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Issues - Needle Exchange - Press Releases - Community

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**until it's over
AIDS ACTION****ACTION ALERT**

July 16, 1999...www.aidsaction.org... Contact: Dan Hewitt 202-530-8030 ext. 3078 - network@aidsaction.org

FY2000 DC APPROPRIATIONS BILL PROHIBITS LOCAL EFFORTS TO CURB NEW HIV INFECTIONS

At a House DC Appropriations Subcommittee mark-up on Wednesday, July 14, Chairman Istook (R-OK) presented a bill with an extension for FY2000 of the current ban on local funds for needle exchange programs operated in the District of Columbia. **AIDS Action urges you to contact your Representative to strongly oppose current legislation that would tie the hands of the District of Columbia in their fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS.** The DC Appropriations bill is scheduled for mark-up in the House Appropriations Committee on **Tuesday, July 20.**

The FY2000 DC Appropriations Bill would continue to hold the Whitman-Walker Clinic hostage with a needle exchange "rider" in last year's DC Appropriations bill (FY99). The Clinic had to divorce completely its needle exchange operation or risk losing ALL federal funding. The language adds insult to injury by prohibiting the use of private funds for needle exchange programs. The current DC Appropriations bill is a clear violation of our ability to manage this epidemic and denies jurisdictions the ability to implement interventions that have been supported by the community. This ban may foreshadow action on a national level. "We are concerned that this legislative action may threaten other state and local efforts to curb new HIV infections," said Julio C. Abreu, associate director of government affairs.

Currently, there is a prohibition on federal funding in the FY99 Labor/Health and Human Services appropriations bill. Additional legislation restricting states' and local communities' ability to fund needle exchange programs is unnecessary and is an issue that should appropriately be addressed by state and local public health officials, based on the best available scientific research. In addition, the Administration has spoken out in opposition to this provision. In a Statement of Administration Policy (SAP) released July 1, 1999, the Administration "would strongly oppose efforts to restore the [FY1999 DC Appropriations] prohibition."

TAKE AIDS ACTION:

1. AIDS Action urges you to contact your Member of Congress, and request that they **oppose all legislation that would allow the federal government to jeopardize state or local efforts to curb new HIV infections, and to support efforts that give local control back to the community.**
2. AIDS Action urges you to contact your Member of Congress, and urge them to weigh in with the House D.C. Appropriations Subcommittee Chair and Ranking Member (Rep. Moran D-VA), and express opposition to the "rider."

The Capital Switchboard at 202/224-3121 can transfer your call.

SLT

HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN

TO: Ms. Sandy Thurman

FAX NUMBER: (202) 632-1096

FROM: The Human Rights Campaign
Legislative Department, PAC Department, Field Department*Winnie Stachelberg, Legislative Director*
Kevin Layton, PAC Director/Chief Legislative Counsel
*Donna Red Wing, Field Director*Nancy Buermeyer
Bill Darker
Becky Dinwoodie
Candace Gingrich
Terrance HeathDoug Hess
Seth Kilbourn
Tiffany Newton
Kris Pratt
Susanne Salkind

DATE: July 1, 1997

RESPOND TO: Seth Kilbourn

PAGES TO FOLLOW: 4

PHONE: 202.628.4160
FAX: 202.347.5323

Message:

WORKING FOR LESBIAN AND GAY EQUAL RIGHTS.

1101 14th Street NW, Suite 200 Washington, DC 20005
phone (202) 628 4160 fax (202) 347 5323 e-mail hrc@hrcusa.org



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN

1101 14th Street NW
Washington, DC 20005
phone 202 628 4160
fax 202 347 5323

Memo

Date: July 1, 1997

To:	Erskine Bowles	Toby Donensfeld	William Corr
	Sylvia Mathews	Bruce Reed	Marsha Marrin
	John Podesta	Franklin Raines	Richard Tarplin
	Sandy Thurman	Nancy Ann Min DeParle	Eric Goosby
	Donald Gips	Kevin Thurm	Richard Socarides

From: Seth Kilbourn, Senior Health Policy Advocate

Re: AMA and USCM Support for Needle Exchange Programs

The Human Rights Campaign supports the use of federal funds for local needle exchange programs. We look forward to meeting with Administration principals to discuss the Administration's plan for lifting the restrictions on federal funding, preserving the Secretary's authority to do so and ensuring that science and public health drive the discussion of this issue.

