

A C O N

AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.

**Annual
Report
1992/93**



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Committee and Staff

EXECUTIVE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: DON BAXTER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR: DAVID EDLER
Executive Secretary: Christine Connolly

FINANCE, ADMIN & HUMAN RESOURCES

MANAGER: KEVIN GOLDING
PERSONNEL TEAM: Marian van de Donk
Mark Gruber (from Nov 93)
Michelle Rabbitt
VOLUNTEER SERVICES: Jim Belford
FINANCE TEAM: Alison Lee
Penny Lull
Allison Wells
ADMIN SERVICES TEAM: Nicola Addison
Dean Andrews
Anthony Cuthbert
Jeremy Nicholas
Tegan Sodlak
Andrew Sajben

CARE, HOUSING & TRANSPORT

MANAGER: LOU McCALLUM
CSN TEAM: Gary Smith
Barry Webb
Graeme Bray
Gabe Billick (relief)
Paul Van Reyk
HOUSING TEAM: Fred Oberg
Kim Spurway
Heidi Becker (on leave)
TIFFY'S TRANSPORT
SERVICE: Kay Bradbury
Juli Jelbun
Monica Khoury
Rob Lake
Stewart Odgers
Che Aitz

HIV STRATEGY & SUPPORT

MANAGER: MARK HOSKINS
HIV SUPPORT: Stephen Gallagher
Vivienne Muoro
Les Seaton
EARLY TREATMENT
CAMPAIGN:
NSW TREATMENTS
OFFICER:
COUNSELLING TEAM:
SPANISH PROJECT:

Ross Duffin

Lyle Chan

Mark Cashman

Marcus Cohen

Shelly Daniels

Grant Fatchuarson

Richard Swayne

POLICY & PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

MANAGER: KEN DAVIS
WOMEN PARTNERS OF
BISEXUAL MEN
WOMEN & AIDS:
GRIDS & BEREAVEMENT:
DISCRIMINATION:
MAN 2 MAN:
GAY VENUES:
OUTREACH:
Sarah Lubowitz
Lisa Rockwell
Trevor Braybrook
Larry Wellington
Greg Millan
Nic Frischknecht
Garry Rogl

INFORMATION & NATIONAL PROJECTS

MANAGER: MARK DAVIS
LIBRARY: Meryl Pannaci
SPEAKERS BUREAU: Jamie Barrett
ELECTION: Essex-Jevons
MICHAEL: Alexander
LEGAL TEAM: Timothy Leach
AMANDA: Lynns
NIKITA: Karvounis
NATIONAL
TREATMENTS: Ian McKnight
Alan Strum

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

MANAGER: MICHAEL COXIGLIARD
CAMPAIN PLANNING: Karl Dunn
RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT:
GNDUP:
RURAL OUTREACH:
Paul Kearns
Julia Sideris
Dodge Trappic
Jack Wallace
Sam Witch
Nik Acadianis
Nigel Carrington
Andrew Morgan
Crispin Rice

PEER EDUCATION

MANAGER: BRENT MACKIE
ETHNIC TEAM: Michael Camit
Amiel Lindichio
Ken Wong
MATURINE AGED
GAY MEN (MAC): Steve Ostrow
YOUTH PEER
EDUCATION:
Mark Alder
John Byrne
Ashleigh Ellis
Owen Hughes (Spain)
Rodney Knowles
Aldo Spina

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION/TRAINING: Norman Booker
 EVALUATION: Leynthia Crooks
 Diana McCorday
 STAFF SUPPORT: Mark Cashman
 STAFF/VOLUNTEER
 COUNSELLOR: Simon Jenkinson

WESTERN SYDNEY

COORDINATOR: Phillip Keen
 EDUCATION OFFICER: Peter Townsend
 ADMINISTRATION: Julianne Cowan
 Marc Larson
 CSN COORDINATOR: Pat Kennedy

HUNTER BRANCH

COORDINATOR: KEVIN PATON
 EDUCATOR/
 COUNSELLOR: Gail McLeson
 BEATS OUTREACH: Wayne Cook
 Carl Modet
 Brett Steel

VOLUNTEER SERVICES: Rosemary Bristow
 Mary Saunders
 ADMINISTRATION: Nicole Green
 EDUCATION: Paul Beland

ILLAWARRA BRANCH

COORDINATOR: DANIEL MADEBESU
 BEATS OUTREACH: David Alyak
 Michael Gibbons
 RURAL OUTREACH: Peter Waples
 ADMINISTRATION: Tracey Simcock

NORTHERN RIVERS BRANCH

COORDINATOR: SALLY BOYD
 BEATS OUTREACH: Timothy Kerslake
 Peter McPherson
 SUPPORT WORKER: Sue Bodda
 Patrick Ross-Boyle
 ADMINISTRATION:
 YOUTH EDUCATION: Neale Somers

MID NORTH COAST BRANCH

COORDINATOR: SHARON DILOSA
 EDUCATOR/
 COUNSELLOR: David Deach
 ADMINISTRATION: Diane Robinson

ACON Committee of Council

PRESIDENT	PETER GROGAN
VICE PRES	<i>Position Vacant</i>
Secretary	David Buchanan
Treasurer	David Hartstone
(Assistant Treasurer)	Martin Bangs
David Austin	(BCOF Rep)
Don Baxter	(Ex Officio)
Norman Booker	(Staff Rep)
David Bellar	(Ex Officio)
Michael Etwee	(CSN Rep)
Bill Glenn	
Graeme Gibb	(PLWTA NSW Rep)
John Godwin	
Helen Jones	
Michael Nelson	(ULCS Rep)
Robert van Maanen	(PLWTA NSW Rep)
Lex Watson	

In Memoriam

The Committee, Staff, Volunteers and Management of ACON wish to dedicate this Annual Report and the work it represents to the memory of those AIDS Council Staff, Volunteers and Committee members who have lost their lives as a result of AIDS over the course of the last twelve months.

AIDS Council of New South Wales

1. Introduction

The AIDS Council of New South Wales (ACON), is a community based organisation funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments. ACON is Australia's largest AIDS organisation.

ACON's activities include providing HIV/AIDS education to the community; counselling and support services for people affected by AIDS; advocacy for effective public health policy; and representing the interests of people affected by HIV/AIDS.

2. Formation and Membership

ACON was formed in 1985 at a public meeting, organised by members of Sydney's gay community, to discuss appropriate ways of responding to HIV/AIDS in New South Wales. The meeting subsequently resolved to form the AIDS Council, adopt a constitution, and elect a Committee to manage the affairs of the Council.

ACON represents and provides services for all people affected by AIDS in New South Wales.

A number of community organisations are closely affiliated to ACON. These organisations include the Community Support Network (CSN), which provides volunteer home caring and support for people with AIDS, and the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, a charitable organisation, which provides financial assistance to people with AIDS. CSN is managed by a Liaison Committee comprising members nominated by ACON and by CSN.

ACON and CSN together have around 800 members throughout New South Wales.

Branches of ACON have been established in Newcastle, Lismore, Coffs Harbour and there are offices in Wollongong and Western Sydney.

3. Management

ACON is incorporated under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act. ACON has a detailed constitution and a management plan to ensure efficient use of resources, clear lines of communication and effective participation of volunteers.

ACON is governed by an elected honorary committee of 12 persons, which determines policy and accepts financial accountability.

ACON's Committee has a number of working groups and subcommittees to advise it and to develop policy. Membership of working groups and subcommittee is open to anyone willing to contribute to the work of the group.

Staff of ACON carry out day-to-day administration and implement policy to meet the mission and objectives established by the Committee of Council.

Staff also manage the operation of CSN, with the Executive Director of ACON also acting as the Executive Director of CSN.

4. Staff

ACON has over 60 full-time staff and a number of other staff employed for fixed-term projects.

Staff in the Sydney office are divided into management units - Policy Coordination and Information Unit; Finance, Administration and Human Resources Unit; HIV Strategy and Support Unit; Community Development Unit; Sex Education and Western Sydney Unit; Care, Housing and Transport Unit; Project Unit; and Organisation Development Team. The staff are responsible through Unit Managers to the Executive Director, who is in turn responsible to the Committee of Council for all aspects of Council's operation.

5. Volunteer Participation

ACON and its affiliated organisations rely a great deal on the assistance of volunteers. ACON actively encourages the involvement of its membership and the community in its activities, particularly in home care and participation in working groups. Over 400 volunteers were involved in ACON initiatives in 1992/93.

6. Conclusion

ACON's philosophy is to work closely with the State and Commonwealth Governments and with other organisations. The Council and its affiliated organisations provide a very effective model of optimising community involvement in responding to AIDS in New South Wales.

ACON's Mission and Objectives

Mission Statement

ACON's purpose is to bring the AIDS crisis to an end.

We strive to do this by

- building on the response of the gay community;
- empowering all affected by the epidemic; and
- achieving self-determination for people with HIV / AIDS

We work primarily with gay men, and we are committed also to working with other people and communities directly affected by the epidemic in New South Wales.

Organisational Objectives

Education

- to promote behaviours and skills which prevent the transmission of HIV;
- to promote programs aimed at facilitating attitude change;
- to strengthen positive responses made by affected communities;
- to promote health maintenance of people with, or at risk of, HIV.

HIV Support, Care and Treatment

- to empower people living with HIV/AIDS;
- to provide a range of services to people with HIV/AIDS which improve or maintain their quality of life

Advocacy and Policy Development

- to develop, advocate and disseminate effective HIV/AIDS policy;
- to advocate a supportive nondiscriminatory environment;
- to advocate the provision of comprehensive high quality HIV/AIDS services.

Resource Management

- to develop and maintain an efficient and effective organisation which defines, acknowledges and integrates the roles of members, volunteers and staff;
- to promote the participation of affected communities.

President's Report

The AIDS crisis impacted on the ACON Committee of Council in the deepest possible way in the past year. Robert Walmsley, ACON's Vice President, died. Robert continued to contribute to the organisation - reading papers, providing advice, seeking input - right up until he died. His dedication and long, active service to the organisation (he had been a committee member since 1989) identify him as one of the heroes of the epidemic.

ACON is now one of the largest community based organisations in Australia and continues to be the largest AIDS organisation in Australia. There are now four thriving branches outside Sydney, an exciting and much needed Western Sydney Office and ACON Sydney currently occupies two buildings.

The organisation has again seen an annual growth of approximately 20% in funding for programs and services, some of which is recurrent and some of which is short-term funding only. Hundreds of volunteers continue to give thousands of hours to the community through ACON. They bring with them a wide range of skills and give their services in a variety of different ways.

For these reasons, the task of the Committee of Council to oversee these operations and to report to members, the community and stakeholders on the activities of ACON during the past year is a complex one. Much of that detail appears in subsequent sections of this report. I will address what I believe are some key concerns for members.

Community Development

Community development is a key strategy for ACON. The community mobilisation model, which guides our response to AIDS, suggests that empowering the groups most effected and building on communities is one of the most effective strategies. Through a range of strategies and activities, this year we are supporting community development in the HIV community and the gay and lesbian community, in the transsexual community and in areas outside Sydney through our branches and the Rural Project. We also co-sponsored the 1993 Candlelight Vigil, the largest so far held.

Our Annual Campaign addressed some difficult issues for the community: the ongoing impact of grief and loss, sustaining safe sex in the long term and injecting drug use, with the theme of confronting these issues as a community.

We continued taking our safe sex and safe injecting educational messages to community groups and

commercial venues in an attempt to convince those groups to take on the messages as their own and see them as a clear part of their responsibility in dealing with their constituents, customers, members and clients.

While ACON needs to raise discretionary funds for some of our more innovative, controversial or political activities, we have moved more consciously through this year to work with other community organisations. The 1993 Hand In Hand Party, run jointly with Pride, raised over \$50,000, with ACON distributing some of our share of the proceeds in support of a range of community organisations and actions. These include the Transsexual Anti Violence Project, the Anti-discrimination rallies, the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, the Quilt Project and the Gay and Lesbian Intergenerational Task Force.

Major Policy Areas

AIDS policy in Australia at a government level has been directed by the National HIV/AIDS Strategy, a three year plan which was put into place in 1989. That plan formally expired in June of this year and there has been considerable delay and frustration in the production of a replacement document. Initial drafts gave us considerable cause for concern and involved much lobbying of the various federal bodies.

There are worrying trends emerging in various areas such as the economically held view that AIDS receives too much funding and the suggestion that the community sector in AIDS is too strongly focused on gay men and is sexist and racist.

Don Baxter and I represent ACON on AFACO, the peak body made up of the state AIDS Councils and national organisations representing PLWHA's, sex workers and IV drug users. The two major areas to report on are its very successful lobbying and press efforts during the lead up to the Federal Election and the Organisational Review of AFACO which is currently under way.

The outcome of the election was probably the best possible outcome for continuation of existing HIV/AIDS policies in Australia. ACON assisted with considerable planning and lobbying to achieve this result.

From the AFACO Review it is clear that the organisation's role is perceived as being much more directed towards policy advice, advocacy and lobbying on a national level rather than project management. I hope the outcome of the Review will be a much more responsive and better managed AFACO, possibly located

The ACON Housing Policy launch
(l-r, Don Baxter, Robert Webster,
Peter Grogan).



in Sydney, which will remove some of the national responsibilities from ACON.

I have served on the Attorney General's Committee to implement the Anti-discrimination Board's Report into HIV Related Discrimination. That Committee was an extremely good model which allowed us to meet with senior representatives of each of the relevant departments to discuss their implementation of report recommendations, and to ensure that the recommendations did not simply lie in a report on a shelf.

This has been an extremely useful process which led to the establishment of a second committee under the chair of Chris Puplick within the Department of Health. It aims to implement the Inter-Governmental Committee on AIDS Legal Working Party Report recommendations. The implementation of the Committee's report is currently in draft form and will contain significant recommendations in the areas of prisons, drugs, education and legal reform such as the recognition of the same sex relationships, all in the context of advancing the aims of the National Strategy. A similar committee chaired by Bill Bowtell now operates at a Federal level.

Fundraising

We have put considerable energies into our relationship with the AIDS Trust and the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation during the year and have convened quarterly fundraising meetings in an attempt to engender cooperation and a unified approach in the area.

ACON and AFAC made certain demands of the AIDS Trust last year as a result of our firm conviction that the ratio of the monies raised to the administration expenses was clearly wrong. I am happy to report that the financial position of the Trust during 1993 has greatly improved, although we consider it still has a

considerable distance to go in improving its profile within the community and in its administration.

ACON Funding Issues

Major developments over recent years have seen us begin the move to seeking AIDS funding from departments other than Health and 1992/93 saw that work come to fruition in a number of areas.

Funding from the NSW Department of Housing for special rental subsidy and the purchase of houses specifically to be rented to PLWHA's and managed by us, and the recent receipt of funding from the Federal Attorney General's Department for the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre are both the culmination of our lobbying and the recognition by governments of the need to broaden their response to AIDS and not treat it simply as a health issue. We need to make clear that this is not the case and to formalise some of the informal links that we already have with areas such as Family Planning and other community groups.

