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Interdepartmental Task Force on HIV/AIDS

Agenda

February 18, 1998

2:00 p.m.

Welcome/Introductions	Sandra Thurman
Purpose	Sandra Thurman
World AIDS Day	Sandra Thurman
Presidential Directive on Youth	Sandra Thurman
Agency Updates/Activities	Agency Representatives
Back To Work Issues	Department of Energy Social Security Administration Office of Personnel Management
Open Discussion	Agency Representatives

Interdepartmental Task Force on HIV/AIDS

**Wednesday, February 18
2:00 p.m.**

Room 472 OEOB

TALKING POINTS --

I. GENERAL INTRODUCTIONS

Thank everyone for attending today's meeting.

As everyone in the room to **introduce themselves** by their and agency, and ask them to **sign the attendance sheet which is circulating**.

Remind people that this is **only the second Interdepartmental Task Force on HIV/AIDS meeting**, and that you are looking forward for it to become an **avenue for discussion of key topics** within the Federal government.

II. WORLD AIDS DAY

Thank them for a successful World AIDS Day, and acknowledge them for their efforts within their departments.

ONAP was very pleased to see the number of federal departments which sponsored World AIDS Day Activities and were glad to be able to share information about them with the media.

III. PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE ON YOUTH

As many of you know, the **President issued a directive** on World AIDS Day calling for each Federal agency to:

- **identify programs** under its control that serve young people ages 13 - 21 and that offer a significant opportunity for preventing HIV infections; and
- **develop specific plans** through which these programs could increase access to HIV prevention and education information, and to supportive services and care for those already infected.

ONAP, in conjunction with DHHS/Office of HIV/AIDS Policy, is providing direction and technical assistance to those agencies that have programs capable of providing HIV prevention services to young people to develop their plans.

Many of you attended **the January 14th meeting**, and many of your agencies indicated that you did not have any relevant programs.

I want to **thank you for your responses to date**. I know that this is one of many things you must respond to, but rest assured, **we are not out to make more work for you**.

Two reports will be forthcoming:

- 1) an **“inventory”** of federal programs that are providing, or have a significant opportunity to provide, HIV prevention messages to young people **WAS due to ONAP February 9**, so that ONAP and DHHS may produce a report by the end of February.
- 2) A **second report**, one on increasing access to HIV prevention, is **due by May 30**. ONAP/DHHS will also be providing technical assistance to the agencies in developing responses.

I again want to **thank you** for your efforts in responding to the Presidential Directive.

IV. AGENCY ACTIVITIES

Indicate that the **package on their chair** contains a brief summary of each department's AIDS related activities as submitted by the Departments. it also contains:

- 1) contact information for attendees;
- 2) copy of the Presidential Directive on Youth
- 3) copy of a draft executive order on disabilities, which will be discussed later

ONAP asked for the summary of each department's activities at the last meeting so that each of us could better know what we are engaged in, and so that if we had questions, we would know what Department to turn to.

If a Department has not yet responded, please send your response to ONAP and we will make sure that it is shared with the others.

Ask if any Department/agency has any announcements that they would like to share with the others. (Go around the room.)

V. PRESENTATION: RETURN TO WORK ISSUES

We are pleased today to have several of our colleagues who have agreed to make **brief presentation** on what is quickly becoming a very important issue, not only within the federal government but in the civilian workforce as well, that of **“Return to Work”** issues for people living with HIV and AIDS.

I want to thank them in advance for their willingness to present today and for their preparation for this meeting. I know you each have many other things you would rather be doing.

Since this is a federal meeting, the presentations will focus mainly only on this issue as it relates to employment within the Federal government.

Based on discussions which occurred during the last Interdepartmental Task Force on HIV/AIDS meeting, we thought that this might be a good way to highlight an important issue. This is one of the purposes of the Task Force. it.

I would like to make it clear up front -- this meeting is not designed to SOLVE any problems or issues which may be identified.

Rather, it is simply to highlight the major issues surrounding people with HIV and AIDS who may have left federal employment on medical disability, or retired, or left for some other reason or who continue to work for the federal government.

Ideally, this meeting will allow us opportunity to gain a better understanding of this issue including some of the current policies which guide us.

