



AIDS
CONCERN

為愛拯命
For Life

OUR TRIPLE ZERO

2014-2019

零目標
TRIPLE ZERO

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AIDS Concern Office

- A 17B, Block F, 3 Lok Man Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong**
- E 2898 4411**
- S www.aidsconcern.org.hk**
- F www.facebook.com/AIDSCONCERN**

Yau Ma Tei Health Service Centre

- A Unit 602, 6/F, King Centre, 23-29 Dundas Street, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon**
- E 2394 6677**

If there is any inconsistency or conflict between English and Chinese version, the English version shall prevail.



**ZERO
NEW
INFECTIONS**

AIDS Concern was established in 1990 and is the longest established HIV/AIDS NGO in Hong Kong.

We work to prevent HIV and to support people living with HIV/AIDS.

This Strategy document is AIDS Concern's Strategy for the 5-year period from April 2014 to March 2019.

The purpose of this strategy document is to explain the main priorities for focus, action and resource allocation by AIDS Concern. This will be used by the Board of AIDS Concern, the Management Team and organisation as the framework for planning the most effective response possible to HIV/AIDS with the resources we have.



**ZERO
STIGMA**

VISION

Our vision is to see Hong Kong with ZERO new HIV infections, ZERO stigma for people living with HIV and ZERO AIDS deaths. TRIPLE ZERO.

MISSION

AIDS Concern will lead social change by individuals, organisations and society to achieve TRIPLE ZERO, to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS and eliminate stigma for people living with HIV.

In the coming 5 years our aim is to see the annual HIV new infection rate in Hong Kong falling from the 2013 rate. Our ambition is also to see a fall in the public stigma index for HIV.

THE FOUR STRATEGIES

- Deliver HIV education and prevention targeting people at highest risk
 - Provide support for people living with HIV in Hong Kong
 - Build partnerships and capacity for an effective HIV response
 - Create public advocacy on HIV



**ZERO
AIDS
DEATHS**

BACKGROUND

In the 30 years since the first HIV case in Hong Kong occurred we have developed significant knowledge about HIV/AIDS. This knowledge has helped agencies to develop effective strategies to reduce the scale of the epidemic and provide treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Treatment is important and evidence is showing that there is an important role for treatment in preventing the further spread of HIV/AIDS. However, if we are to begin eradicating HIV altogether we need to prevent its spread in the first place by creating the conditions where people do not put themselves at risk of contracting HIV.

Campaigns about the importance of safer sex and provision of condoms will remain important in the battle against HIV/AIDS. However, a long term approach to the problem requires a deeper look at the attitudes and understanding of people which lead to the behaviours where they put themselves at risk. What are the circumstances which put people at risk? How can we prevent those circumstances developing?

We can help individuals who are at risk of HIV or living with HIV by providing them with

information, education, support and care. However, we also need to recognise that there are many social determinants which can act as barriers making it harder for people prevent HIV.

- **Lack of sex education makes it difficult for people to get the knowledge they need about the risk of HIV.**
- **Stigma about sexually transmitted infections and LGBT people makes it difficult for people to seek advice about safe sex or treatment.**
- **Depression, drug use and thrill seeking all play a part in reducing the likelihood of safer sex and treatment adherence.**
- **Living with HIV can be very difficult when you feel you cannot talk to your family or if there are not services to help you that are easily accessible.**

In designing services and advocacy campaigns to work towards TRIPLE ZERO we need to recognise these social issues. By working to reduce the barriers people face we can make it easier for people to choose health-seeking behaviour and get the treatment they need.

This is why AIDS Concern must tackle the societal barriers that exist in relation to the challenge of HIV/AIDS as well as providing

direct support to individuals at risk and those living with HIV/AIDS. This means being a public advocate for the changes we want to see which will deliver action on HIV as well as providing some of the services that will help.

AIDS Concern has a responsibility as one of the leading NGO on HIV/AIDS to lead change. However, the challenge of HIV/AIDS in Hong Kong is not one we can tackle by ourselves and we also have a responsibility to use the opportunity to work with others to build capacity in people and organisations to respond to the threat of HIV. AIDS Concern recognises the role of individuals, the public, government, healthcare providers, businesses and civil society as a whole in tackling HIV/AIDS. We are uniquely placed to be able to understand the communities of interest which we need to influence and to work with those communities. Building capacity in others is how we can deliver a response of the scale required.