We also need to counter the perception that AIDS is too heavily funded. This misconception occurs because AIDS funding is specifically targeted and therefore is easily extracted as a one off figure from the health budget, unlike other areas.

Planning

With the three year strategy and funding program now in place, effective planning for the medium-term future is a vital concern for ACON. It is a difficult role with which the committee and staff continue to struggle. We have now embarked on a strategic planning process which will include consultations with many stakeholders and other organisations seeking their impressions of ACON, what it is that we do well and where they think that we should be heading.

We are fully aware of the responsibilities and difficulties of continuing to play a leadership role in the

fight against AIDS in this country. That is a task which at times feels extremely thankless and many of us often question why we put ourselves through the stress of working in an area where you must constantly confront grief and loss at a personal level as well as rampant discrimination and prejudice.

The benefits, on the other hand, are significant. ACON has played, and continues to play, a significant role in the response to HIV in this country and most particularly in NSW. It is gratifying to know that a huge number of HIV positive people are provided with services on a daily basis by ACON including counselling, support groups, legal advice, treatment information, vitamin supplies, assistance with housing, transport services and volunteers support in their homes

Management

ACON is larger than many businesses and the achievement of its aims are crucial to our stakeholders our clients and our members. One major achievement of the organisation in this financial year has been to administer a budget of over \$6 million and return only a small deficit of \$70,000, representing just over 1% of the budget. The complexity of this task, given the organisation maintains separate budgets for each branch and unit, reflects a considerable increase in the skills and expertise of staff and management in this area. The Committee also successfully adjusted and strengthened its Finance Subcommittee to improve oversight of the organisation's complex finances.

We are approaching finalisation of an industrial agreement for the ACON work place and job descriptions and performance indicators are in place for every project and staff member. We have also adopted an extremely detailed HIV Employment Policy.

All of these achievements may sound bureaucratic to some, but an organisation the size of ACON requires substantial skills and expertise in management if it is to ever hope to achieve its aims. The skills necessary for developing the sorts of management outlined above are not easy to find, particularly in the community sector.

ACON, both through AFAO and on its own behalf, continues to play a strong leadership role in the community sector in AIDS in Australia. This is not an arrogant statement and it is an appropriate role given that we are the largest community organisation working at the centre of the epidemic and are funded in the most areas. We should not underestimate its significance and I can appreciate that it is easy for members not to be aware of the amount of effort which actually goes

into having input into policy and direction with the government, the scientific and medical community and the community sector.

We live in a time when a frightening epidemic continues to ravage us and those closest to us and when many others from our community remain at risk of infection. ACON, infuriating as it may be to some of us sometimes, is an organisation and an institution of which we can all be proud and which deserves our continuing support. I commend ACON and the fight against AIDS.

In times of crisis we continue to find our strength in the support of our community and each other. Unfortunately, our work will not be done until the crisis is at an end.

Peter Grogan
President

POSITIVE O NEGATIVE



SODOMIZE SAFELY



ACON
AIDS COMMUNITY ORGANISATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES



Executive Director's Report

It has been a difficult year for ACON, both internally and externally.

Internally, our management team needed time to implement and consolidate our Organisation Review and restructure. Efficient implementation was hindered, however, by the "Grimes projects" funding, being effectively a 10% short-term program expansion, completed from submission to project completion into a nine month time frame. This represented a major diversion of management focus away from consolidating implementation of the Review, while simultaneously compounding the chronic accommodation problems in most of our offices.

Externally, the organisation was buffeted by the federal election campaign and an entirely unsatisfactory process for devising the three year continuation of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy, factors which were compounded by changes in leadership and staff at APAO.

As the election and the National Strategy each carried the potential to significantly change Australia's response to the epidemic - particularly the role of the community sector in that response - ACON increased its already substantial role in policy input, advocacy and leadership at the national level. The President, myself, the Committee and ACON managers all played significant roles and it appears our work was worth it. The National Strategy provides a much improved policy framework, preserving the role of the community sector and three years of dedicated funding to the HIV/AIDS program is assured.

APAO has appointed a dynamic Director, former ACON Committee member Felicity Young, and moved rapidly to an Organisational Review, the outcome of which should see a refocusing on APAO's role in policy development and advocacy, relieving ACON of some of the responsibility for national leadership we have shouldered over the years.

While relations at the Commonwealth have been turbulent, at the NSW state level they have been characterised by productive stability and expansion. Health Minister Ken Phillips has maintained and strengthened his commitment to, and directions for appropriate HIV/AIDS policies, reiterated in his opening speech for our Western Sydney Office and again in launching our "Talk Early Treatments" campaign. Similarly, Premier Fahey's Parliamentary

statement of 2 March 1993 clarified both his personal commitment and his government's commitment to current HIV/AIDS strategies and programs. Effective relations have also been established with the NSW Attorney General John Hannaford and Housing Minister Robert Webster.

In establishing more effective links with government, ACON has been careful to maintain our capacity as an independent community organisation to publicly criticise government where necessary, as indeed became so with the failure of the Government to include homosexual and HIV/AIDS vilification in its package of amendments to the Anti-discrimination Act.

Major Policy Issues and Advocacy

While the revised National Strategy negotiations required major policy focus, ACON continued to develop and advocate policy on a range of other vital issues throughout the year.

Anti-discrimination Act Amendments

ACON has played a leading role in the Puplick Committee overseeing implementation of the Anti-discrimination Board's Report on HIV Related Discrimination.

ACON is also involved in the Puplick (Mark II) Committee, which is carrying out a similar exercise in reviewing implementation of the Report of the Intergovernmental Committee on AIDS (JICA) Legal Working Party.

These two reports cover almost the entire range of legislative issues directly relating to HIV/AIDS. Comprehensive implementation of their recommendations would achieve a ten year goal of creating a supportive legislative environment for responding to the epidemic.

NSW Education and Prevention Plan

ACON has contributed substantially to the NSW HIV Prevention Plan, the first comprehensive plan on HIV/AIDS education and prevention goals and programs produced in Australia. Ken Davis and Ross Duffin wrote chapters, with many other staff providing extensive consultation.

Housing

Several years of lobbying with the Department of Housing finally bore fruit with a substantial change in its policies on providing accommodation to people with HIV/AIDS and \$2 million dollars allocated for housing for ACON to manage.

Treatments Issues

Despite considerable pressure from ACON, we have not been successful in forcing Wellcome Australia to provide acyclovir free of charge while it is being evaluated.

Outcomes from the Berlin International AIDS Conference about AZT, including the Concorde trial and other clinical trials, led to much confusion about the use of antiretrovirals in HIV treatment. ACON persuaded the NSW Ministerial Committee on AIDS Strategy to develop a consensus position on the issue in order to reduce confusion and uncertainty.

After years of lobbying, it was pleasing to see the funds for highly expensive drugs doubled in the Commonwealth's 1993/94 Budget.

While ACON and others have been raising tuberculosis as a serious issue, carrying with it the potential for unnecessary panic, we have been less than convinced about the response from government and health agencies. We have now persuaded the relevant parties to conduct a "consensus" meeting similar to that for antiretrovirals.

Provision of HIV/AIDS Services

ACON has increased its input to the planning and monitoring of care and treatment services for PLWHA's in 1992/93, with a range of area and regional health services seeking and receiving ACON assistance in their decision making and planning processes.

The busiest Area Health Service, Eastern Sydney, finally invited our participation, along with PLWHA (NSW) on to their AIDS Advisory Board and in their strategic planning processes. This was certainly a major breakthrough.

ACON was also involved in consultations on the proposed move of the Albion Street Centre to the Prince of Wales campus and we conducted a public meeting of interested parties with the key players to discuss issues in the proposal. Of singular importance has been the ACON Hunter Branch's close involvement in the comprehensive review of HIV/AIDS services in the Hunter area, just recently completed.

Preventive Vaccines

ACON called for public consultation and debate on the ethical and public health issues arising from preventive vaccine trials in October 1992. It has taken almost a year for that to happen and in the meantime the range of complex issues raised by proposed preventive trials

was thoroughly debated within the organisation and a policy position developed which has now received widespread support from most HIV/AIDS experts at the ANCA Vaccines Workshop in September 1993.

NSW Health Care Complaints Bill and Commission

ACON has played a leading role, in conjunction with the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and other interested community organisations, in achieving substantial changes to the proposed Health Care Complaints Commission. The body is likely to deal with a range of HIV/AIDS associated complaints and we were pleased when the initial bill was withdrawn by the Minister, with its replacement draft moving to address many of our concerns, particularly the independence of the Commission.

HIV Awareness within ACON

A major internal policy focus has been organisational strategies to improve the participation of people with HIV in the organisation and making ACON a safe and secure place for people with HIV. To this end, the HIV Employment Policy has been finalised and implemented; a Code of Practice for Client Services developed and implemented; the Complaints System implemented and a series of HIV Sensitivity Workshops for staff and key volunteers being conducted.

Northern Rivers Branch Program Expansions

1992/93 saw ongoing consolidation across all of our programs and services (as detailed in the various sections of this report), as well as some new initiatives.

This year also saw a further diversifying of the sources of funding for ACON programs, including the first major project funded by the private sector. The "Talk Early Treatments" campaign is funded by Wellcome Australia and our acceptance was not an easy decision for an HIV/AIDS community organisation.

The highlights of these developments include:

- Expansion of volunteer legal services through the establishment of the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre (HALC) and short term infrastructure funding by the AIDS Trust and part-time solicitor, funded by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department
- The "Talk Early Treatments" project, a 12 month media campaign supported by a phone counselling line intended to encourage people with HIV to discuss their treatment options with a well-trained peer, funded by Wellcome Australia

- Provision of funding by the NSW Department of Housing for ten units in inner-Sydney and two houses in Lismore for PLWHA's and a half-time Tenancy Officer to manage them
- The Women Partners of Bisexual Men Project, designed and implemented through a low-key but effective suburban media campaign by Sava Lubowitz, and backed by support groups, funded by the Grimes fund and NSW Health
- A Care and Support Officer for the Northern Rivers Branch, allowing a more effective response to the demonstrated need in this area (NSW Health)
- The Sustaining Safe Sex and Men's Outreach Projects, both designed to address sustaining safe sex among "standard gay men", filling a gap in our existing staffing for education programs directed to gay men (NSW Health)
- A Rural Education Officer based at our Illawarra Office, funded through AFAO
- Two Discrimination Officers (fixed term) for PLWHA's from different cultural backgrounds and those in rural areas (AFAO)

While the Grimes projects are funded for only six months and are intended to supplement existing programs they include some new initiatives of note:

- The HIV Positive Asian Men's Project, which provides support and information for Asian men, a community understandably reluctant to approach "standard" ACON or mainstream health agency programs
- Youth Project expansions in Sydney and Western Sydney, which was particularly timely in light of the success of the "Young Gay Men's" national media campaign

Research and Evaluation

In addition to individual activity evaluations, ACON has initiated or participated in a range of wider-scale evaluations of some of our programs and services through the year. These include a review of our community development strategies, commissioned by the AIDS Bureau, and reviews of CSN home care operations, the HIV Support Project and our Beats Outreach Project, all initiated by ACON.

On a much wider scale, we assisted with Project Male Cell, a sexual behaviour survey of over 2600 MSM's across Australia, conducted by Macquarie University. We liaise regularly with the National Centre for HIV Social Research, particularly the Macquarie Unit, with which we conduct several joint research projects. We are also co-sponsors of the SMASH (Sydney Men And Sexual Health) Study, which replaces the previous AIDS Prospective Study. The ACON Social

Research Ethics Committee has considered more than 12 other research proposals for support or endorsement.

ACON continues to place a high value on research and evaluation. We see these as vital in ensuring our programs and services are achieving their objectives both effectively and efficiently.

Conference Presentations

The quality and range of ACON's work is attested by presentations by our staff and/or volunteers at a range of conferences, seminars and meetings through the year, now too numerous to list. Highlights include the Fifth National AIDS Conference, where 48 sessions included presentations by ACON staff and volunteers. Two other presentations of note were the NSW Law Week Seminar on Euthanasia, conducted by the Legal Working Group, and Brent Mackie and Aldo Spina's presentation at the Ninth International AIDS Conference in Berlin on the Fun and Esteem Project.

Community Forums

Part of ACON's community development role is conducting community forums and activities. In 1992/93 these included forums on Housing, the Barker Street Centre proposals, the current status of treatments and preventive vaccines. ACON also co-sponsored the Anti-discriminatory Rally in November 1992 and the Anti-vilification rallies in September and October 1993.

Challenges

We are at the beginning of a new three year strategy, but already we must be asking the question "will there be another one?" ACON must be well positioned to ensure those programs and services which are required to respond to the epidemic continue through the 1990's. In 1992/93, we already started to plan this process. Our strategic planning process, to be completed by early 1994, should allow us to be both ready for a range of possible developments and also to make astute decisions on changes in programs and services in a different era of AIDS: that of static, or even declining, HIV/AIDS funding.

Don Baxter
Executive Director

Deputy Director's Report

During 1993 we have continued to manage a significant period of change. The 1992 review of the organisation provided ACON with a range of recommendations for change and we have continued to these during 1992/93. Some of the major changes recommended were a restructuring of the organisation, improvement in many of the systems (including communication and decision making), clearer focus on staff issues and more attention to ACON's strategy.

Many of these internal issues had arisen because ACON experienced a rapid increase in funding and staffing numbers from 1989. It is now a relatively large community based organisation and we are having to manage quite a complex environment. Indeed, this year we have had another significant increase in staff and funding and although short-term, it has added to the stress and strain of managing the organisation.

There has been some criticism levelled at ACON because of its apparent bureaucracy. While we acknowledge that this may be the case, it is important to recognise that when an organisation gets to be this size there are a number of systems and procedures which need to be implemented to make it work efficiently and effectively. We are aware that this may be a barrier for some people and have been looking at our policies and procedures to make them more "user friendly", as well as ways to involve our clients and the community in the organisation. As a result, there have been several areas of change.

Client focus

Complaints System

This was introduced in September 1992 and provides a mechanism for people who use ACON's services, or have a comment to make on what we do, to tell us about it. Since it was introduced, we have dealt with around 30 complaints which have in most cases, been able to be resolved quickly.

Code of Practice

We are currently planning to introduce a Code of Practice for the organisation which will provide a greater sense of responsibility towards dealing with clients and others who use ACON's services and programs. This is like a guarantee of service which

increases our accountability to those who use our services.

HIV Sensitivity Training

This is being conducted throughout the organisation to improve our awareness of, and sensitivity to, people with HIV. It will become a regular component of a new employee's induction and will occur on a regular basis for all staff within the organisation.

Human resource policies

In May 1993 we launched the HIV Employment Policy, setting out an affirmative action strategy to increase the employment of people with HIV at ACON and to improve the HIV sensitivity and awareness of our all employees.

In February 1993, the Volunteer Policy was introduced, setting out strategies for more effective involvement of volunteers within the organisation through clearer structures and rewards.