As you know, the American Medical Association (AMA), citing "urgent public health need", voted overwhelmingly last Thursday to support the use of federal funds for needle exchange programs. In doing so, they join such organizations as the National Academy of Sciences, the National Commission on AIDS, and the General Accounting Office which have concluded that needle exchange programs are effective in reducing HIV transmission.

In addition to respected medical and public health groups, the American public supports needle exchange programs to reduce HIV transmission. The results of a poll commissioned by HRC are attached which shows that 55% of Americans support this public health intervention.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors also passed a resolution last week supporting the use of federal funds for needle exchange programs as part of a comprehensive HIV prevention program. Attached is a statement from HRC supporting this action and the President's remarks regarding the twin epidemics of HIV and substance abuse.

Given the consensus that needle exchange programs are effective and do not increase illegal drug use, it is vital that HHS maintain and exercise its authority to allow localities to use federal funds for these programs. It is the role of public health officials with the input of scientists, researchers and state and local communities to determine the most effective strategies to reduce HIV transmission.

I look forward to meeting with you soon to discuss this important issue. If you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to call me at (202) 216 - 1526.

THE TARRANCE GROUP**Lake Sosin Snell & Associates**

Date: April 29, 1997

To: The Human Rights Campaign

From: Lori Gudermuth
The Tarrance Group (R)

Celinda Lake, Jennifer Sosin and Dana Stanley
Lake Sosin Snell & Associates (D)

Re: **AMERICANS SUPPORT NEEDLE EXCHANGE**

A new national poll by the Tarrance Group (R) and Lake Sosin Snell & Associates (D) shows that a majority (55%) of the American public favors needle exchange programs:

Some local communities have adopted "needle exchange" programs as a way to curb the spread of AIDS and HIV. "Needle exchange" programs allow drug users to trade in USED needles for CLEAN needles. Generally speaking, do you FAVOR or OPPOSE these kinds of "needle exchange" programs?

[FOLLOW-UP:] *Is that STRONGLY (favor/oppose), or SOMEWHAT (favor/oppose)?*

<i>strongly favor</i>	32	55
<i>somewhat favor</i>	23	
<i>somewhat oppose</i>	9	
<i>strongly oppose</i>	29	37
<i>(don't know)</i>	8	

Republicans are split evenly on this issue (45% favor, 48% oppose, 7% don't know), and moderate-liberal Republicans favor needle exchange by 17 percentage points (57% favor, 40% oppose, 3% don't know). Strong majorities of both independents (58% favor, 33% oppose, 9% don't know) and Democrats (64% favor, 29% oppose, 7% don't know) are in favor. Needle exchange also finds support in every region of the country: 60%-32% in the Northeast, 49%-44% in the Midwest, 51%-40% in the South, and 64%-30% in the West.

This memorandum reports the findings from a national survey of 1,000 adults who indicated they are registered to vote, conducted April 8-10, 1997, by The Tarrance Group and Lake Sosin Snell & Associates. The overall margin of error is ± 3.1 percent.

201 NORTH UNION, SUITE 410
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314
703/684-6688

1730 Rhode Island, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036
202/776-9066



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN

1101 14th Street NW
Washington, DC 20005
Contact: Kim I. Mills
phone 202 216 1534
pager 800 386 5997

News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, June 24, 1997

MAYORS ADOPT RESOLUTION CALLING FOR NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS TO REDUCE SPREAD OF HIV/AIDS

Conference Demonstrates Understanding That These Programs Save Lives, HRC Asserts

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Conference of Mayors moved to save lives today by passing a resolution in favor of needle exchange programs to reduce the spread of HIV and AIDS, according to the Human Rights Campaign.

