



APPG AIDS

Newsletter January 2005

News and Updates

Chancellor Gordon Brown on his six day trip to Africa called for a £5.5 billion international plan to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The Chancellor called upon wealthy nations to increase their funding pledges so that countries most affected by HIV/AIDS can make investments in sex education and hospitals and purchase antiretroviral drugs. He also spoke about an initiative which aims to double the current £400 million pounds spent world wide annually on vaccine research and coordinate an international vaccine information system. The Chancellor announced that if such funding increases were realised a vaccine might be possible three years earlier than the current projection of 2020.

The Department for International Development has agreed to extend financial help to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to combat HIV/AIDS following a request from the Department of Economic Affairs in India. The National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) in November last year re-classified Bihar and Uttar Pradesh from “low prevalence states” to “highly vulnerable states”.

Former Harvard Economist Dr Jeffrey Sachs’ Millennium Development Goals’ Report calls for much higher spending on development if the Millennium Goals are to be reached. The self-imposed target of providing 0.7% GNP for development assistance to reach the Millennium Goal to halve poverty has so far only been reached by Denmark, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said the goals of

the project are not utopian but “eminently achievable”.

During Education Question Time

(2 December 2004) Sir Nicholas Winterton MP asked “With one in eight young women in this country infected with Chlamydia, and with a huge increase in the incidence of syphilis and gonorrhoea, will the Government carefully consider the example of the Ugandan Government, who have promoted the ABC campaign to highlight abstinence and faithfulness in sexual relationships? That campaign has resulted in a 75 per cent reduction especially in HIV infection among 15 to 19-year-olds. Cannot we learn something from a developing country in that instance?” Stephen Twigg MP, Minister for Education, answered that he would be happy to examine the evidence from the Ugandan model.

Executive Director for UNAIDS, Peter

Piot, has praised Uganda’s efforts on fighting HIV/AIDS. He said that the delegation that he led had been impressed by the country’s progress including increased access to antiretroviral treatment, and said that other countries “have a lot to learn from Uganda”. He asked the international donor community to provide consistent and long lasting financial support, especially for grassroots health and poverty programmes. Mr Piot pledged UNAIDS’ collaboration with the Ugandan government to improve living conditions, and he called on the country to strengthen existing HIV/AIDS programs and to address sexual violence against women and girls.

EDMs concerning HIV/AIDS tabled since the start of the session in November

- Reduction of VAT on condoms to 5 percent / Lynne Jones MP
- Action on AIDS/ Neil Gerrard MP
- Bushmeat and Simian Foaming Virus/ James Paice MP
- Contaminated blood products public Inquiry/ Patsy Carlton
- HIV/AIDS / Alan Duncan MP
- Trade Justice Movement / Alan Duncan MP
- Vulnerable children affected by HIV/ AIDS / Alan Duncan MP
- Make Poverty History in 2005 Campaign/ Julia Drown MP

- G8 and EU Presidencies/ Alan Duncan MP

Recently published:

The Framework “*HIV and AIDS in African Communities*” was launched on the 20th December by the **Department of Health**. The framework is part of the Department of Health’s National Strategy for Sexual Health and HIV.

“*Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society; the Government’s Strategy to Increase Race Equality and Community Cohesion*” was launched by the **Home Office** on the 19th January and is a strategy that looks at reducing and combating inequalities in key public service areas.

Recent APPG AIDS events:

On January 11th Sigma published a report commissioned by the National Aids Trust. The report “*Outsider Status: Stigma and discrimination experienced by Gay men and African People with HIV*” The launch was held in the Attlee Suite with speakers Catherine Dodds from Sigma and Rhon Reynolds from the African HIV Policy Network.

Forthcoming Events:

On the 8th February APPG AIDS are holding a meeting on the Criminalisation of People living with HIV. In the UK three men were prosecuted last year for knowingly infecting other people with HIV. This has highlighted the lack of clarity in public policy on criminalisation and HIV. Speakers will be Dr. Matthew Weait, Lawyer and lecturer at Keele University, and Chris Morley from the George House Trust.

A Health Select Committee Inquiry into new developments in HIV/AIDS and sexual policy will be held on the 27th January in the Wilson Room.

Other News

Edwige Fortier left her job as Policy Advisor to the APPG AIDS in December and was replaced by **Aviva Bresky** in January. Aviva works part-time for the group and can be reached on 020 7219 6916 or breskya@parliament.uk



**Aviva
Bresky**