The Staff Development and Appraisal Program has been developed and will be implemented in late 1993.

The ACON job classification structure has been finalised and will be introduced later this year, providing the organisation with a way of evaluating and classifying jobs at ACON. It will be the basis of our own award or agreement which we hope to introduce early next year.

Planning

All projects within ACON have developed work plans and performance indicators, in line with the expectations of our funding bodies. However, we are also using these as a tool to evaluate project work and for future planning.

The ACON Committee, in conjunction with branches, was involved in establishing the organisation's objectives and priorities for 1993/94. This enabled us to plan and prioritise key areas in our work for the next 12 months.

Strategic Planning is a process we expect to begin and complete by early next year. Taking a strategic view of ACON's role in the epidemic has been difficult in a climate of constant change, however we recognise that we must do this in order to effectively meet the challenges that are likely to arise in the next three years.

We will be calling on members and key stakeholders to participate in this process within the next few months.

Systems

Communication systems

With an organisation this size, clear and timely communication is essential. ACON now has a regular newsletter which provides information about the activities and work of units and branches. Regular reports, internal memorandums and briefings of staff and volunteers are ways in which we hope to improve this system.

Consultation systems

In 1992, we established the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) which includes representatives from staff, union and management. This committee is a forum to discuss a range of issues which impact the staff and work of ACON. Decisions or recommendations which have a broad impact within ACON are brought here for discussion before they are finally adopted. The committee meets monthly and includes HIV positive staff representatives, as well as Branch representatives.

Positive Staff forum

This is a monthly meeting of HIV positive staff and volunteers to discuss issues that are relevant and important for them within the organisation. These issues are conveyed to management or other parts of the organisation as appropriate.

Branches

Earlier this year, Branch coordinators and committee convenors were included in a planning day with the ACON Committee to develop organisational priorities. This was the first time that branches were included and has helped develop a greater sense of organisation and learning about the issues that were important in regional and rural areas. We plan to involve branches in this sort of planning twice a year.

We have also been working with Branch committees to clarify their roles and streamline the management structure of the Branches.

Accommodation

In December 1992 we opened a second office in 55 Oxford Street. This was the result of increased numbers of staff through 1991 and 1992 and the reorganisation of staff into work units. We also needed to accommodate client needs more efficiently.

Our office at Oxford Street houses the Peer Education and Community Development Units, as well as a number of other smaller teams. We only have a short term lease on this space and are looking at options to

move back together into one building as soon as it is possible for us to do that.

Industrial Agreement

In line with current industrial reforms, ACON has been looking at clarifying our responsibilities in this area. We are currently looking at developing a specific industrial agreement which covers all staff in the form of an enterprise agreement. Negotiations with staff and the union are occurring and we will have an agreement ready for registration early next year.

Funding

As the result of additional Commonwealth funds for education programs, ACON received an increase in funding for a number of short-term projects. These projects are due to be completed around September/October 1993 and many aim to develop resources and short-term strategies in peer education and community development areas.

ACON also received funding from the AIDS Trust in June 1993 to employ a media liaison officer, housing strategy coordinator, HIV/AIDS Legal Centre administrator, as well as funds to assist with client services.

Our future funding arrangement with the Department of Health will change this year to allow for greater flexibility with managing our funding. The AIDS Bureau will require ACON to submit a budgeting plan each year which details how we intend to allocate and spend the funds from the Department of Health. It is intended that we find funds for high priority programs from within our existing funding before we ask for additional funds from the Department. This will mean that we have to be clear about our priorities and establish ways of making these decisions which are supported by all staff, volunteers, members and community.

Management team

Managers have provided an increased role in leadership within the organisation. With larger units to manage than last year and increased responsibilities, management staff have had greater role in decision making, planning and priority setting within their unit and across the organisation. Attention has been given to training managers and increasing their skills to become more effective in their role. Managers have to deal with time constraints and constant changes within their work and are learning to deal with those demands through better planning and supervision.

Anne Malcolm
Deputy Director

Working Groups

Legal Working Group

Achievements for 1992/1993

The ACON Legal Working Group (LWG) has continued to provide legal advice, support and policy assistance to ACON and other related community organisations. Some primary areas of assistance have been insurance, superannuation and wills.

Members of the Legal Working Group were responsible for the writing and post production of the second edition of the Australian *HIV/AIDS Legal Guide*. Three members in particular, David Buchanan, Julie Hamblin and John Gedwin, contributed greatly to the text and were supported and assisted by a number of other LWG volunteers. The launch of the *Guide*, attended by Federal Minister for Justice, Duncan Kerr, was primarily organised by Working Group members.

In May 1993, in conjunction with NSW Law Week, LWG presented a forum on Euthanasia. With extensive media coverage and over 100 people in attendance, the presentation proved most successful in tackling this issue and many of the myths surrounding it.

A pilot series of the *Planning Ahead* kits, including Wills, Power of Attorney and Treatment decisions was released in March 1993. These kits give simple and practical information and shells of the documents for people to use if they wish. To date, feedback has been positive, with many non-HIV related organisations seeking permission to adapt them to their specific needs. These brochures are currently being evaluated and hope to be reprinted in the future.

Group members have updated the *AIDS & Your Rights* pamphlet and negotiations are underway for funding and production of a fourth edition. Work has started on a pamphlet on superannuation issues for people with HIV.

Speakers from LWG have continued to provide education to a variety of groups and organisations, universities, public forums and conferences. Three members of the working group were given the 1993 NSW Law Society's Golden Quill Award, receiving the award in recognition for their articles and contribution to the edition dedicated to HIV/AIDS of the *Law Society Journal*.

HIV/AIDS Legal Centre

The HIV/AIDS Legal Centre (HALC) is a community legal centre which has grown out of the work of the ACON Legal Working Group and the AFAC Legal

Project. After a six month planning period, the Centre commenced operations in August 1992 in the ACON offices in Goulburn Street.

HALC was formed because of the great increase in casework being handled by the AFAC Legal Project in NSW. A decision was made to involve volunteer lawyers and others in the provision of advice and assistance to people experiencing HIV related legal problems. Legal advise sessions, conducted by volunteers, are held every Monday evening. Some volunteers have also been involved in daytime interviews and follow up casework during the day. A hospital outreach service is conducted at St Vincent's Hospital and the Sacred Heart Hospice, primarily dealing with wills, powers of attorney and advance directives. About 20 volunteer lawyers and students were involved in HALC services in the first 12 months of operation.

HALC is affiliated with the Commonwealth Community Legal Centres Group (NSW) and is in the process of becoming incorporated. It has been successful in obtaining a grant from the Trust to employ a person for nine months to further develop systems to recruit, train and effectively utilise volunteer lawyers and students. HALC has also received considerable financial support from the ACON Committee and other donations to enable purchase of essential items and basic running costs.

HALC's casework is supervised by the AFAC Legal Officer, but there is a pressing need for funding for an additional solicitor to focus on NSW casework. Strenuous efforts have been made during the year to obtain funding for such a position. These efforts have paid off; in September 1993 the Commonwealth Minister for Justice announced that recurrent funding has been made available under the community legal centres funding program to enable the employment of a part time solicitor.

The HIV Community Working Group

The HIV Community Working Group grew out of a facilitator of ACON's HIV Support Project's dissatisfaction with key areas of ACON's service and procedures in early 1992.

Discussion and action has since been taken in the areas of the development of a volunteer policy, establishment of a complaints procedure, improvement of accessibility to client services and commencement of HIV Sensitivity Training for all staff and volunteers.

Discussion and progress in these areas is an ongoing process.

The Working Group provides an avenue for further discussion as well as a way for HIV positive people to formulate, suggest and discuss ACON policy and procedures directly with its Committee of Council on an ongoing basis.

The major projects currently being worked on are effective implementation of the HIV Needs Assessment and advanced planning for a Positive Living Centre in Sydney.

International Working Group

In mid-1993 the ACON Committee chartered a new staff and volunteer working group to assist in providing hospitality and information to people visiting ACON during liaison and study tours. This working group will regularise meetings in late 1993 and will assist in identifying AIDS and human rights advocacy issues in the region to be pursued by ACON and APACO. In July, ACON became an associate member of the International Lesbian and Gay Association.

In the last year ACON has been privileged to welcome visitors from AIDS organisations in over 30 countries, primarily in Asia, the Pacific and Southern Africa, including the Health Minister of Laos and a delegation from the National AIDS Committee of Vietnam.

Women and AIDS Working Group

The Women and AIDS Working Group (WAWG) was reconvened and launched in January 1993. It has a membership of more than 60 individuals and organisations, with volunteers attending community

events, staffing information stalls and producing a monthly newsletter sent to all members.

This year the group successfully raised funds to send a HIV positive woman to the Ninth International AIDS Conference in Berlin. It has also concentrated on the policy areas concerning women's access to clinical trials and treatments and on oral sex. It also convenes an Education Sub-committee.

WAWG will organise more fundraisers and education forums in the future, including a forum on the advent of "female controlled" safe sex equipment (e.g. femidoms).

The Group meets on the first Wednesday of every month in 55 Oxford Street at 6.30pm.

Sustaining Safe Sex for Negative and Positive Gay Men Working Group

This Working Group meets fortnightly to discuss a range of education policy and strategy issues. A considerable amount of time has been devoted to the articulation of a policy on the impact on safe sex of trials for HIV preventive vaccines.

The Group discusses issues around viral load theories and the safety of oral sex and strategies of negotiating unsafe practices within relationships. These have been taken up for policy formulation by the APACO Education Policy Working Group.

Forums and research report-backs have been held for staff and volunteers, including sessions on gay men and sexual health, the Male Call survey, current HIV epidemiology, "negotiated safety" in relationships, Ron Gold's research on the cognitive psychology of unprotected anal sex and APACO's report on the Meanings of Sex Between Men.

A CON SYDNEY UNIT REPORTS

HIV Support and Strategy Unit

The HIV Support and Strategy Unit was created in March 1992 as a result of the Organisational Review. The projects incorporated into the Unit are the HIV Support Project, Counsellors, Spanish Speaking Project, PLWHA (NSW) Inc., Sydney Treatments Access Scheme (the Buyers Club), NSW Treatments Officer and the Talk Early Treatments Hotline. The manager of the Unit, Mark Hoskins, was appointed to the position in August 1993.

The Unit aims to maintain the HIV employment strategy for HIV positive people within ACON and associated organisations, to support and encourage people living with HIV to be active in the organisation and acknowledge the valuable contribution that they have made, and continue to make, to the organisation. It also develops strategies for provision of services to those who are living with and affected by HIV by working with other units within ACON and other agencies to highlight the areas of concern and address them with planned strategies, both short- and long-term.

1992/93 In Review

The services provided by the HIV Support Project were once again in constant demand, with 21 support groups being initiated and over 210 PLWHA's being provided with peer support. Forty-two facilitators gave their time and energy for these groups and a further 50 new facilitators were trained during the year. Of these, ten were from areas outside of Sydney, which means that the peer support model is developing well in other areas. We now have a base of over 90 facilitators.

The Project has successfully continued its HIV Information Nights. This year 36 sessions were held, with topics varying according to requests from within the community, whilst still maintaining some of the very important regular sessions. Overall, some 750 people attended these sessions in 1992/93 and from the feedback, most were more than happy with the content and delivery of the sessions.

The HIV Positive Womens' Support Officer has also been running ongoing Support Groups. Owing to the different issues that women generally face (e.g. family commitments, isolation by geography and community), these groups are more loosely structured than others. Overall, they have been well attended. As well as the

support groups there have been several Positive Weekends arranged for women with HIV and their families.

The Support Project has maintained a presence at the Lifestyles Unit at Long Bay Gaol and continues to hold support groups for facilitators, as well as organising social events such as barbecues for support group participants, Antibody parties and Mixer parties.

The counsellors deal with about 70 people per week, both face-to-face and over the phone. This is a great achievement, considering there are only 7.5 counsellors, one of whom is dedicated to working with the Spanish speaking community.

The NSW Treatments Officer has been kept busy with calls from a wide range of people interested in finding out about treatment options. Another position has been appointed to answer calls about early treatments. Called the "Talk Early Treatments" line, this service is an enhancement to the brilliant work already being done by the Unit.

Of course, the continuing success of the Unit and the ability to maintain such a workload would not be possible without the enormous number of volunteers who continue to give their time and energy. All support groups are run by volunteers and the work put into running social events is also done by volunteers. The Unit thanks each one of these people for their unending support and recognises that without them, there would be far less achieved and far fewer people who would find support for the issues that are always present when living with HIV.

In the year ahead, the Unit will continue to meet the ever changing needs of PLWHA's. Its goal of empowering and resourcing PLWHA's to have more control of the situations we find ourselves in will remain the primary focus.

Mark Hoskins
HSSU Manager

Peer Education Unit

The Peer Education Unit's aim is to create a desire for, and develop the skills of, men who have sex with other men (MSM's) so that they practice and maintain safe sex and safe needle use. The Unit's projects all involve volunteer networks of trained peer educators that provide education to their participants, who in turn educate the broader community.

The Unit went through a year of change in 1992-93, with a number of projects breaking away and forming the Western Sydney Unit. Combined with this change was the addition of a number of short-term (6 month) projects attached to various existing projects in the unit towards mid-1993. The year has been one consolidation and rapid one-off expansion, with some interesting and innovative new projects injecting new activities into the unit.

Youth Peer Education Project (Fun and Esteem)

The Project aims to make safe sex and safe needle use a realistic aspect of the lives of young men who have sex with other men. It targets young men under the age of 26 years in the Sydney area, regardless of sexual identity or HIV status.

Over the year the Project conducted a range of activities, the highlights including:

- Seventeen "Start Making Sense" workshops dealing with HIV/AIDS and safe sex education with over 250 young men taking part
- Fifty social/support drop-in groups in the inner city of Sydney, with an average of 30 participants per group
- Fifty social/support drop-in groups in Western Sydney, with an average of 15-20 participants per group
- One facilitation training workshop at which 15 volunteers were trained to facilitate social/support groups and the Start Making Sense workshops

- Initiation of a volunteer group in Western Sydney to co-facilitate the social/support drop-in groups there and further expand the Project in Western Sydney
- Launching of the National Gay Youth advertising campaign. This involved advertisements in mainstream youth magazines and gay community newspapers and magazines and resulted in almost doubling the number of new participants
- The two Project Officers presenting a paper on the Project at the 1993 International AIDS Conference in Berlin
- The Project is in the process of developing a detailed "How To" manual for facilitators on the Start Making Sense workshops.

The Project also published 12 issues of the *Fun and Esteem News*, which is now distributed to over 450 young men who have sex with other men across the state.

Volunteers play an essential part in the work of Fun and Esteem, facilitating the workshops, contributing to the newsletter, general office work and recruitment for the Project. A youth trainee has also been employed for a period of one year. This program gives an unemployed person under 20 years old the chance to gain work experience while attending a 12 month course in computer skills and information technology.