The mayors, meeting in San Francisco, passed a resolution urging state and local public health officials to "utilize appropriate federal resources for needle exchange as part of a community's comprehensive HIV prevention plan."

"Because they are at the front lines of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, the mayors understand that needle exchange programs save lives," said Winnie Stachelberg, HRC's legislative director. "This resolution underscores that the mayors need every tool available to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic."

The resolution presents a rationale for approving needle exchange programs that includes such facts as:

- Six federally funded studies have reported that needle exchange programs reduce HIV transmission and do not increase drug use;
- Needle exchange programs can offer a bridge to drug treatment, HIV prevention information and medical support services to hard-to-reach populations;
- Intravenous drug use is responsible for the greatest number of new AIDS cases among

the heterosexual population.

The mayors called on Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala to exercise her authority to lift the ban on spending federal money for needle exchange programs. That move would be consistent with President Clinton's remarks to the mayors Monday, especially when he said, "We have to continue to identify sound public health strategies that enable local communities to address the twin epidemics of AIDS and substance abuse."

In February, Shalala released a report concluding that needle exchange programs are effective in slowing the spread of HIV and AIDS.

"We agree with the mayors, as well as the scientific and public health community, that Secretary Shalala should lift the ban on spending federal money on needle exchange programs," Stachelberg said. "The mayors are clearly calling for a partnership with the federal government to implement these life-saving programs, which we hope the secretary will heed."

Currently, there are 113 needle exchange programs in 29 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, according to the Conference of Mayors.

A majority of the American public -- 55 percent -- favors needle exchange programs as a method to curb the spread of HIV and AIDS, according to a poll conducted for the Human Rights Campaign.

The poll found 55 percent "strongly favor" or "somewhat favor" needle exchange programs while 38 percent "somewhat oppose" or "strongly oppose" them. The poll was conducted for HRC by the Tarrance Group, a Republican firm, and Lake Sosin Snell and Associates, Democratic pollsters. The results are based on a survey of 1,000 registered voters.

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that lesbian and gay Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.

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March 24, 1998

National Minority AIDS Council

ACTION ALERT

The President and Secretary Shalala Fail to Act on Needle Exchange, Allowing Thousands To Become Infected with HIV

The twin epidemics of HIV and substance abuse are devastating communities of color throughout this country and its territories. Needle exchange programs have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing the risk of HIV transmission through intravenous drug injection. However, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala, and the Clinton Administration, have failed to act to lift the ban on federal funding for needle exchange programs. Current law provides that no federal funds may be used to carry out syringe exchange programs, unless the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines that such programs are effective in preventing the spread of HIV and do not encourage the use of illegal drugs. The FY 1998 Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), Education Appropriations bill, includes a moratorium on the ability to use federal funds for needle exchange programs until March 31, 1998.

Last week the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, unanimously passed a resolution expressing no confidence in the Clinton administration's commitment and willingness to achieve the President's goal of *reducing the number of new HIV infections annually until there are none*. The Advisory Council also called upon Secretary Shalala, to issue an immediate determination on syringe exchange programs. A New York Times article published on Monday, March 23, 1998, highlighted the conflict in the Clinton Administration between General Barry R. McCaffrey, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, and Sandra L. Thurman, Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy. In a letter leaked to some members of Congress and to the New York Times, General McCaffrey expresses strong opposition to federal support for needle exchange programs. Ms. Thurman, on the other hand supports lifting the ban on federal funding for needle exchange programs. General McCaffrey's strong opposition to needle exchange programs has been a key component contributing to the Clinton Administration's silence on this issue and may undermine support for the programs.

It is now up to Secretary Shalala, who heads the nation's public health agency, to break the silence and resolve the conflict. She must make a definitive determination, that based on the scientific evidence, needle exchange programs are effective in preventing the spread of HIV, and do not encourage the use of illegal drugs. The crisis we face demands that science, not politics, lead public health policy in this country.