In the coming 5 years AIDS Concern will need to work with many people and organisations to achieve our mission. We will need to work with young people, schools, social workers, parents, government and other NGOs to improve access to education about positive relationships and sex. We will need to work with the LGBT community, companies, politicians, the media,

the public and opinion formers to improve rights for LGBT people and reduce social stigma.

We will work with many people to help them understand what contribution they can make to achieving TRIPLE ZERO and to give them the tools and the motivation they need to help us.

- **Individuals can understand their risk of HIV and take action to reduce their risk.**
- **Family and friends can encourage people to take action on risk of HIV and to be welcoming and supportive to people who have HIV.**
- **Healthcare services can understand how to recognise the risk of HIV and to provide appropriate treatment, support and care.**
- **Government can protect the rights of minorities, ensure that there is good sex education for young people and services for people at risk of and living with HIV.**
- **The media can remind people about the risk of HIV, educate the public and work to reduce stigma.**
- **Companies can work as employers and responsible businesses to promote HIV prevention and stigma reduction.**
- **Saunas, bars and the sex industry can educate people about the importance of safer sex.**

In the coming 5 years AIDS Concern will need to work with many people and organisations to achieve our mission.

1



Deliver HIV education and prevention targeting people at highest risk

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

There are too many people being infected with HIV in Hong Kong. Not enough people are protecting themselves from HIV and the reasons for this are complex. The result is that in 2013 over 500 people a year were infected.

At the core of AIDS Concern's work is a commitment to create better understanding and awareness about HIV and to educate high risk sections of the population about the importance of protecting themselves against HIV infection. In the coming 5 years AIDS Concern will continue to work on education and prevention programmes. However, we will also look to implement new evidence-based approaches dependent on their potential to reduce infection rates in Hong Kong.

- Combination HIV prevention strategies are now available and have been promoted in international discussions about HIV.
- Combination prevention programmes operate on different levels (e.g., individual, relationship, community, societal) to address the specific, but diverse needs of the populations at risk of HIV infection) (UNAIDS 2010)
- Some interventions have been applied in Hong Kong for a long time such as HIV counseling and testing, condom use, STI treatment and behavioural education interventions.
- Some interventions are not well developed here and may have potential such as harm reduction, pre-exposure prophylaxis, post-exposure prophylaxis and home testing.

AIDS Concern will look carefully at the potential to introduce new approaches which will help.

THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE AT RISK OF HIV AND AIDS CONCERN WILL AIM TO CHANGE PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR ALL. HOWEVER, WE WILL PARTICULARLY FOCUS OUR EDUCATION AND TESTING ON THE HIGHEST RISK GROUPS FOR TRANSMISSION INCLUDING:

- People living with HIV (those who know they are HIV positive and those who do not know)
- Men who have sex with men
- Heterosexual men with multiple sex partners
- Youth at risk for HIV infection

WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 5 YEARS

- We will increase our service coverage for communities with high risk behaviour --- on HIV prevention /sex education.
 - We will increase the HIV and sexual health knowledge of communities with high risk behaviour.
 - We will increase the awareness of the communities with high risk behaviour on HIV prevention and sexual health.
 - We will increase the testing rate of communities with high risk behaviour.
 - We will increase the condom use rate of the communities with high risk behaviour.
 - We will increase the percentage of diagnosed people living with HIV getting tested and treated at an early stage.
 - We will work to eliminate the risk factors of HIV infection in the communities with high risk behaviour.
 - We will increase the engagement of community stakeholders in HIV prevention and sex education programmes.
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2



Provide support for people living with HIV in Hong Kong

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

We strongly believe that the key to effectively lowering prevalence of HIV/AIDS is through establishing close communication with communities. This means not only the most vulnerable groups but also People Living with HIV (PLHIV). Since the big improvements in medical treatment for PLHIV, provision of information and emotional support to people newly diagnosed and those not using the formal medical system has become a priority.