One in a series of new posters produced for AFAO's National Gay Youth Project.



Which
one of
us is
gay?

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Call Our Office for Details of THE 1993 FLYING HIGH FESTIVAL. Many other organisations throughout Australia have flyers available.

Mature Aged Gay Men's Project (MAG)

The aim of the Mature Aged Gay Men's Project (MAG) is to give support and education on safe sex and sex needle use to mature aged gay men through a peer education network. The Project is now in its second year after successfully obtaining recurrent funding from the NSW Department of Health.

MAG meets bi-monthly on Saturday nights in an ongoing social/support group which has over 60 core members. Meetings can often attract over 70 participants and the popularity of the group means that finding a space big enough to accommodate it is becoming a problem!

A coordinating committee of volunteers supports the Project worker through assisting with planning, conducting meetings and helping with administrative tasks. The MAG meetings are a blend of discussion topics of interest to participants and talks by guest speakers on topics related to HIV/AIDS and safe sex. Some of the more successful evenings have included a series of talks by prominent mature aged gay men.

The Project also supports a number of smaller projects set up by volunteers aimed at developing support and providing education for mature aged gay men. These include an informal MAG group in the Watsons Bay area with around 30 participants, a regular monthly dinner for HIV positive men and other mature aged gay men at Helfron Hall and a support network for mature aged gay men in Long Bay Jail.

MAG also provides a column, "The Best is Yet to Come" in the *Sydney Star Observer*. Written by the Project Officer, this column provides information about issues of interest to mature aged gay men and is a major way people hear about the Project. Judging by the response to the "Best is Yet to Come", it is very successful.

The Project has been very successful in targeting, educating and empowering a group of men who, for the most part, have been overlooked by education strategies in the past. These men are sexually active and have an important contribution to make to the gay community. However, issues that are significant to

these men are often very different to those of younger gay men.

Ethnic Men who have Sex with Other Men (EMSOM)

The aim of this Project is to educate gay and bisexual Asian men about safe sex and safe needle use through the provision of information, networking and peer support.

With the development of the Asian-only support group, Silk Road, in 1992, EMSOM has been successful in providing education specifically aimed at Asian men who have sex with other men. It meets every Friday night and, like MAG, is a blend of discussion evenings and talks by invited guests. The group has a core membership of around 30 people and a volunteer network that assists in its running, as well as in other community development exercises.

The Project played a major role in the first Asian Gay Pride Week in 1992, with various volunteers from the Project instrumental in the events. It has conducted a Zen Journey workshop which provided HIV/AIDS education to Asian men. The workshop also dealt with a wide range of gay related issues such as sexual identity, coming out and being Asian and gay.

Continuing the success of the previous year, the *Love Him Safely Every Time* pamphlet and poster series was distributed to ethnic and community centres, SIS clubs, numerous gay venues and to gay and bisexual Asian men making personal contact with the Project.

With short term funding from the AIDS Bureau, the Project has been able to develop in a number of new areas. A HIV Positive Asian Project is being initiated which will look at producing resources and providing support for HIV positive Asian MSM's. The second area of expansion is in Western Sydney, where the Project is in the process of initiating a social support and education group along the lines of the Silk Road group in Western Sydney. The group has already met a number of times and there seems to be quite a lot of interest in it. The EMSOM Project relies a great deal on the volunteers who assist its activities. These volunteers are growing and there are always useful functions for newcomers. The Project would like to extend thanks to all those volunteers who have contributed to our work over 1992/93.

Funding Sources

The projects in the Peer Education Unit are funded by the NSW Department of Health. The three main projects, Youth Peer Education, MAG and EMSOM are funded on a recurrent grant. Other projects are part of a one-off package of grants to the AIDS Council.

**Brent Mackie
PEU Manager**



The new logo for Silk Road, a support group for gay Asian men which has grown out of the EMSOM Project.

Policy and Project Development Unit

Formed in February 1993, the Unit brings together new and innovative projects with the existing policy and women's projects, including outreach to men in gay venues, a media liaison officer and an extension of both women's projects.

Staff of the Unit have collaborated in the steering committees of research studies with Macquarie University, the National Centres in HIV Social Research and HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Trials. These include Sydney Men and Sexual Health (SMASH) and two studies on the impact of the epidemic on the Sydney gay community and on cultural production

to expand housing options for PLWHA's. It also provided detailed advice on policy documents submitted by the Privacy Committee of NSW, Centacare Catholic Welfare, the NSW Health Department (discussion paper on Palliative Care), St Vincent de Paul Society, University of Technology, Sydney (HIV & Hepatitis Policy), the Law Society and the NSW Department of Corrective Services (Communicable Diseases Policy).

Women and AIDS Project

The Project has continued to produce education resources for women. As well as distribution of the "We Want Safe Sex Now" materials, a new poster has been released to increase community awareness of women living with HIV. With a motif of doors, it is based on a very successful Canadian model, but uses Australian images.

About 250,000 copies of a brochure on condom use are due to be distributed Australia-wide with the December edition of Cleo. The leaflet asserts that condoms are the only method of birth control that also offers adequate protection against the transmission of HIV and other STD's. Resource materials on sexuality for women with HIV are also in production.

The Project Officer assists in coordinating the ACON Women and AIDS Working Group and assists the Positive Women Groups through referrals, support,

**DOES YOUR
BIRTH
CONTROL
PROTECT
YOU
AGAINST
HIV/AIDS
AND OTHER
STDs?**

YES	40
■ ■	BIRTH CONTROL PILL
■ ■	IUD
■ ■	STERILISATION (having your tubes tied or vasectomy)
■ ■	NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING
■ ■	WITHDRAWAL
■ ■	DIAPHRAGM or CERVICAL CAP (barrier method)
■ ■	SPERMICIDES (creamy foam, jelly)
■ ■	CONDOMS
	Not answered

A brochure produced by the Women and AIDS Project for the December 1993 issue of Cleo magazine.

Policy Development also responded to policy inquiries by 34 organisations, including assisting the establishment of a pilot program with the Department of Housing

promotion and the co-organisation of peer support gatherings.

At major community events, such as International Women's Day and the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, the Working Group organises information stalls and highly visible Women and AIDS contingents.

The Project collaborated with the Hands On Youth and AIDS project in planning and running a series of regional seminars and a three day festival at Bondi, promoting peer education for a diverse range of young women around safe practices and HIV.

It also acts as a central information point for women and women's organisations around a range of HIV issues and takes an average of 40 inquiries each week. The Project Officer has given presentations on request from organisations in Sydney, Wagga and the Blue Mountains. The Project convenes quarterly meetings of women working in AIDS related services and participates in Women Out West AIDS Working Group.

Many media inquiries come to the Project Officer, who has in this year alone worked with, and provided information to, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Clev. Burn*, *60 Minutes*, *Attitude*, *SBS News 2JJ* and *Lesbians on the Loose*.

Policy areas taken up in the last year include oral sex, women's access to HIV treatments and trials and women's access to clinical and support services in relation to the proposed move of the Albion Street Centre. The need to promote HIV issues onto the agenda of the NSW Women's Advisory Council is also being addressed. The Project Officer participates in the AFAO Women and AIDS Working Group, has

represented women's issues to the Commonwealth during consultations evaluating and developing National AIDS Strategy and compiled reports for the *National AIDS Bulletin*.

Currently the Project Officer is helping to develop a proposal to the Australia Council for funding of a theatre project, which will develop the theatre skills of women affected by HIV and produce a performance piece to tour NSW. It is also developing a funding proposal for a Positive Women's conference for early 1994.

Women Partners of Bisexual Men

Peer support groups began meeting in April 1991 and were facilitated by a volunteer. In February 1993 a project staffed by Sara Lubowitz started, with funding lasting until late 1993. Two support groups for women whose male partners are bisexual men meet monthly. A newsletter is circulated to those in contact with the groups, keeping often isolated women in touch with each other and discussing the issues arising from their current or past relationships.

The Project, with help from volunteers, analysed letters sent in by women about their situations and a report was published in the *National AIDS Bulletin*. It also contacted NSW phone counselling services to ascertain their responses to the issues for women partners of bisexual men, which has been compiled into a brief needs assessment report. The Project is assisting these helplines with advice on referrals and relevant information packages.

The Project has circulated a booklist and articles on the subject of women whose male partners have sex with other men to a range of libraries. It has maintained a high level of consultation with relevant mass media, including television drama series that run story lines on women partners of bisexual men.

A successful phone-in was held between 26-30 July 1993, staffed by 24 volunteers. It was well advertised in local, suburban and rural newspapers, significant ethnic publications, *Koori News*, on several radio interviews and Channel 7 ran a free community announcement advertisement. A report analysing data from the callers and outlining their issues is being produced. Several of the callers were women with HIV.

A brochure designed to raise the profile of these issues and breakdown the isolation that many women partners of bisexual men feel is being produced to provide basic information on AIDS and relevant services. The Project is also planning training seminars

Women Partners of Bisexual Men



Phone In
008 069-814

(lines open on:
26th - 30th July 1993
12 Noon - 9pm)

- Tell your story
- All information is confidential and anonymous
- Find out about support available to you

Download our pamphlet 'Choices of my life'

WPAW

FAX 429

1488/4717101

AIC QIN
www.aicqin.org

The Women Partners of Bisexual Men Project conducted a phone-in in July 1993 to provide information and support to its target group.

for staff and volunteers in services likely to deal with inquiries from women with bisexual men partners. To continue its work, the Project is seeking extra funding in 1994.

Grief and Bereavement Project

This is a short-term project assessing the impact of multiple bereavement on individuals and groups in the communities affected by the epidemic. Trevor Braybrook, the Project Officer, made presentations at the National Conference on Grief and Bereavement in Yeooper, and provided an overview article for the *National AIDS Bulletin*.

A mail-in survey on how people are experiencing and dealing with AIDS related grief was published in the *Sydney Star Observer* on 15 October 1993. The responses to this survey are being analysed with the assistance of Macquarie University.

Peer support groups will be trialled and recommendations will be proposed for grief interventions and responses to be developed by ACON and other AIDS organisations.

Man 2 Man Project

Recurrent funding was secured to begin a new project investigating how to run successful peer education groups for gay men, of all ages, both HIV positive and negative. The Project seeks to design and implement new educational strategies for gay men that address their current concerns. Ten years into the epidemic, gay men are facing a broad range of issues that impact on their decisions to sustain safe sex behaviours.

Project worker Greg Millan has been researching contemporary Australian and overseas models and is completing a needs assessment involving workers and the target group. He has recruited a large team of volunteers to assist in all aspects of the Project.

National HIV Anti-Discrimination Project

As part of the APAO-suspiced National Project, Larry Wellings began in June 1993 working part-time for 12 months to investigate and document ways of empowering people with HIV who may be isolated by class, language or culture from accessing supportive services and programs.

A series of peer groups for people from three different language groups is being initiated in collaboration

with workers from Central Sydney Area Health Service's Multicultural AIDS Education and Support Program. The project also focuses on literacy issues in AIDS information and dissemination materials, and utilises personal narrative approaches in developing new resources.

Ken Davis
PPDU Manager

An innovative design for the Women and AIDS Project, the "Doors" poster was adopted from a Canadian idea.



Organisation Development Team

The OD Team works in conjunction with the Management Team and all staff to develop and implement ongoing processes of organisational development. The Team currently comprises five members, each with specific areas of responsibility in planning, training, evaluation, communication, workplace counselling and support.

Over the year the team's key achievements have included:

- Provision of skills training and experiential workshops for staff in a range of contact areas
- Project planning and evaluation sessions conducted with units, workteams and projects
- Staff development workshops dealing with workplace and performance indicators conducted for staff and management
- Continued development of strategies addressing HIV awareness among ACON staff and volunteers
- Development and implementation of a model of support for CSN volunteers
- Ongoing provision of confidential one-to-one counselling sessions to ACON staff and volunteers addressing concerns including stress, anxiety or depression, grief associated with multiple loss, interpersonal team
- Conducting small group conflict resolution sessions with members of staff
- Analysis and reporting of data collected by the HIV Needs Assessment
- Review of HIV Support project within the HIV Strategy and Support Unit

- Conducting analysis and reporting of a survey of staff following the implementation of changes flowing from the Organisation
- Participation in the organisation's strategic planning process.

Who really cares?



CSN produced a new series of eye-catching flyers for the CSN Information Sessions. This one features Mother Theresa.

Care, Housing and Transport (CHAT) Unit

The last 12 months has seen an overall increase in requests for services for all areas of the CHAT Unit. As a result, there has arisen an imperative to review existing structures and procedures used by the three projects. This has been met by a formal review carried out by outside consultants (as in the case of CSN) or by systematic self-review of a project and its staff. This process will be ongoing.

Tiffy's Transport Service

The Transport Service provides transport to and from Treatment Centres for people with HIV/AIDS (PI,WHA's). Centres serviced by the Project include Out Patient Clinics at St. Vincent's, Prince Henry, Prince of Wales, Royal Prince Alfred, St George Hospitals and the Sacred Heart Hospice, as well as the Albion St. Centre, Taylor Square Clinic, Community Health Centres and general, dental and other practitioners. The boundaries of the service extend from the Harbour in the north, to the coast in the east, Strathfield in the west and Kogarah in the south. Aside from meeting the day to day medical transport needs of people with HIV/AIDS within the defined boundaries, other achievements of the Project for the year have included:

- A survey and report on the transport needs of people with HIV/AIDS living on the North Shore
- Funds from the AIDS Trust to purchase and install a two way radio system in both vehicles, replacing a mobile phone system and improving efficiency and reducing costs
- Replacing the large bus with the more "user friendly" Terago
- The introduction of a service to take people to and from hydrotherapy sessions at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
- The development and implementation of a comprehensive client satisfaction survey, distributed to 70 clients and referrers
- The purchase of two child restraint car seats to safely provide transport to Prince of Wales Hospital for children with HIV/AIDS

- The recruitment and training of two volunteer office assistants
- Change of service hours to incorporate early transport needs (the service now commences at 7am)
- Providing transport for people with HIV/AIDS to social and community events, such as the Candlelight Rally, outside regular service operations
- Development of guidelines for employment, training and assessment of relief drivers

Thanks must go to Danni Koster for the design of the Tiffy's logo to enable clients to identify the bus without the need for signing and to the Bobbi Goldsmith Foundation for their ongoing support of the Project through provision of one of the vehicles.

ACON Housing Project

The ACON Housing Project provides assistance to people with HIV/AIDS in securing and maintaining appropriate housing. It accomplishes this by providing advice, advocacy and referral around housing options, both government and non-government. Interim housing is also provided through the Project to people with HIV/AIDS who are awaiting allocation with the Department of Housing (DOH).

The past 12 months have proved to be a time of great activity for the Housing Project. Major changes in Department policy, increased funding to directly supply housing to people with HIV/AIDS and the employment of an added part-time worker have contributed to the work of the busy Project.