IF I MAY, I want to just briefly put this issue in context:

People want to work for many reasons:

It fills individuals with a sense of accomplishment;

It provides structure to their day, filling the hours in a day;

It allows for interaction with other individuals; and finally, of course,

It helps pay the bills.

Over the past several years, protease inhibitors have worked wonders for a large number of individuals. This success has translated into new challenges, especially in the work place.

As more and more people with AIDS are benefiting from protease inhibitors, more and more people are living with HIV.

Those who had AIDS and retired on disability are now able to return to the work place.

For some, the thought of returning to work is a psychological change, having once resigned themselves to the fact that they would not return to their careers.

With new therapies, for some at least, a second career is now an option.

Those with HIV who never stopped working now must deal with complex drug treatment schedules, deal with the side effects of those drugs, and must more carefully plan for their future.

For people with HIV and AIDS, returning to work and continuing to work presents many complications and questions:

- Am I physically able to work?
- Can I handle eight hours a day for five days a week?
- Can I handle the stress that work often presents?
- Do I want to deal with the questions people will have about why I left work in the first place?
- Who do I have to tell at work about my illness or why I am taking so many pills every day?

- Are my co-workers going to be supportive of my working?
- Will my co-workers want to work with me?
- I have to take my drugs on a very strict schedule, will my boss let me take the breaks I need to follow my drug regimen?
- What happens if I get sick and have to have a lot of doctor's appointments?
- Will my supervisor be supportive of my return to work?
- Will my manager make sure the work environment is supportive?
- What role can the union play in helping me stay a productive employee?

Then there are a host of financial related questions:

- What will happen to my social security benefits or my disability benefits if I return to work, or if I continue to work?
- Will my health insurance be affected?
- Do I get back any sick leave that I forfeited when I left work?
- Even though I was sick, I took a buy-out. How will that affect me?
- I started taking out of my Thrift Saving Plan, what happens now?
- Who should I go at my agency to ask these questions, and can I rest assured that my confidentiality will be respected?

These are all very serious questions with serious consequences.

We are very fortunate to have with us several of our colleagues who have agreed to lead the discussion on this issue. Representatives from the Office of Personnel

Management, the Social Security Administration, and an employee of the Department of Energy will help us understand some of the issues that people with HIV and AIDS face when making the decision to either return to work or to leave work.

I want to thank them in advance for their participation.

I believe Donald Donaldson, who is an employee at the Department of Energy will start off. For today's presentation, Donald is here representing himself and not the Department.

Donald.....



After Donald is finished, Robert Nickerson of SSA will have a presentation.

He may introduce others from his office.

After they are finished, Ron Patterson of OPM will talk and introduce others from his agency.

Ideally, questions will be allowed throughout the presentation.

At the end, just a few wrap up comments:

- Thank the presenters for their wonderful presentations.
- We have heard a lot of important issues today.
- Ask each person to share today's information with appropriate individuals at the agencies.
- Remind people that this is will not be going away anytime soon.

Meeting: Interdepartmental Task Force on HIV/AIDS

Time/Place: 2:00 p.m., Rm. 472 OEOB

Topic: Quarterly Task Force Meeting

Presentation on Return to Work Issues

You will conduct the meeting (general business), introduce the topic and presenters, and then make general closing remarks after the presentation's are completed.

Interdepartmental Task Force on HIV/AIDS

**June 11, 1998
10:00 - 11:30 a.m.**

**White House Conference Center
Truman Room**

Introductions	Sandy Thurman
Policy Updates	Sandy Thurman
Agency Updates	Sandy Thurman
International Issues	Paul Delay - USAID Nancy Carter-Foster - State Loni Havens - Peace Corps
Discussion/Comments	Sandy Thurman

Interdepartmental Task Force on AIDS

June 11, 1998

10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

**White House Conference Center
Truman Room**

(NOTE: AVOID THE TERM "THIRD WORLD," USE "LESS DEVELOPED")

Welcome them to the 2nd meeting of the Interdepartmental Task Force on AIDS this year.

The last meeting focused on "return to work issues within the Federal government." You were pleased to here some of dialogue on this issue.

Tell them that you are pleased to see everyone here.

Ask them to go around the room and introduce themselves.

Invite them to 736 Jackson Place to see our new offices. We are delighted to be there, especially since we are now in the White House complex.