One of the biggest challenges for achieving our vision is the social stigma and discrimination that people living with HIV/AIDS face from the general public and even themselves. Hence investment of resources to eliminate stigma about HIV/AIDS to create a PLHIV-friendly society is vital.

CURRENT POSITION

Feedback from community members is that AIDS Concern has established a good PLHIV service. People say that our staff are well-trained, resourceful and prepared. We treat clients as individuals and build good relationships with them. People living with HIV say that we are reliable and they are willing to work with us.

However this service is currently only able to help a small but growing number of people. We cannot offer a service to all PLHIV and this means we need to carefully define the service model. Now that we have developed a good service we will grow it in the years ahead to provide more and better support to PLHIV.

Monitoring people with HIV on treatment and helping them understand how to protect their partners will also be important to prevent the epidemic growing.

WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 5 YEARS

- A PLHIV support service can be accessed by all cases diagnosed by AIDS Concern and referred to us by others.
- We will have trust and tight cooperation with private clinics and public hospitals that will refer cases for our follow-up.
- There will be fewer diagnosed PLHIV outside the formal medical treatment system.
- There will be other organisations offering a PLHIV service based on the AIDS Concern model to PLHIV in Hong Kong.
- Serodiscordant couples (where one partner is living with HIV, one without) will have knowledge on prevention and handle their relationships with confidence.
- AIDS Concern will be known as a good reliable source of info about HIV/AIDS to all PLHIV.
- Stigma and discrimination experienced by PLHIV from medical professionals or social workers will be lower.
- More PLHIV will have taken up the role of peer counselor or positive speakers and participate in service development and advocacy.

HOW WE WILL DO THIS

- We will prioritise resources for the growth of this service.
 - We will develop the service model for our PLHIV programme.
 - We will review and set up the strategy for peer engagement and empowerment.
 - We will partner with The Chinese University of Hong Kong to follow up the Stigma Index which is currently the most helpful way to review the stigma towards PLHIV.
 - We will build up strong partnerships with medical schools and social worker schools that provide regular/compulsory trainings to the students.
 - Once we have developed evidence for our PLHIV service model we will share this evidence with partner organisations locally and elsewhere.
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3



Build partnerships and capacity for an effective HIV response

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Reaching TRIPLE ZERO will require joint efforts by many organizations engaged in HIV prevention work. Building organisations' technical capacity for HIV prevention will lead to a more effective overall response, as recommended by HIV/AIDS strategies for Hong Kong 2012-2016. Hong Kong is where the majority of AIDS Concern partnership and capacity building work will take place. We will particularly work with youth workers and healthcare providers as they are playing a vital role in offering health advice on safer sex and risk reduction.

Mobility is a risk factor of HIV transmission¹ as traveling is associated with high risk behaviours among both heterosexuals and MSM². The latest HIV surveillance report released by Department of Health shows 20% heterosexual men and 3% MSM were infected with the HIV from Mainland China, and we are concerned the future HIV epidemic of both communities will increase. Evidence shows that unsafe sex by Hong Kong travelers is relatively common, nearly 40% did not use condoms with strangers^{3,4}, 18% and 54%⁵ did not use condom use with mainland commercial sex partners and irregular sex partners respectively. In addition, 15% of the Hong Kong MSM had been seeking male sex partners in Shenzhen and 54.9% Cross-border MSM had unprotected anal intercourse with at least one MSM partner in Shenzhen in the last 6 months⁶. These figures highlight there is an external influence in the Hong Kong HIV epidemic. Therefore, prevention and control of HIV in Hong Kong hinges greatly on the corresponding work in the Mainland China as well as the Asia Pacific region.

AIDS Concern will work with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Community-Based Organisations(CBOs) in Pearl River Delta to provide technical support and experience sharing on service development, programme design, monitoring and evaluation.

Last but not least, we will strive to network, communicate and develop partnership with organisations in Asia Pacific region. Closer communications allow us to update the HIV situation in Pearl River Delta and the nearby region, and working with overseas bodies can facilitate us to learn from their innovative approaches.

CURRENT POSITION

Strategic directions in 2008-2013 committed us to work in Hong Kong and PRD to share our experience and expertise to build the capacity of other HIV/AIDS workers in Hong Kong and Mainland China.