The Project has been funded under the CAP scheme to access ten housing units specifically purchased by the Department for ACON. These properties will be owned by DOH and managed by the Housing Project. They will join the six bachelor flats (The Glebe Project) already managed by ACON in providing interim housing for people with HIV/AIDS awaiting permanent allocation (a waiting period which can be up to nine months in some cases). The part-time position of Tenancy Coordinator has been created to oversee this facet of the Project. At the time of writing two dwellings have so far been purchased in the inner-west.

The recent launch of a HIV/AIDS-specific housing booklet and announcement by the Minister of Housing

regarding a new pilot Rental Subsidy Scheme for people with HIV/AIDS has been the culmination of intense lobbying, liaison and direct input to the Department regarding the housing needs of people with HIV/AIDS. This was done by the ACON Policy Analyst, Lou McCallum, and the staff of the Housing Project.

Other major achievements of the Project have included:

- Successful negotiations between members of the Housing Crisis Group, including the ACON Housing Officer, and Waverly Council regarding the establishment of a Council-run housing facility for PLWHA's in the Waverly district. A suitable building for this purpose will be sought by the Council's housing workers as soon as the final plan is approved by Council
- Participation by the Housing Officer in the National Association of People With AIDS (NAPWA) Housing Working Group
- Maintaining a 100% occupancy rate of the Glebe project
- Providing in-service training, in conjunction with Mark Tietan of BGF, to various service and health organisations regarding the housing needs of PLWHA's

Community Support Network

Requests for CSN assistance have continued to increase over the last 12 months. In the period from January to June 1993 alone, CSN received 180 referrals. To keep pace with this demand, CSN has been endeavouring to re-evaluate its systems and practices. To this end, external consultants have been contracted to examine how the CSN office and staff operate, what processes and procedures are employed in the day-to-day activities of recruiting, training and rostering volunteer carers and how these may be improved.

ACON Housing Policy Launch (l-r NSW Housing Minister Robert Webster, Heidi Becker, Fred Oberg).



Another development has been the preparation and granting of a six month funding submission by the Commonwealth Government to create a Carers Resource Manual. Titled *Don't Panic*, it will principally be designed for people in the primary carers role of a person with HIV/AIDS. It is expected that the manual will be particularly useful for people living in isolated areas who are unable to access a range of support services such as CSN. It is due to be completed in March 1994.

As well as providing care for people with AIDS over the last 12 months, other achievements of CSN have included:

- Planning and introduction of peer support based support groups to assist with carer retention
- Two four-day training courses held to train facilitators for peer support groups
- Introduction of a revised referral system and referral form
- The development of a new module for the training of CSN carers around the issues of HIV/AIDS disease progression, transmission and infection control
- Talks and workshops carried out with service organisations and health care workers
- Grief and Loss workshops for carers, held throughout the year

With CSN continuing to grow and develop, discussions have been underway between the Executive Director of ACON and the CSN Committee regarding alterations to the ACON/CSN Liaison Agreement and possible changes to the responsibilities of the parties concerned.

ACON has submitted funding enhancements to the AIDS Bureau for three new CSN staff positions and under recommendations made by the consultants, other changes will be implemented over the coming months.

After 15 months of hard work in the Western Suburbs, Chas Stewart has left CSN. Along with the dedicated carers in the west, Chas has established CSN as a valued service providing a high level of care. He will be sorely missed. Assuming his role is Patricia Kennedy, a long-term CSN volunteer who is already well known to many people. Pat will be based at the ACON office in Sydney's west.

Over the coming six months the CHAT Unit will be managed by Lou McCallum whilst I am relieving in the Deputy Director's role. I believe this will be an exciting year for the CHAT projects as they continue to develop and grow to meet the needs of the increasing number of PLWHA's requiring assistance.

David Edler
CHAT Manager

Information and National Projects Unit

The primary role of the Information and National Projects Unit is to collate and disseminate up-to-date information on HIV/AIDS. This is done through both the production and dissemination of printed information and through direct client contact. Many of the projects in this Unit work closely with volunteers through working groups and direct volunteer input into the operation of the project. The unit is managed by Simon Kenolow. The National Treatments Project and the National Legal Project (including the Confidentiality and the Law Project) are funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing, Local Government and Community Services through the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO). The HALC Infrastructure Establishment Officer position is funded through the AIDS Trust of Australia. The remaining projects are funded through the NSW Health Department's AIDS Bureau.

Library

The last 12 months has seen a dramatic increase in the number of people utilising the ACON Library, the majority of whom have been tertiary students and health care workers. In May 1993 alone the Library received over 280 inquiries and lent over 145 items.

Over 1500 new items have been entered onto the NSW AIDS Library Network catalogue by the ACON Library staff and volunteers. This catalogue allows items such as journal articles, books and videos from five libraries (ACON, Albion Street Centre, Family Planning Association, Department of Corrective Services and the Centre for Education and Information on Drugs and Alcohol) to be accessed by author, subject, title and key words. It holds information on over 6700 items, is the largest HIV/AIDS catalogue in Australia and can be accessed through our Library.

Speakers' Bureau

The ACON Speakers' Bureau trains volunteers to give general talks on HIV/AIDS to workplaces, schools, TAFE Colleges, universities, community organisations, clubs and health services. The constant challenges for this Project are to present HIV/AIDS information in new and imaginative ways, to ensure that the information is up-to-date, relevant and focused for the varied audiences who request talks.

In recent months, 16 new volunteer speakers were trained through ACON's three month (42 hours) Speakers' Bureau Training Program. With these new recruits the Project has over 30 active volunteers and is able to maintain an average of ten to 12 talks per month. Many of the talks are to schools, where teams of volunteers present HIV/AIDS information to 100 or more students in a single day. The Speakers' Bureau utilises interactive approaches rather than lecture-style information presentations whenever possible. Over the last 12 months the Speakers' Bureau has given talks to over 150 different groups, reaching over 6200 people. It has also been involved in helping other AIDS and community service organisations such as the Lesbian & Gay Anti-Violence Project and People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in developing training procedures for their volunteer speakers.

Resources Distribution

The resources section provides educational material, including pamphlets and posters, upon request to non-government and government organisations, health care workers, people with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA's), students and members of the general public. Materials are also distributed to staff and volunteers at ACON's Sydney office and the branches. A total of 117,200 resource materials were distributed between July 1992 and June 1993, which is an increase of 11% in the utilisation of the service from the previous 12 months, although the overall number of inquiries has diminished slightly through this period (2670 requests in 1991/92 compared to 2214 in 1992/93).

The Project is an important part of the public face of ACON and liaises with the community sector as well as state, national and international organisations involved in resources production.

AFAO National Treatments Project

The National Treatments Project is a community-based organisation that provides easy-to-understand information about the various forms of therapies used by PLWHA's. The Project is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing and Community Services.

The principal objectives of the Project are to:

- Collect, interpret and distribute information on treatments to PLWHA's, their friends, carers, service providers and doctors
- Empower PLWHA's and their carers to make partnership decisions about the treatment options which are currently available
- Act as an advocate on behalf of people with HIV/AIDS on treatment issues, clinical trials and drug accessibility

The past 12 months has seen the Treatments Project become more involved in treatment issues internationally as well as in Australia. Some of the major achievements over this period have included:

- Nine issues of the *HIV Herald*, a publication designed to provide treatments news in an Australian context to over 3200 subscribers
- Four issues of the *HIV Briefs*, which address specific treatments issues
- The publication of the first specialised booklet, *A Guide to Clinical Trials*, which has been designed to assist people who are making decisions around taking part in clinical trials
- The provision of numerous articles on HIV/AIDS treatments issues for a range of publications including the gay media, the *National AIDS Bulletin*, *CNN News*, etc
- Involvement in the development of policies at a national level through the AFAO Treatments Policy Working Group and through similar organisations at the state level
- Community representatives on a number of treatments committees including ANCA and CHATIN. Participation on the Antiviral and Opportunistic Infection working committees of the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research
- Recognition of the Project at an international level. It has been invited to take up a core group position on the International Clinical Trials Directory called *Contact*. It has also negotiated to be the Australian agent for the *National AIDS Manual* from the United Kingdom

There is much more work in progress to make information resourcing easier for all people requiring news on HIV/AIDS treatments issues.

National Legal Project Report Advocacy

Over the past year the Legal Officer has provided an advice and casework service to clients across Australia. In 1992/93 the Project handled 602 enquires, many of which resulted in the opening of files for follow-up work. Legal assistance is provided by phone or in person.

The Officer provides the ongoing supervision of files conducted by volunteer solicitors with the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre. Presently, the most common areas of inquiry are wills, powers of attorney, treatment decisions and advanced directives, discrimination, breaches of confidentiality and superannuation. In the past year the number of superannuation inquiries has increased significantly. The advent of the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act*, which came into force from 1 March 1995, presents significant new opportunities to challenge discriminatory practices by insurance companies and superannuation funds. Several complaints have already been lodged by the Project under the new legislation.

The position also acts as a resource for other legal practitioners dealing with HIV-related matters and provides legal advice and assistance to other ACON projects and interstate AIDS Council services.

Information and Education

The past 12 months have seen the completion and launching of the *Australian HIV/AIDS Legal Guide* (second edition). The *Guide* represents a major achievement for the Project. It was produced and coordinated by the then Legal Research Officer, David Patterson, and Amanda Lyons. David was also a co-writer.

The Project also produces the *HIV/AIDS Legal Link* newsletter. *Link* has grown into a comprehensive 20 page quarterly detailing law and policy developments in the area of HIV. Its new format is designed to mirror and compliment the *Legal Guide*. Its current print run is 700 copies and these are widely distributed throughout Australasia, South East Asia and the Pacific. The Project coordinates the collection and editing of articles and also writes about a third of each edition.

Geoffrey Bloom, who temporarily filled the position of Legal Research Officer, was heavily involved in lobbying for the proposed Health Care Complaints Bill, in association with a broad coalition of community services. Most of that group's recommendations have been incorporated into the Bill.

The Legal Project also plays an active role in ACON's Legal Working Group, including organising this year's successful NSW Law Week on Euthanasia.

The Legal Project is currently undertaking a Confidentiality and the Law Project, designed to assist

organisations attempting to address the issue of confidentiality and HIV. The Project will produce guidelines for use by community based and other agencies, together with a poster aimed at promoting confidentiality as an issue. These resources will be available from January 1994. The Project is also focusing on training workers to develop their own policy, as agencies will benefit as much from considering the issues as from actually adopting a policy.

Simon Donohoe
INPU Manager



HOW TO USE THE
• N • S • W •
A I D S
L I B R A R Y
N E T W O R K

AIDS Library Network brochure produced this year.

Community Development Unit

The Community Development Unit aims to achieve ACON's mission by resourcing affected individuals to develop their own processes for social change through a sense of community and common goals.

In January the Unit, along with the Peer Education, moved into offices at 38 Oxford Street. This caused considerable delays for the establishment of new projects, disruption and stress in the Unit at the time.

Rural Project

The Rural Project aims to minimise the negative impact of HIV/AIDS on gay men and other MSM's living in rural NSW by developing and encouraging networks of HIV positive and negative gay men who can take on HIV/AIDS issues at a local level. Project workers Nik Andronis and Nigel Carrington have had a busy and productive 12 months.

Peer Education Training Workshops

Six Peer Education Training Workshops were conducted in 1993/94 with 129 participants completing the course. Details of the specific aims of the workshop and evaluation results are available on request.

Expanded networks

Many country gay networks have been consolidated or expanded with the influence and support of the Project. Ten networks now produce regular newsletters which raise local HIV/AIDS issues. Communication between them is now occurring and joint social events are becoming more regular and well attended.

008 Telephone Line

A free 008 service is promoted through newsletters, beat stickers and word of mouth. This has been an important point of access for gay men and other MSM's to get accurate and personally relevant information. We have also provided men with information about local social and support networks.

Publicity and Promotion

Conference presentations were made to the Fifth National AIDS Conference and to the First National Conference on the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS and an article on the Peer Education Training workshops appeared in the *National AIDS Bulletin* in May 1993.

Re-orientating Health Services

Many regional health services providers have visited or made contact with the Project, aiming to improve their accessibility to gay men and other MSM's. We have supported the establishment of Health Department positions to outreach to gay men and MSM's through sharing ideas on job descriptions and assistance in promoting these vacancies through our communication networks.

Beats Outreach

Development of extensive volunteer based beats outreach is supported through specific modules of the Peer Education Training Workshop. A beat sticker designed specifically for rural areas was produced by the Project and has been widely distributed. Calls on our 008 line have highlighted the effectiveness of the stickers.

Anti-Discrimination Worker

A 12 month Anti-discrimination Project, funded by the Commonwealth, also forms part of the Rural Project. This Project aims to identify high HIV prevalence areas in rural NSW and to inform, educate, advocate and resource people with HIV about issues in relation to discrimination. Project worker Andrew Morgan works within the Project's philosophy and fits into existing communication networks and other already established infrastructures.

Newsletter

Funded by a short-term grant, part-time Project worker Crispin Rice has been developing the structures, systems and volunteer base that will leave us with an ongoing newsletter to link all the peer education trainees and relevant Health Department workers across the state. Two editions of the newsletter have been published so far and response has been very positive.

Emerging Issues

With lack of certainty of the future of HIV Study Grants Program, a source of funding for the fairly expensive travel costs associated with this particularly successful project activity is now in question. We have made a submission to the Health Department to cover this shortfall and expect to hear of its success towards the end of this calendar year.

Significant debate has ensued from diverse quarters about the priority areas in HIV/AIDS education. There has been an increasing call from some researchers for AIDS education to target non-gay identifying MSM's and challenges to the use of community attachment strategy in educating these men. We feel that community attachment strategies are not well understood and are being interpreted as "empire building" of the gay ghetto, but we maintain that these strategies (as outlined in various papers by Garry Dowsett and others from Macquarie University AIDS Unit) are appropriate and successful for behaviour change and maintenance for gay and non-gay identifying MSM's. Our challenge will be to promote the relevance and effectiveness of these strategies.

Venues Project

The Venues Project aims to assist in the establishment and maintenance of a community standard of safe sex and safe injecting practices as a means of minimising HIV transmission. The Project works with gay businesses and community organisations to assist owners, managers and organisers to incorporate safe sex/safe injecting and HIV services promotion at their venues and events.

Project worker Matt Toomey had a particularly hectic, yet productive, year and is currently seconded to AFAC to implement their National Sauna Project.

Much of the routine work in the Project has involved ensuring gay bars, clubs, saunas and back rooms have up-to-date and appropriate posters and pamphlets on display. In earlier years considerable time was spent in ordering and delivering cheaply sourced condoms and lubricant to saunas and other sex on premises venues. With astute negotiating and a new level of competition between both condom and lubricant manufacturers we have been able to assist 90% of these venues to order their supplies independently, freeing up the Project's time to be more strategic in its community development work.