Talking Points:

Provide them an update on other key issues that have either been in the paper or are concern to the office:

- **NEEDLE EXCHANGE**

What was the decision?

What does the decision mean at the Federal level?

What are the implications for state/local efforts?

What efforts are being undertaken to increase funding for drug treatment slots?

Where do we go from here?

- **FY 99 BUDGET UPDATE**

Where are we in the process?

Any new initiatives planned?

- Next meeting of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS is set for June 15 - 18 in D.C. One of the subcommittees is on International Issues.

At that meeting, Nancy Carter-Foster and Dave Wagner will present on the Department of State's Plan, similar to what they will be doing for us today. We are pleased to serve as a practice run (ha! ha!).

- **President's Race Initiative, HIV efforts**

As part of the overall Initiative on Race President has asked the Department of Health and Human Services to look at how it can eliminate the disparities in health between minority and non-minority populations. HHS is focusing on six areas:

- infant mortality;
- cancer;
- cardiovascular disease;
- diabetes
- immunizations; and
- HIV infection/AIDS

HHS has formed working group for each of the six areas: In terms of HIV/AIDS, HHS:

Currently developing an inventory of current and past efforts.

Focusing on prevention, services and research.

Overriding theme is to eliminate the disparity in health care between minority and non-minorities.

Secondary theme is to ensure that all programs are linguistically and culturally appropriate.

Most likely use a grant program to target resources.

Current discussion are still in-house, but plans call for involving the community.

Looking at how the system works, or doesn't work, and whether there is a need to revamp the entire system.

AGENCY UPDATES

- **Go Around the Room** and ask if anyone has any **announcements** from their agencies.
- **Remind** them that the Interdepartmental Task Force is an excellent **forum** in which to **discuss** policy issues of concern, in which to **share information** about programs and pending policies, or to **just bounce off ideas**.
- Remind them that they are welcome to **suggest topics** for discussion during the IDTFA meetings.

TODAY'S MEETING WILL FOCUS ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Often times, we forget that HIV is a world wide problem, with millions of individuals outside of the U.S. already infected or at risk for infection.

We often do not remember the horrible health conditions and lack of health care infrastructure which often exists in other countries.

We tend not to remember the lack of resources in many countries.

We tend to forget that many Americans spend more on one nice dinner than many people are able to spend all year on health care.

There are an estimated 30 million people worldwide infected with HIV.

In some parts of some countries, infections rates are over 50 percent of the population.

Every year, there are thousands and thousands more AIDS 'orphans' internationally.

Yet, our efforts can only do so much. There is only so much money to go around.

With new advances in medical treatment, especially protease inhibitors, we have an even greater challenge in making sure those who can most benefit from the new drugs have access to them.

((Briefly discuss you recent travels to Russia and South Africa))

((Briefly discuss what you hope to accomplish during the upcoming International AIDS Conference in Geneva)).

Acknowledge that international AIDS work is difficult and thank those in the room who have dedicated their lives to this issue.

PRESENTATION:

Our presenters today will focus on international AIDS issues:

In order of presentation:

Paul Delay

Chief, HIV/AIDS Division

Global Program on AIDS

U.S. Agency for International Development

Paul will give us a general overview of the state of the epidemic and some of the major efforts that are ongoing.

Nancy-Carter Foster

Director

Office of Emerging and Infectious Diseases and HIV/AIDS

U.S. Department of State

Nancy will update us on the progress of the State Department's AIDS plan and how this fits into the picture of addressing HIV from an international perspective.

Loni Havens

U.S. Peace Corps

Loni will show us what I have heard is a wonderful video of Peace Corps activities in this area.

I want to thank each presenter in advance for their presentations.

If there are any questions, I urge you to ask them either during the presentation or afterward during the discussion session.

AFTER THE PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION:

Thank them for their time.

Remind them to start thinking about World AIDS Day activities.

Remind them that we are open for suggested topics.

Possible Question for the Discussion Period:

How are we insuring that individuals in less-developed countries have access to drugs?

How receptive are countries to prevention education efforts?

How does the State Department coordinate its efforts with other Federal agencies, with the United Nations, and with other countries?

How have the Peace Corps efforts changed over the course of the epidemic? Are countries asking for Peace Corps volunteers to specifically focus on HIV, or only as a part of an overall health program?

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