- We provided trainings such as physical outreach, peer management and counseling training to CBOs in Shenzhen.
 - We provided support to newly established NGOs in Hong Kong to support them on how to set-up HIV testing services and skills on funding applications.
 - We provided trainings to youth workers (Centre based and school based workers) on sex education.
 - We provided trainings to nurses and general practitioners on understanding the MSM community so as to equip them with sufficient knowledge and skills to provide appropriate services and consultations to MSM.
 - We collaborated with male-dominant social service organisations to provide HIV preventive education and train up their volunteers on sexual health for safer sex promotion.
 - We had certain International connections with NGOs, and we are a member of a number of MSM alliances.
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WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 5 YEARS

In Hong Kong

- The HIV infection numbers from Mainland China of heterosexual men and MSM will be lower than 2013.
- We will have a stronger network with organisations whose work is related to sexual health, particularly strong partnerships with youth organisations and medical professionals.
- Youth workers and healthcare providers will have better knowledge and awareness on sexual health, and able to offer health advice on safer sex and risk reduction.
- The attitude of healthcare workers will be more open about HIV and sexual health issues and they will be more able to address cultural appropriateness.

In Pearl River Delta

- We will identify partnership with CBOs to provide technical support, training and capacity building programmes with reference to the organisations' needs.
- More CBOs will be able to educate and deliver good quality of services to heterosexual men, MSM and local people under the support of AIDS Concern.
- We will have strong communication and network with CDC, organisations in Shenzhen, 2nd tier cities and Guangzhou.
- CDC and CBOs will proactively approach AIDS Concern for partnerships, so that we are able to learn from each other

In the Asia Pacific Region

- We will establish meaningful partnerships with the existing contact NGOs, and regional alliance so as to give constructive contribution and involvement.
- We will have strong communication and networking with organisations in the Asia Pacific Region.
- We will take a proactive role on Asia Pacific Region conferences through skills building workshops, abstract submissions and poster presentations.

HOW WE WILL DO THIS

In Hong Kong

- We will do situation analysis to see what the current HIV participation of NGOs is.
- We will approach potential organisations --- particularly youth organisations and medical professionals to see how we can help them on HIV prevention.
- We will approach the Department of Health and others to look at whether we can develop more training for medical professionals.

In Pearl River Delta

- We will do a CBOs mapping exercise as well as needs assessment in Shenzhen, second tier cities and Guangzhou, and seek support from CDC.
- We will deliver targeted capacity building programmes, training and information sharing tailor-made for those CBOs who needed support from AIDS Concern.
- We will help CBOs to understand what HIV prevention services are needed for their local communities and help them to spread good service model to other CBOs.

In the Asia Pacific Region

- We will enhance partnership with existing contacts to seek cross-country collaborations such as exchange programmes to learn from each other.
- We will identify partners (through the DAN alliance, and International conference) for networking and building relationship with organisations in the region.
- We will proactively involve in the International alliance groups and Asia Pacific conferences such as APCOM, DAN network, ICCAP to take a lead in discussions about MSM work and sharing our good practice at the regional level.
- Develop a communication platform with overseas organisations.

“We will strive to network, communicate and develop partnership with organisations and Asia Pacific region.”

by Andrew Chidgey, Chief Executive of AIDS Concern.

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4



Create public advocacy on HIV

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

‘Advocacy’ means work to influence public and political opinion and action. For this strategic direction it is taken to include political lobbying and media work.

There is currently limited understanding about HIV risk and stigmatization for people with HIV. This damages the prospects for HIV prevention and stops people being able to live a good quality of life with HIV. By assertively tackling poor public understanding and stigmatization we can create a social environment in which people can understand and pursue health-seeking behaviour.

To meet the challenge of HIV in Hong Kong AIDS Concern must be a vocal, compelling and respected public advocate on HIV. Improving the awareness and understanding of the public and politicians is a major priority for AIDS Concern in this 5-year strategy. We will be a strong public advocate for better sex education for young people and also for better rights for sexual minorities. We will also make the public argument for resources to go into the best treatment and care for people with HIV.