Important achievements in the Project in 1992/93 included:

- Negotiating the installation of lubricant dispensers in all Sydney saunas, as well as many other sex on premises venues
- Sourcing condoms and lube vending machines (most commercial machines vend condoms only) and promoting these to many gay pubs who have installed them on our advice
- Initiating the design of 15 different safe paks for particular parties and events. In most cases the costs of printing and contents have been met by sponsors who have included their advertising on the safe pak

The Project has traditionally been charged with the organisation of a number of tasks that will now come under the responsibilities of newly funded gay community programs. Examples of these include community event needle and syringe exchange (now with Gay & Lesbian Injecting Drug Use Project), Safe Sex Sluts (now with Venues Outreach Project) and safe pak design consultation (now with Resource Development). These new projects will allow Venues to re-focus on gay community business negotiations. In the new financial year we will be able to catch up with what seems to be a flourishing gay business environment and broaden our target to businesses such as guest houses and travel companies.

Annual Campaign

The Annual Campaign's broad purpose is to reinforce gay community standards of safe sex, safe drug use, health maintenance behaviour, support to HIV positive people and to congratulate the community on its sustained response to HIV/AIDS.

For the first time this year ACON has been able to appoint a part-time Campaign Planning Officer on a permanent basis. Along with many other projects in the Unit, recruitment was delayed while extra office space was located. This led to a later-than-usual launch of the 1993 campaign.

The Annual Campaign invariably receives more community scrutiny than any other ACON project. Its development process is also extremely important if we are to develop a sense of community ownership of the campaign and it is important that it is not seen as a "message sent down from on high".

Our research this year suggested that a tougher, grittier campaign would be more in line with the community's mood. This year's campaign started with a "teaser" with the theme "Let's face it together", enabling us to have some product ready for the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade and Party.

This component was quite useful in eliciting opinion from a broad range of people into the campaign proper. Its images focused on four major themes: safe sex, safe injecting, HIV related grief and loss and community strength.

In line with action research outcomes in various education projects, our safe sex message this year highlighted the importance of using a water based lubricant with condoms. The "Grief & Loss" poster included images from the Candlelight Memorial and was the first time this aspect of the impact of HIV in our community was acknowledged and represented. The safe injecting poster created quite a bit of controversy in its up front depiction of two gay men sharing the injecting experience. We decided it was important to target this message at people at risk of sharing needles, so it was important not to show people injecting in

isation. Focus test feedback from the target group (e.g. from gay men who inject) was extremely positive with quotes like "beyond the amputated arm". This element of the campaign was not approved by the Aids Bureau and was eventually funded through money raised in the community.

These images were reproduced on postcards, t-shirts and in full page ads in the gay community press. Another important element was the community launch of the campaign at the Midnight Shift, attended by around 700 people. A report on the evaluation of this year's Annual Campaign is being finalised and will be available by mid-November on request.

Gay and Lesbian Injecting Drug Use Project

This Project commenced in April 1993 after protracted delays in establishing office accommodation for ACON's Community Development and Peer Education Units. It aims to develop the capacity of the lesbian and gay communities to effectively address injecting and other drug issues and to minimise the transmission and adverse impact of HIV and other blood borne infections on gay men and lesbians who inject.

Until July 1993, the Project took on a number of important establishment tasks. These included reviewing ACON's existing needle and syringe exchange, ordering stocks and implementing stock control, developing workplans for outreach and community development initiatives and promoting the new Project with other agencies in the field.

In its first three months the project distributed 2666 syringes to a total of 45 new and 116 regular clients (78 male and 28 female), resulting in 790 minutes of direct client contact.

The establishment of ACON's Community Needle and Syringe Exchange at an information booth inside the 1993 Sleaze Ball was a very significant achievement. In previous years we provided this service through a mobile unit parked outside the main entrance to the party.

Resource Development

This Project aims to provide high level support and enhance the development of quality printed educational/promotional resources to ACON projects. Part-time Project worker Paul Kearns is responsible for



GLID UP is a new project which commenced in April 1993

the development and implementation of ACON's resource production strategy, including the development and management of our resource production schedule.

The Project works within a Community Development framework and is therefore responsible for developing the skills of project staff and key volunteers in the areas of visual concept, visual literacy and quality layout and design.

It provided direct support to the production of 19 separate resource items from January to June 1993. In that period, two thirds of ACON projects producing printed materials accessed this Project for support. Other important achievements in this project include:

- Staff development in concept development, understanding commonly used terms in print production, focus testing, dealing with printers, obtaining quotes, prioritising budget expenditure and launching/publicising new resources and services
- Development of a calendar of anticipated resource needs of the organisation, including re-releasing and updating previously successful materials
- Skilling key volunteers in the styles of ACON's education and resource production
- Establishing and maintaining a register of volunteers skilled in print design and production and community artists and persons involved in gay media advertising
- Establishing and maintaining a register of businesses and services used by ACON in resource production
- Networking with other agencies and industry professionals involved in resource development
- Developing a coordinated "look" or style to ACON's publications

- Supporting staff, as requested, in developing high quality print resources for the organisation

Deaf Project

This Project ceased receiving government funding in December 1992. Project staff were Colin Allen (Project Officer) and Paula Weber (Interpreter/Clerical Assistant).

Key achievements of the Deaf Project in 1992 were the production of *Three Way Traffic*, a video for deaf clients and counsellors of deaf clients educating on how to use interpreters in the counselling process and *Draftsize*, a comic for young deaf people covering HIV and sexuality issues. Both resources were launched at a glamorous event with the assistance of TV personality Sophie Lee.

The loss of funding for this Project has seriously reduced our abilities to work with deaf clients. We are maintaining a TTY telephone service for deaf people to contact this organisation, and actively supporting a submission in the Health Department to employ a Policy Officer to look at issues of deaf peoples access to a whole range of health services and programs.

Sources of funding

Funding for the Unit comes predominantly from the NSW Health Department through the AIDS Bureau. The Rural Project received research funds through Commonwealth AIDS Research and grant and travel assistance through NSW HIV Study Grants. The Deaf Project was funded by a combination of State and Commonwealth sources. The Unit was also able to organise sponsorship by community businesses of

important gay community resources, such as safe packs and Mardi Gras and Stag's Ball materials.

Michael Lockhart
CDU Manager

ACON's 1993 Annual Campaign was based on the theme "Let's Face It Together"



Finance, Administration and Human Resources Unit

The aim of Finance, Administration Unit is to provide an effective infrastructure which supports ACUN in achieving its mission to bring about an end to the AIDS crisis. It implements and maintains systems which ensure that ACUN runs smoothly. The Unit is made up of the Finance, Human Resources, the Administrative Services Team (which combines reception, clerical support, administrative services, and the ACUN vitamin service) and Volunteer Services.

Finance

The Finance section is responsible for maintaining all financial records for ACUN and for producing the financial statements presented in this report. Additionally, all accounts payable and accounts receivable are handled in the Finance section. During the past year the Finance section upgraded its reporting systems to improve the quality of reports to management and to the Committee.

Human Resources

The Human Resources section is responsible for maintaining all personnel systems related to the paid staff at ACUN. The past year was an especially productive one. Among other achievements, the section introduced a new payroll and human resources system, designed a comprehensive job classification system,

completing the design of a staff appraisal and development system and is in the final stages of producing a new industrial agreement. ACUN also improved staff consultative mechanisms by establishing a Joint Consultative Committee consisting of management and staff. As an Occupational Health & Safety Committee was established and this has instigated improvements to air-conditioning and office environments.

Administrative Services Team

The Administrative Services Team is responsible for the reception areas in Goulburn and Oxford Streets, clerical support duties, maintaining equipment, vehicles, and buildings and for vitamin sales to clients. During the past year, the AST underwent a comprehensive re-organisation in an effort to streamline services provided to

ACUN staff, including designating initial and secondary responsibility for the large number of functions they serve. The major achievements of the Team included the refurbishment and expansion of the Sydney Resource Centre to Oxford Square, implementing the Spectrum direct dial telephone system, producing a comprehensive *Administrative Services Guide* and partially upgrading the computer network to Novell Netware.

PAID STAFF	AT 30TH JUNE 1992	AT 30TH JUNE 1993
Permanent Staff	90	128
Casual Staff	9	12
Staff Recruited	27	53
Staff Resignations	31	30
TOTAL NUMBER EMPLOYED DURING YEAR	167	218

ACON Vitamin Service

In 1992/93 the Administrative Services Team worked hard to promote the Vitamin Service. In consultation with the Practitioners Group, the product range was greatly expanded, especially the range of food supplements. These efforts have resulted in sales increasing by 30% over the last 12 months.

Volunteer Services

Volunteer Services was a new function introduced to the Unit early in 1993. While ACON has historically made extensive use of volunteers, the new section was

created to formalise the process. A comprehensive volunteer strategy was adopted by the Committee and Management Team and implementation of the strategy has begun. Even without general advertising, the number of volunteers available to ACON has increased markedly since the introduction of this program and volunteers were invaluable in activities such as the Candylight Rally and the Hand in Hand fundraiser.

Kevin Golding
FAHRU Manager

The Guide to Administrative Services of ACON

First edition
August 1993

The Administrative Services Team (AST) revised and streamlined many of its services this year, culminating in the production of this guide for staff reference.

Administrative Services Team

Western Sydney Unit

The Western Sydney Unit was set up in Blacktown in late 1992 and supports the work of the Sydney Beats Project, an Education Officer and a Youth Peer Education Officer.

The office is set to grow over the coming months. When the Beats Review (see below) is completed, additional Beats Project Officers will be appointed. The CSN coordinator for Western Sydney will also soon be based in the office.

We are currently finalising a performance agreement with Wentworth Area Health Service to conduct an MSM Outreach Project. This Project is part-time and will focus on reaching gay men and other men who have sex with men (MSM's) who live in the plains region around Penrith. This position will liaise with local sex and commercial venues and HIV/AIDS related services, as well as set up a "hot line" offering confidential support and referral advice for MSM's living in and around Penrith.

The arrangement with Wentworth AHS developed from a needs assessment conducted by it and ACQN. As such, the Project marks an important milestone in non-government and public sector collaboration in the continued effort to educate people about HIV/AIDS.

Education Project

The Education Project has operated for ten months and in that time the Project Officer has made contact with local networks of gay men and developed relationships with sex on premises venues and sex shops, local gay social organisations and key people in community networks. The Officer also helps the groups to run workshops, social gatherings and distribute printed resources. The Project has also made contact with GPs and other health care providers in the west who see members of the target group, to find out more about the needs of these people and to assist in recruitment for education work.

Building links with the target group

Building links has involved the gradual development of rapport with gay men who do not usually have ready access to HIV/AIDS education and support services. The target group is also widely dispersed in the west and some of these men are very cautious about new services. We have also developed working relationships with local gay networks which are often experiencing stress due to homophobia and the

psychosocial effects of HIV/AIDS. The development of links with these networks is a slow process, but necessary for effective education with the target group.

Consulting and sharing knowledge

The Education Officer has also been approached recently to provide advice and support to project officers from the Western Sydney Area Health Service to conduct education work with MSM's who are not gay identifying. The worker has also assisted a group of facilitators wanting to conduct lifestyle workshops to combat social isolation for gay men living in the west. These liaisons have lead to the piloting of a safe sex workshop for non-gay MSM's in sex on premises venues and the planning of a residential workshop for gay men living in the west.

HIV Information Nights

A recent initiative has been a HIV Information Evening and Planning Session for HIV positive people living in the west. Based on the outcomes of this meeting, the office will pilot support activities for HIV positive people living in the west over the coming months.

Future education work in the west

Over the next 12 months the education project will:

- Pilot and evaluate group meetings about safe sex and sexuality in different parts of the west
- Develop simple print based education resources, taking into account low literacy levels and cultural meanings relevant to the target group
- Continue to assist other education workers from ACQN and related services to develop their work in the western suburbs
- Maintain social links with key people, networks, venues and commercial operations

Sydney Beats Outreach Project

The Beats Project is one of the longest standing education projects conducted by ACQN. In late 1992 it was relocated to the Western Sydney Unit. A review is currently being conducted which will examine outreach practices in the beat setting, as well as the training and support needs of Beats Outreach Officers.

The review will also consider the objectives, staffing structure and procedures of beats outreach. An outside consultant is conducting the review and is presently looking at recent social research of MSM's, with particular reference to theories of EDV transmission in this group, and is investigating models of practice of other beats outreach projects in Australia and overseas.

ACON staff will also be consulted and the report will make recommendations about re-structuring the Project.

Other Activities of the Unit

Increased community involvement

Since the Western Sydney Office opened, it has had to meet demands beyond the initial goals of education work with gay men living in the west and has come to operate more as a HIV/AIDS resource centre for people living in the west. Various community groups use the premises to hold workshops and to glean support from the ACON staff in an otherwise difficult social environment for gay men and people with HIV/AIDS.

The reputation of the Office has grown through promotion work so that gay men and other MSM's and community members, students, relatives of gay men and people with HIV/AIDS access the service for information and advice.

The NSW Health Minister, Mr Ron Phillips, launched the Office at a ceremony in February 1992. Almost 100 people attended with wide representation from local gay and AIDS related community groups as well as health sector organisations. Since that time the office has held a small number of social events which have been attended by locals. Recently a benefit night was held at the Midnight Factory Office raising over \$1700 for the office, reflecting a growing community interest.

Inter-agency participation

The unit is developing links with local AIDS related services and local city councils, particularly Blacktown and Parramatta. It has instigated a regular meeting of Area Health/HIV/AIDS Coordinators for the three regions in the west

(Western, South-Western, Wentworth), furthering cooperation and coordination of HIV/AIDS education. Beats Project staff have also been called upon to provide consultant and training support for a number of other Health Areas wanting to develop beats outreach programs (e.g. Southern, Central, Northern). Beats Project staff have also initiated joint meetings of Police Gay Liaison Officers working in patrols in the west as a way of furthering the development of effective outreach to MSM's.

Office relocation

Unfortunately, due to road works the office has been asked to move from its current premises by the Blacktown City Council. The staff are searching for new premises at this point in time and it is expected that the office will move in late 1993.

Mark Davis
WSU Manager

MEN TOGETHER
A get-together for gay guys living in Western Sydney



talking about

1 being gay 1 safe sex 1 living in the west

Over 3 nights

A chance to meet other guys, make some friends and have a good time.

Ring Peter or Tim for more details

ACON 8311899
WESTERN SYDNEY EDUCATION OFFICE

Men Together was a pilot workshop for gay identified men who live in Western Sydney. Topics included talking about being gay, safe sex and living in the west. Twelve men from areas like Penrith and Parramatta attended.

A CON BRANCHES

ACON Hunter

The 1992/93 period has been a time of significant change and development for all at ACON Hunter. Increased workloads have characterised all projects, changes in the organisational structure have created improved reporting mechanisms and closer liaison with, and recognition by, ACON Management and Council members and the ACON Hunter Management Committee adopted a resolution to become an Advisory Committee, with a transfer of management responsibilities on 26 August 1992.

The community profile of ACON Hunter has improved greatly as a result of various education initiatives, as well as the coordination of World AIDS Day activities throughout the Hunter and involvement in a range of issues involving the Hunter Area Health Service (HAHS).

