

- Undertaking auspice of CAHMA (Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation and Advocacy)
- Maintain resourcing of SWOP
- Continued liaison with AFP on GLBTI and Sex Worker issues
- GLBTI Health Forum conducted
- Attendance at national Anex conference
- Participation in implementation of Needle and Syringe Program vending machines
- PACT ACT (Partnership Approach to Comprehensive testing ACT)
- Ongoing linkages with organisations including Hepatitis C Council, SHFPACT, Directions ACT,

Point 2

- Multiple client advocacy in area of housing with ACT Housing and associated agencies
- Liaison with ACT Dental Health to develop special needs dental program
- Group and individual advocacy with Centrelink and associated agencies
- Advice provided on discrimination issues
- Ongoing liaison with ACT Mental health
- Ongoing liaison with Drug and Alcohol agencies in ACT and region
- Ongoing liaison with ACT and regional corrections agencies
- Support and advocacy in court related matters
- Ongoing consultation for Knowingly Infect Protocol
- Positive community representation maintained on SHHARD

2004/2005

Key focus area 4

Encouraging our people - staff, volunteers and other members - to achieve the Council's mission.

Point 1

- Development and implementation of quality assurance plan across agency
- Training needs assessments conducted
- Commencement of Certificate IV workplace assessment and training
- Forward plans for all areas developed
- Board and staff planning days conducted

Point 2

- Review and update of all agency policy
- Review and update of all agency procedures

Key focus area 5

Building an organisation which is fully equipped to achieve our mission.

Point 1

- Entire network upgraded
- Purchase of laptop
- Latest version of Microsoft office for all staff
- Introduction of AAC mail server
- Internal website hosting
- Removed obsolete boiler room equipment
- Vehicle upgrades to increase client access
- Storage facilities for Heritage collection
- Incorporation of SWOP Activities into Westlund House

Point 2

- Use of ACTQueer and Jellybabies email groups and Q Radio
- Westlund house and resources made available for community activities
- Ongoing website updates
- Support for and participation in SpringOUT, particularly Fair Day
- Continuing support of Good Process in GLBTI law reform process
- Candlelight Memorial Service and World AIDS Day activities continue with high public profile and broad ranging media coverage
- Good attendances by representatives of other agencies and organisations at Council events
- Use of The Canberra Times adult services section to promote SWOP , STRIP and the t.h.r.o.b. and w.i.s.h. phonedines

board members (current as of 30 June 05)

Joey Tabone

(President)

John Guppy

(Vice President)

Kevin Playford

(Secretary/Treasurer)

Kenn Basham

(PLWHA Representative)

Bonnie Jessup

(Volunteer Representative)

Mandi Collins

(Staff Representative)

Nicole Wiggins

(CAHMA Representative)

Rebecca Davey

(Ex-Officio)

David Bengier

(Board Member)

Mike Wight

(Board Member)

Megan Hansford

(Board Member)

Mark Glover

(Board Member)

other board members within the financial year

Martin Portus

(Board Member)

Aveline Rubinshteyn

(Staff Representative)

Pat Brant

(Board Member)

David Mills

(Staff Representative)

Nada Ratcliffe

(Ex-Officio)

staff (current as of 30 June 05)

Rebecca Davey (General Manager)

Community Support Services

Nada Ratcliffe (Manager)

Marcus Bogie (PLWHA Support Worker)

Stephanie Buckle (Counselor)

Mark Appleford (Health Maintenance
and Treatments
Information Officer)

Community Education and Health Promotion

Kevin Schamburg (Manager)

Tony Blattman (Education Officer)

David Mills (Project Officer)

Organisational Services

Andrew McLeod (Manager)

Valan Phoenix (Administration Officer)

Mandi Collins (Reception)

Leonie Campbell (Volunteer and Events
Coordinator)

CAHMA

Nicole Wiggins (Manager)

Kim Moran (Treatments Officer)

Micky Barry (Health Promotion Officer)

Various casual staff

other staff within the financial year

Tarquin McPartlan (SWOP)

Aveline Rubinshteyn (SWOP)

Victoria Smith (Reception)

Graeme Anderson (Reception)

Sue Driscoll (Counselor)

Lisa Henry (Treatments Officer)

Anabell Thoener (Volunteer and Events
Coordinator)

Mick Doring (PLWHA Support Worker)

2004/2005

sponsorship and acknowledgements

The Council would like to give special thanks to the following businesses, organisations and individuals that have assisted us in putting on events this year, either through sponsorship or donations. We greatly appreciate your assistance.

**6 Sense Media
ACT Health
All Saints Church
Ansell
ARTS Theatre Company
Australian Federal Police, Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers Network
Bears Canberra
Breville
Canberra Milk
Canberra North Bowling Club
Champions/Mustang Ranch
Cube Nightclub
Fernmark Inn
Gay and Lesbian Tennis Club
High Country Meats
Jeans West
Kwik Kopy
Mawson Club
Melissa and Roger Campbell
National Gallery of Australia
National Zoo and Aquarium
Raffies Lingerie
Taronga Zoo
The Canberra Theatre
The Eros Foundation
The Tully's
Theatre 3
TransACT
Vivaldi's Restaurant
Western Plains Zoo
What Joe Says clothing**