CURRENT POSITION

At AIDS Concern we identified public advocacy as important within the 2008-2013 Strategy. Over 5 years there are many examples of public campaigns where AIDS Concern has looked to engage the public, stakeholders and decision-makers in our work.

We have used set piece events and milestones like World AIDS Day and the Red Ribbon Angels Campaign to promote our objectives and the work of AIDS Concern.

AIDS Concern is a member of the Hong Kong Coalition of AIDS Organisations (HKCASO).

WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 5 YEARS

- There will be a growing social movement in Hong Kong of people and organisations committed to action on HIV, with AIDS Concern as one of the main leaders of that movement.
- There will be high profile campaigns on HIV reduction and living with HIV.
- Stigma experienced by people living with HIV will be lower.
- There will be better access to sex education for young people.
- There will have been a legal change on rights for sexual minorities including LGBT people.
- The media will cover HIV stories regularly and seek the views of AIDS Concern.
- People living with HIV will be speaking out on public platforms and in the media.
- High profile celebrities and opinion formers will want to be associated with the HIV/AIDS campaign and AIDS Concern.

HOW WE WILL DO THIS

- We will make public advocacy a core requirement across all of our work.
- We will create a specialist advocacy function to lead the development of our public advocacy work. This will require personnel with the specialist skills to communicate with large public audiences and also with politicians, opinion formers and the media.
- We will research and publish qualitative evidence about HIV risk, infection and living with HIV to drive media interest.
- We will develop evidence-based public policy position statements on a range of HIV-related issues. This will include issues statements on issues like access to treatment and legal rights for people with HIV.
- We will use the 25th anniversary of AIDS Concern in 2015 to highlight the work of AIDS Concern.
- We will work with HIV/AIDS clinical specialists and academics to make the best case for appropriate treatment.
- We will develop media partnerships with mass market media outlets and also target 'at risk' community publications for young people, men who have multiple female sex partners and men who have sex with men.
- We will meet regularly with LegCo members and other opinion formers and create a network of action on HIV political supporters.
- We will work with an effective coalition of organisations that can advocate with us.
- We will advocate assertively on the need for sex education of young people working with other organisations who do the same.
- We will work with the LGBT community to improve the legal rights of sexual minorities.
- We will create a supported programme of patrons and ambassadors for action on HIV including people affected by HIV.

5 YEAR MEASURES OF SUCCESS ON HIV

Between 2014 and 2019 AIDS Concern's ambition is to achieve major progress towards our vision of TRIPLE ZERO in Hong Kong. Here we set out some of the main outputs and outcomes we will be working towards. These cannot be achieved by AIDS Concern alone so will require partnership work with many other people and organisations. For some of these measures better data will need to be developed.

Hong Kong measures that AIDS Concern contributes to

- A drop in the number of new cases of HIV as measured by reported cases year on year. By 2019 we want to see fewer cases reported than in 2013.
- A rise in the number of at risk communities for HIV infection reporting condom use.
- More people in high risk populations being regularly tested for HIV.
- More people living with HIV accessing information and support.
- A fall in stigma associated with HIV and people living with HIV as measured by the public stigma index.
- More secondary school children and young people will be receiving comprehensive sexuality education.
- Legislation in place outlawing discrimination against sexual minorities.

MEASURES FOR AIDS CONCERN

- AIDS Concern will increase the total number of contacts we have year on year with people at high risk of HIV.
- A larger number of high risk people will be getting tested.
- AIDS Concern will have established an ongoing programme of evidence development on community and service user needs to inform programme development and advocacy.
- Evidence-based service specifications (quality standards) will be in place for our programmes.
- Our model PLHIV support service will be adopted by others.
- More Hong Kong organisations (particularly NGOs) will be incorporating HIV and sex education into their training.
- A higher proportion of the public will be able to answer questions about HIV correctly and reduce the stigma towards HIV/PLHIV (public survey).
- AIDS Concern will have an ongoing programme of public advocacy work that is delivering proactive media stories and political engagement.
- AIDS Concern will establish a good practice on HIV prevention and education with some other NGOs/government and the service model of AIDS Concern will be widely used.

**AIDS Concern has
a responsibility as
one of the leading NGO
on HIV/AIDS
to lead change.**