ACON Hunter has continued to provide a base for a growing number of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA's) who have become more actively involved in the activities of the Branch. Developing further resources and support to enable increased involvement is a high priority.

Education Projects and Services

Beats Project

The Beats Project has continued to expand its services to the Upper Hunter and Central Coast areas and has increased the area of outreach by 50%.

The Project has also continued to act as a vital point of referral for testing, counselling and other services. In the past 12 months, 630 beat contacts were made, with an increase of 74% in the last six months compared to the previous half of the year.

Other notable achievements include:

- Approval from Port Stephens, Cessnock, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Scone Shire Councils to extend the Beat Outreach into their areas
- Draft Hunter Beats Staff Training Manual completed
- Design of Safe Sex Kit for Male Sex Workers
- Continued liaison with Hunter police districts
- Assisting in ACON Branch activities including education for developmentally delayed people, Safe Summer Safari Campaign, World AIDS Day Activities, University and TAPE displays and Safe Pak design

- Contribution of monthly articles to a local gay magazine
- Commencing a Needle and Syringe Exchange for beat users.

Youth Peer Education

Three successful groups for gay and bisexual men under 26 have been held, with a total of 18 young people participating. The groups aim to promote personal skills in safer sex negotiation, increase social support and provide a supportive environment in which the young men can explore the benefits of their sexuality.

Drop-in Evening

This program, held once a fortnight, was well attended this year. Semi-structured workshops on specific topics, mostly concerning lifestyle issues, health and relationships were presented by individuals with expertise in particular areas.

Community Education and Information

A particular focus of this Unit over the past 12 months has been to raise the issue of universal education programs that recognise the needs of PLWHA's and young gay and lesbian people, without isolating or further stigmatising them.

The 1992/93 Safe Pak campaign featured four designs and targeted safe sex behaviours and drug using practices. A series of meetings with venues and gay groups to outline our services and commencement as a Needle and Syringe Exchange Outlet were also notable activities, as was the recent initiative to provide condoms and lube at cost to venues, groups and sex workers.

Community Education has continued to a range of groups such as youth workers, university and college students, prisoners, counsellors, welfare organisations and community carers. Information kits and brochures are supplied with an increasing focus on our library and related research materials (over 140 office contacts).

ACON Hunter coordinated World AIDS Day events and activities throughout the region, with over 57 participating groups and organisations. A high level of community awareness of HIV related issues, services and involvement was achieved as a result. An ongoing HIV education program has been conducted for developmentally disabled people in a private institution.

The Educator/Counsellor, in conjunction with the CSN Coordinators, runs monthly HIV/AIDS education evenings for CSN carers, PLWHA's and other interested community members.

HIV Education Project

The HIV Educator is providing a broad-based education strategy and has established three important projects:

- information workshops for complementary therapists and clients
- visualisation and "self-imaging" workshops
- HIV peer support networks

Project updates have been published monthly in the local gay magazine *Preference* and through the ACON Hunter newsletter.

A series of posters have been commissioned in collaboration with Design 4 students at Newcastle University as part of their degree requirement. These will be exhibited over World AIDS Day. Successful Hunter-relevant poster designs chosen from the display will be printed and circulated.

Support Services

Community Support Network

CSN has continued to provide support services to PLWHA's, their partners, family and friends. Services are provided at home, in the Immunology Ward, John Hunter Hospital and MacKillop House. This support is provided by recruitment, training and rostering volunteer carers. Over the past year CSN has supported 68 clients, with 42 active carers providing 2113 shifts totalling 8480 hours of direct care. Twenty-three new client referrals were received during this period.

After identifying a need for additional carers, a CSN Carer Information Night was held in April 1993 and was attended by 60 people. Carers receive support at monthly Network Nights, as well as on an individual basis.

A CSN coordinated Quilt Project resulted in seven Quilt Panels being dedicated and displayed at Christ Church Cathedral for World AIDS Day 1992.

The CSN Hunter Subcommittee has established working guidelines for itself, as well as a Carer's Support Policy and guidelines for carer's rostered at MacKillop House.

Counselling/Support

The Branch continues to provide counselling and support on a wide range of issues for those living with, or affected by, HIV. Ongoing support and counselling has been provided either in person or over the telephone.

Counselling requests covered relationship difficulties, sexual identity, parental concerns regarding gay children, people with HIV and partners, bereavement issues, discrimination and assault, recent diagnosis issues and disclosure of HIV status.

There has been a further increase in the demand for counselling by the gay community and young people needing to discuss sexuality issues.

HIV Testing

The HIV Antibody Testing and Counselling Service continues to operate each Wednesday morning between 9.30am and 1.00pm. ACON Hunter successfully retained this vital service, which was under threat of closure. Provided by the HAHS Sexual Health Clinic, it is the only outreach service operating in the area. Regular advertising has proven effective in attracting people aware of their at-risk status and feedback about the service has been excellent.

Future Directions

- Development of a HIV Education campaign for PLWHA's, including a HIV Peer Support Group and related workshops (e.g. self-imaging)
- Development of a trained Hunter Branch Volunteer Team
- Continued production of a regular monthly branch newsletter, with increased circulation to the Upper Hunter
- Continuation of an advertising campaign to promote ACON Hunter/CSN services, including carer's training, HIV testing services and youth support groups
- Training of gay people from Hunter to become peer group facilitators for workshops and courses
- Coordination and extension of World AIDS Day activities for 1993
- Expansion of CSN hours to cover projected client requests, volunteer carer training and support
- Continuing development of a Hunter based Quilt Project
- Poster production for PLWHA support and education campaigns
- Continued involvement and advocacy in strategic planning for HIV/AIDS services provided by HAHS, including clinical, education, sexual health, needle exchange, etc

- Extension of the Beats Project to the Central Coast under contract agreement with Central Coast Area Health Service.
- Expanding ACON Hunter's resource base to include complementary therapy, sexual identity, bereavement and HIV research information
- Continued liaison with the University of Newcastle regarding education and research programs

Acknowledgments

The Staff and Committee of ACON Hunter acknowledge the continued support of the following groups:

Anti-discrimination Board, City of Newcastle, Church Cathedral, Clinical Immunology Unit and Ward (JIB), Coastal

Connections, Craig Payten Memorial Support Group, Gay and Lesbian Information & Support Service, Gaywaves Collective, Guys on Wheels Bicycle Club, Hunter AIDS Lobby, Hunter Area Health Service, Hunter Centre for Health Advancement, Hunter Hospice and Palliative Care Unit, Junction Primary School, Karumah Day Centre, MacKillop House, Needle and Syringe Exchange Service, Newcastle Media Club, Newcastle Motorcycle Club, Newcastle Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Group, Preference Publications, Sexual Health Clinic (RNH), Sotiron Social Group

Kevin Paton

Hunter Branch Manager

ACON Illawarra

1992/1993 has been a challenging period for ACON Illawarra. We have moved premises and have experienced considerable growth and expansion at a very rapid rate.

Thanks must go to both Anne Malcolm and Peter Sunmans, without whose advice, support, supervision and direction in the past year our Branch would not have enjoyed the success it has.

- Image, accessibility and relationship with community

The move from a one room office at the Port Kembla Sexual Health Clinic improved the accessibility of our services. Requests for information and demands on our services have since increased 200%.

We have worked very hard at improving our relationship with the Illawarra gay, lesbian and general communities. The number of donations and support we have received has improved as a result. Most of the furniture at our centre has been donated, community groups have organised many benefit nights and Unity, the local gay and lesbian support group, and the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service hold their meetings at our venue.

Education

Beats Outreach Education Project

The Project has concentrated geographically within the Illawarra region, but some work has been done

outside the area. Negotiations are still under way with Shoalhaven Council to stencil local beats and a two week exploration of the Macarthur region has been completed.

The Beats team has made over 300 contacts, with interactions still focusing on direct safe sex and safe injecting education. The project has moved towards building deeper rapport with the men they meet, linking them with other services and working on safe sex negotiation skills.

A new direction for the Illawarra will be running beat workshops, "Beat Meet", using a similar model to the ACON Rural Project Peer Educator Training.

Rural Outreach Project (one year grant)

The geographical focus of this Project is specifically on the Shoalhaven region, the aim being a initial needs assessment to find out how men who have sex with men (MSM's), gay men and HIV positive people in the region access HIV/AIDS information, whether our target group access local HIV/AIDS related services and the extent of their HIV/AIDS knowledge.

The outcome will be a description of the Project's findings, with recommendations for improving accessibility to accurate HIV/AIDS information and care and support services, as well as a local service directory.

Speakers' Bureau (volunteer)

Seven speakers were trained in October 1992 and have been a wonderful addition to our branch, providing 186 hours of education. The focus of the talks have been HIV/AIDS information, safe sex and safe injecting, disease progression and service talks, as well as an evening workshop on homophobia.

Special mention has to be made of two speakers, Glen Barrington and Helen Power, both of whom have shown an incredible amount of initiative and dedication to the Project.

Care and Support

Community Support Network (volunteer)

Within a year CSN has grown from 39 to 75 carers and has provided 4000 caring hours, compared to 400 during the previous 12 months.

Understandably, we are now solidly working on improving our carer support structure and will be implementing facilitated peer based support groups for all active carers.

Another future directive is improving community and service provider understanding of CSN services, as a current concern is the fact that approximately 80% of our clients are self-referred.

HIV/AIDS Support and Strategies Project (volunteer)

Since the beginning of 1993 a weekly drop-in night has been available for Illawarra PLWtLs. Attendance

has been low but steady with an average of five people each week.

The Project is investigating other ways of accessing and providing support.

Counselling and Referral

Support has been provided to 126 people in matters such as dealing with HIV, serodiscordant relationships, sexuality issues, bereavement issues, coping with working and living with HIV/AIDS, requests for priority housing, requests for financial assistance and referrals to the Dobby Childsmith Foundation.

Massage (volunteer)

A regular massage day has been available at ACON Illawarra since December 1992 and we also do home calls.

Resources Management

It has been difficult to constantly adjust to change over the past 12 months and both human and financial resources have felt stretched at times. The coming year will be less focused on growth, more focused on consolidation and improving existing services.

Daniel Madoddu
Illawarra Branch Manager

Northern Rivers Branch

ACON Northern Rivers offers care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWtLs) in the Northern Rivers region of NSW. We develop, provide and evaluate education programs to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in our community and alleviate the discrimination faced by PLWtLs in our region.

ACON Northern Rivers relies heavily on volunteer support. Duties range from management committee members, administration assistance, emotional care and support for PLWtLs and

education work. There are far too many people to mention, but we thank them all for their contribution throughout 1992/93.

As a result of the hard work by staff, committee members and volunteers over the past few years, 1992/93 was a year of many exciting developments, including:

- Moving into new premises, giving us both space and privacy. We now have the chance

- To expand our services to operate a variety of support groups on site
- Purchasing two two-bedroom houses with the Department of Housing for PLWHA's to be used as medium term housing. We have established priority guidelines to ensure access will be based on those with greatest need
- A full-time care and support position, which is being job shared by workers with a range of skills within the welfare and nursing fields
- Instigating home assessment visits by HIV Care Support workers. This involves going into the homes of PLWHA's to assess their needs and offer ongoing support and referral to other agencies
- Completion of a 40 hour Emotional Care course that will link PLWHA's with people with communication and listening skills. This enables those who are socially isolated by their HIV status, or through cultural or physical isolation, to access a person who is sensitive towards their needs
- A fundraising film night at Lismore Cinema with a showing of *A Night with Claude*. The event raised \$3000 for the HIV Wellness Fund
- Successfully gained a \$5000 grant from the AIDS Trust to finance the travel costs of our volunteer carers
- The adoption of an advisory body role by the Committee. They will participate in the development of aims, objectives and strategies for the branch
- An informal night with naturopath Peter de Ruyter. This was a closed group for

PLWHA's asking Peter questions regarding treatment, prevention and complementary therapies

- Provision of material to over 60 PLWHA's in our region
- A Grief and Loss workshop for people affected by HIV/AIDS in our region
- Conducting a number of HIV Orientation Weekends for the general community and those wishing to volunteer their services in the HIV/AIDS field
- Conducting a Beats Project within our region and its outlying areas
- Liaising with local police to give them an understanding of ACON's beats work and to stop harassment of beat users by the police
- Production of local stickers for the "A leopard may have to change its spots to survive" campaign. Each sticker can have new messages placed on it each visit by beats workers, without having to renew the sticker
- A variety of training programs for mainstream organisations regarding HIV/AIDS orientation, cross-infection uses and sensitivity to issues for PLWHA's. These services included child care
- Liaising with staff from other community health services from isolated regions regarding gay and bisexual issues and informing them of ACON Northern River's projects and resources. Each centre is putting up gay posters and leaving pamphlets in public access areas, organisations, health services, educational institutions and religious groups

Sally Boyd
Northern Rivers Branch Manager

Mid North Coast Branch

ACON Mid-North Coast has undergone several staff changes during the 1992/93 period. The Branch Coordinator, Marilyn Marks resigned in September 1992 and Sharyn Dilosa was officially appointed Branch Coordinator three months later.

The Educator, Matthew Gillett, resigned in August and was replaced by Henry Von Dousa in December 1992. Unfortunately, Henry was on board for only a

few months when a personal crisis led to his resignation in February 1993. David Oram was appointed as Branch Educator the following May.

During 1993, the Branch was able to employ two Jobskills participants for a period of six months. David Newcombe produced and distributed our branch newsletter and compiled a Resource Directory of HIV/

AIDS services and service providers in the Mid-North Coast area.

Judy Margerison worked as our Volunteer Coordinator, organising the training course and coordinating volunteer activities which included promotion stalls, fundraising activities, and care and support.

Major Achievements

Even with the staff changes and a lack of resources, ACON Mid-North Coast has continued to provide education, information, advocacy and referral services to our target group.

Some of our major achievements during the 1992/93 period included:

- A "Rickline" service which was conducted throughout the entire MNC area for six months. It was operated by trained volunteers every Thursday and Friday between 3:00 and 9:00pm and averaged six calls per week.
- A third Volunteer Training Program was conducted in May with ten volunteers successfully trained.
- An emergency food supply source which was established for PLWHA's who were either experiencing financial difficulties or having problems cooking for themselves. The food included some wonderful home-made soups prepared by one of our volunteers.
- Establishment of a support group for carers, partners and families of PLWHA's in March 1993.
- Compilation of a Resource Directory of HIV/AIDS services and service providers in the Mid North Coast area.
- Production and distribution of a Branch newsletter on a regular basis.
- Free massages and Reiki sessions organised for PLWHA's who can not afford to access these services elsewhere.
- A successful "SafeSummer" campaign which was conducted in conjunction with the NSW Department of Health Safe Summer Safari van.

Education

Providing education services in the Mid-North Coast area is a huge job because of the distances involved (over 300 km north to south). As a result, we tend to use a "Train the Trainer" approach to our education programs and encourage peer education and the establishment of peer support networks.

Our priority has been, and remains, gay men and MSM's but we have also provided education to health care workers, Department of Housing staff, injecting drug users and "at risk" youth, amongst others.

Statistics

- The number of people accessing the Branch for education, information, advocacy or referral has increased from an average of 64 contacts per month in 1992 to 140 in 1993.
- The number of PLWHA's contacting the Branch has increased from four contacts per month in 1992 to 36 in 1993.
- Similarly, the number of injecting drug users approaching the Branch has increased from 29 per month in 1992 to 49 in 1993.

These kinds of increases have meant that staff and volunteers have been extremely busy and our resources have been stretched to their limits.

Future Directions

We have arranged to have a team from ACON Sydney visit to conduct a Group Facilitators workshop with local PLWHA's, their friends and carers. As a result, we hope to help these people establish a support group in this area.

We are also starting to use cassettes to record up-to-date information about HIV/AIDS for our PLWHA's who have low literacy skills.

This year our highest education priorities will be "at risk" youth and rural MSM's who do not identify as gay. Due to the high population of Aborigines in the Mid-North Coast area, we will be endeavouring to access as many Aboriginal MSM's as possible.

Sharyn DiLosa
Mid North Coast Branch Manager

A CON FINANCIAL REPORTS

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AS AT 30 JUNE 1993

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 1993

	Notes	1993 \$	1992 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash	2	927,575	974,272
Receivables	3	274,703	274,661
Inventories	4	9,266	4,722
Other	5	43,210	25,509
Total Current Assets		1,254,754	279,164
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Property Plant & Equipment	6	314,646	271,944
Total Non Current Assets		314,646	271,944
TOTAL ASSETS		1,569,400	1,551,108
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors and Borrowings	7	532,865	357,746
Other	8	669,654	743,588
Total Current Liabilities		1,202,519	1,107,334
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors and Borrowings	9	36,228	48,689
Total Non Current Liabilities		36,228	48,689
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,238,747	1,150,023
NET ASSETS		\$ 330,653	\$ 401,085
ACCUMULATED FUNDS			
Accumulated funds at beginning of year		401,085	419,466
Current Year Surplus/(Deficit)		(70,432)	(18,381)
TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS		\$ 330,653	\$ 401,085

INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1993

	Notes	1993 \$	1992 \$
INCOME			
Grants Received	10	6,230,938	5,125,679
Less: Grants Unexpended	8	653,844	731,588
		5,577,094	4,394,091
Add:			
Donations		174,268	142,149
Events and Activities/Fund Raising		141,526	119,559
Interest		68,943	88,920
Sales of Vitamins		65,501	51,538
Other Income	12	110,041	103,149
		560,279	505,315
TOTAL INCOME		6,137,373	4,899,406
EXPENDITURE			
Accommodation		733,238	595,077
Audit Fees		13,183	12,925
Board and Council		13,707	36,088
Cost of Goods Sold		62,359	86,947
Finance		10,860	18,753
Fund Raising	13	165,023	60,754
Office Supplies		324,090	159,389
Payroll		3,680,408	2,779,908
Post Freight Telecommunications		267,334	173,171
Program and Services		409,212	512,573
Publicity and Promotion		157,890	130,271
Specialist Services		47,562	59,175
Travel and Representation		322,939	292,756
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		6,207,805	4,917,787
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		\$ (70,432)	\$ (18,381)

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1993

NOTE 1 - STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with Statements of Accounting Concepts, applicable Accounting Standards and the applicable disclosure requirements of Schedule 5 of the Corporations Regulations with the exceptions where noted:

(a) Basis of Preparation

The accounts have been prepared on an accrual basis and on the basis of historical costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

(b) Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated on a straight line basis so as to write off the net cost of each depreciable non-current asset over its expected useful life.

(c) Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are included at cost or at independent valuation and are depreciated over the estimated useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Only assets of substance and of material value have been capitalised and subject to depreciation.

(d) Accounts Receivable - Grants

The council prepares accounts on an accrual basis, therefore all funds to be committed for the financial year have been recorded as income for that year.

(e) Leases

Assets which are acquired under leases deemed to be "finance leases", that is, leases which effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and benefits incident to the ownership of the leased assets, are capitalised as fixed assets.

Finance leases are capitalised by recording an initial asset and liability equal to the present value of the minimum lease payments including any guaranteed residual values. Leased assets are amortised over their expected useful lives using the straight line method. Lease payments are allocated between interest expense and lease liability.

Lease expenditure relating to leases deemed to be "operating leases" is expensed as incurred. Operating lease commitments outstanding at balance date include guaranteed residual values.

	1993	1992
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
NOTE 2 - CASH		
CASH AT BANK		
Commonwealth Bank		
Sydney	49,665	25,242
Lismore (North Coast)	1,373	3,072
Newcastle (Hunter)	2,194	2,417
Coffs Harbour	3,627	4,441
Illawarra	47	-
	56,906	35,172
CASH ON DEPOSIT		
Australian European Finance Corporation	852,648	927,650
Commonwealth Bank	14,721	8,400
	867,369	936,050
CASH ON HAND		
Petty Cash	3,300	3,050
TOTAL CASH	\$ 927,575	\$ 974,272
NOTE 3 - RECEIVABLES		
Government and Other Grants Committed	\$ 274,703	\$ 274,661
NOTE 4 - INVENTORIES		
Stock on Hand - at cost	\$ 9,266	\$ 4,722
NOTE 5 - OTHER		
Prepaid Expenses	32,097	15,066
Deposits - Utilities	11,113	10,443
	\$ 43,210	\$ 25,509

	1993 \$	1992 \$
NON CURRENT ASSETS		
NOTE 6 - PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT		
1. FURNITURE & FITTINGS		
Furniture & Fittings - At cost	48,819	28,789
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	22,434	15,925
	<hr/> 26,385	<hr/> 12,864
2. OFFICE EQUIPMENT		
Office Equipment - At cost	631,216	523,294
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	356,083	264,273
	<hr/> 275,133	<hr/> 259,021
3. EQUIPMENT UNDER LEASE		
Equipment Under Lease- At cost	13,350	-
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	222	-
	<hr/> 13,128	<hr/> -
4. LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS		
Leasehold Improvements - At cost	3,228	3,228
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	3,228	3,169
	<hr/> -	<hr/> 59
TOTAL PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT	\$ 314,646	\$ 271,944
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
NOTE 7 - CREDITORS AND BORROWINGS		
Trade Creditors	212,568	130,986
Accrued Expenses	43,408	211,177
Lease Liability	20,521	15,583
Provisions	256,368	196,263
TOTAL CREDITORS AND BORROWINGS	\$ 532,865	\$ 357,746

CURRENT LIABILITIES (CONTINUED)

	1993	1992
	\$	\$
NOTE 8 - OTHER		
UNEXPENDED GRANTS		
Unexpended grants represent the total of grants unexpended during the period. The balance of these grants will be carried forward to the next period when the relevant expenses can then be properly matched to the period in which they are incurred.		
GRANTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:		
NSW Government	319,828	466,344
Federal Government & Dept of Health & Community Services	104,770	81,344
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations Inc.	106,212	121,841
AIDS Trust of Australia	26,799	31,270
SAAP	11,488	-
Other Grants	84,747	30,789
Total of Committed but Unexpended Grants Received (See Note 13)	\$ 653,844	\$ 731,588
ADD: GRANTS IN ADVANCE		
Federal Government	15,810	12,000
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES - OTHER	\$ 669,654	\$ 743,588
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		
NOTE 9 - CREDITORS AND BORROWINGS		
1. FINANCE LEASE		
Finance leases capitalised and included in Plant and Equipment (Note 6)		
LEASE COMMITMENT		
Not later than one year	29,232	26,556
Later than one year but not later than two years	29,232	26,556
Later than two years but not later than five years	12,163	33,195
MINIMUM LEASE PAYMENTS	70,627	86,307
Deduct Future Finance Charges	13,878	22,035
TOTAL LEASE LIABILITY	56,749	64,272
Less: Current Liability	20,521	15,583
NON CURRENT LIABILITY	\$ 36,228	\$ 48,689

CREDITORS AND BORROWINGS (CONTINUED)

	1993	1992
	\$	\$
2. OTHER LEASE COMMITMENTS		
Aggregate operating lease expenditure contracted for at balance date but not provided for in accounts payable used to obtain motor vehicles for ACCN employees:		
- Not later than one year	52,537	73,565
- Later than one year but not later than two years	20,727	57,733
- Later than two years but not later than five years	-	6,114
	\$ 73,264	\$ 137,412

NOTE 10 - GRANTS RECEIVED

State Government	4,994,144	4,136,011
Federal Government	472,271	406,399
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations Inc.	478,641	471,340
AIDS Trust of Australia	43,270	86,188
HIV Study	37,077	-
Supported Accommodation	62,000	-
Australia Council	10,000	-
Others	133,535	25,741
	\$ 6,230,938	\$ 5,125,679

NOTE 11 - AUDITORS REMUNERATION

Amounts received, or due and receivable by the Auditor for:

Auditing the main and project accounts of		
AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.	12,152	12,125
Other Accounting Services	1,031	800
<hr/>		
	\$ 13,183	\$ 12,925

NOTE 12 - OTHER INCOME

Globe Rental Housing	8,809	6,925
Buyer's Club	1,743	33,162
Consultancy Services	34,427	15,637
Sales of Materials	56,413	39,997
Membership Fees	5,351	4,706
Staff Social Club Fees	3,278	2,722
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$ 110,041	\$ 103,149

	Notes	1993	1992
		\$	\$
NOTE 13 - FUND RAISING EXPENDITURE			
Hand in Hand Party		104,083	58,068
Prior Year Hand in Hand Party		59,901	-
Branches		1,039	2,686
		\$ 165,023	\$ 60,754

**NOTE 14 - STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS FOR
THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1993**

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

Receipts from customers & granting bodies	5,972,045	4,987,378
Payments to suppliers & employees	[5,904,398]	[4,833,170]
Interest received	68,943	88,920
Interest and other costs of finance paid	[4,588]	(18,752)
Net cash from operating activities	3	132,002

CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES

Payment for plant & equipment acquired	(173,046)	64,896
Payment for plant & equipment sold	21,572	-

CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES

Payments reducing lease liability	(27,225)	-
Net cash from financing activities	(27,225)	-
Net increase in cash held	(46,697)	159,480
Cash at the beginning of the year	974,272	814,792
Cash at the end of the year	1	\$ 927,575

Notes	1993	1992
	\$	\$

Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows

1. RECONCILIATION OF CASH

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in banks and investments in money market instruments. Cash at the end of the year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows.

Cash on hand	3,300	3,050
Cash at bank	56,906	35,172
Deposits at call	867,369	936,050
	\$ 927,575	\$ 974,272

2. NON-CASH FINANCING AND INVESTING ACTIVITIES

Plant and Equipment:

During the financial year the company acquired plant and equipment with an aggregate fair value of \$8,405 by means of finance leases. The acquisitions are not reflected in the Statement of Cash Flows. (Actually, the aggregate fair value is \$13,350, but the actual purchase price was \$8,405, because of a trade-in).

3. RECONCILIATION OF NET CASH FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES TO OPERATING PROFIT/(LOSS) AFTER INCOME TAX.

Operating profit/(loss) after income tax	(70,432)	(18,381)
Depreciation and amortisation	113,970	95,956
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
Increase in Receivables	(42)	(40,206)
Increase in Other Current Assets	(17,701)	(8,151)
Increase in Inventory	4,544	473
Increase in Trade Creditors, Accruals & Provisions	183,120	65,865
Decrease in Grants in Advance	(73,934)	141,604
Decrease in Lease Liability	(7,523)	12,784
 Net cash from operating activities	 \$ 132,002	 \$ 224,376

**AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
THE AIDS COUNCIL OF
NEW SOUTH WALES INC.**

I have audited the Income and Expenditure Statement and Balance Sheet of the AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. for the year ended 30 June 1993.

In my opinion, the accounts of the AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. are properly drawn up:

- (a) so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. as at 30 June 1993;
- (b) the accounting records of the organisation for the year ended on that date have been kept in accordance with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act; and
- (c) in accordance with Statements of Accounting Concepts and all applicable Accounting Standards.

KAZZI & ASSOCIATIONS PTY LIMITED

Raymond Kazzi
RAYMOND KAZZI B.Sc CPA
LEVEL 1
125 YORK STREET
SYDNEY NSW 2000
DATED: 22 October 1993.

Summary of Income and Expenditure by Unit and Branch

	Income			Expenditure			Unexpended Grants
	Grants	Non Grants	Total	Project	Salaries	Total	
Care, Nursing & Transport	525,292	31,916	557,008	135,279	355,227	530,546	13,929
Community Development	745,845	49,296	794,931	315,617	308,523	604,149	184,942
Executive Team	239,651	63,623	201,474	40,185	201,687	272,673	63,847
Finance Administration & Human Resources	650,637	137,639	888,256	677,841	420,591	-282,472	(55,427)
HIV Strategy & Support	515,315	46,763	562,083	172,063	305,646	417,312	131,746
Information & National Projects	688,157	62,976	750,035	258,541	478,964	695,505	31,626
Program Evaluation	311,347	7,342	318,659	49,368	139,947	249,542	72,414
Safety & Project Development	358,181	(2,500)	354,676	126,065	134,894	238,986	115,968
Organisational Development Team	137,325	4,075	141,410	12,736	104,961	119,700	40,260
Western Sydney	100,320	19,663	120,000	320,167	80,630	217,925	36,152
ACON Committee Projects	1,200	(33,655)	209,655	126,730	0	304,726	..
Total Sydney Office	4,986,930	-513,722	5,260,592	2,010,456	2,785,795	4,731,634	375,204
Outer West	330,216	10,380	311,116	57,659	229,036	298,675	4,011
Western Branch	104,954	6,393	121,347	21,127	101,634	132,761	22,630
Mid North Coast	157,676	5,176	138,844	52,737	71,094	127,821	10,175
Northern Rivers	255,063	21,331	277,109	75,236	122,195	197,439	70,059
Total Branches	980,245	-40,866	930,337	264,759	529,969	794,707	137,455
Total ACON	5,556,096	664,526	6,220,523	2,275,213	3,258,526	5,533,741	382,675
Other Organisations							
Sex Workers Outreach Project	501,675	2,197	503,672	217,128	297,156	514,725	52,113
Qut Project	10,000	54,777	64,777	28,317	32,887	77,204	6
People Living With AIDS NSW	152,549	0	162,549	65,320	75,100	141,328	21,120

Notes:

a Finance, Administration and Human Resources include Strategy Resource Centre and "Vibrant" Service

b HIV Strategy & Support includes PIs in Fines Fundraising

c Information and National Projects includes WADS Legal Services

d ACON Consulting Projects includes Hand in Hand Dance Party and Campaign Rally

e Qut Project includes Australian Council Grant and funds provided by AIDS Trust

The Layout, Design and Editing of this report was by Ashleigh, Dean and Irony for
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