Substance abuse is a monumental public health problem which negatively impacts the lives of over 1.5 million injection drug users in the United States. AIDS is the leading cause of death among African Americans between the ages of 25-44 years. HIV infection directly or indirectly related to injection drug use continues to grow and to destroy lives in communities of color. Approximately half of all new HIV infections are occurring among injection drug users in the United States. As of June 1997, the Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC) reported that people of color account for 72% of the male and 78% of the female cumulative AIDS cases directly and indirectly related to injection drug use. The African American community is most severely impacted by injection drug use, which contributes directly to 38% of all adult/adolescent cases of AIDS in this community. An additional 10% of all AIDS cases among African Americans are attributed to having a sexual partner who is an injection drug user. Tens of thousands of lives can be saved if Secretary Shalala exercises her

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National Minority AIDS Council

public health authority and lifts the federal ban on funding for syringe exchange programs. Any further inaction on the part of the Clinton Administration, will send a clear and resounding message, to communities of color, that it is not committed to reducing the racial and ethnic health disparities in HIV/AIDS morbidity and mortality. There is now broad based support for syringe exchange programs. A survey released by the Kaiser Family Foundation in December 1997, found that 64% of the Americans polled favor syringe exchange programs to help stop the spread of HIV among intravenous drug users. More recently, this year, a Kaiser Family Foundation survey, found that 59% of the African Americans polled, favor syringe exchange programs.

Leaders representing communities of color in Congress also favor syringe exchange programs and have stepped to the plate to demand that the Secretary act now. Last month, Representatives Waters and Becerra, Chairs of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Hispanic Caucus, wrote to the Secretary to urge her to make an immediate determination that syringe exchange programs reduce the risk of HIV transmission and do not promote the use of illegal drugs. They also called upon her to make available federal funds for these programs after the moratorium expires on March 31, 1998.

Leading national organizations, including the American Medical Association, the American Public Health Association, the American Psychological Association, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, the American Nurses Association, the National Academy of Science, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, the U.S. Conference on Mayors, and the American Bar Association, have considered the scientific evidence and support syringe exchange programs.

NMAC urges you to take action now and:

- Communicate with the President and Secretary Shalala by phone, fax, letter or e-mail and demand that the Clinton Administration make an immediate determination supporting needle exchange programs and making federal funding available for these programs. They must lift the ban on federal funding for needle exchange programs.
- Take the message back home to your members of Congress and community leaders. Show them that needle exchange programs save lives by reducing/preventing HIV transmission and that they do not increase the use of illegal drugs.
- Provide your local media including newspapers, radio and television stations with information about needle exchange programs, using the scientific data to demonstrate that needle exchange programs are effective in preventing HIV infections among injecting drug users.

Sample Letters:

March, 1998

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
president@whitehouse.gov
Washington, DC 20500

Telephone # (202) 456-1414
Fax # (202) 456-2883
e-mail:

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to respectfully urge you to make an immediate determination that needle exchange programs are effective in preventing HIV infections and do not promote increased drug use. I also urge you to lift the ban on federal funding for syringe exchange programs..

3

National Minority AIDS Council

The twin epidemics of HIV and substance abuse are devastating communities of color throughout this country and its territories. HIV infection directly or indirectly related to injection drug use continues to grow and to destroy lives in communities of color. Approximately half of all new HIV infections are occurring among injection drug users in the United States. African Americans and Latinos are most severely impacted by HIV infection related to injection drug use. As of June 1997, the Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC) reported that people of color account for 72% of the male and 78% of the female cumulative AIDS cases directly and indirectly related to injection drug use.

The evidence supporting the efficacy of needle exchange programs is compelling. Six government reports and numerous scientific studies have shown that syringe exchange programs prevent HIV infections among injection drug users, their partners and children, and do not lead to an increase in the use of illegal drugs. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Consensus Statement on "Interventions to Prevent HIV Risk Behaviors" (February 11-13, 1997), concludes that the studies on syringe exchange programs show that such programs, either did not increase or actually decreased drug use. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that community norms change in favor of drug use or that more people begin using drugs in areas where exchange programs exist. Finally the studies indicate that there is no increase in the number of used syringes, discarded in public places. Preliminary results from a study of the Baltimore syringe exchange program also confirm no increase in the number of discarded syringes in public places.

There is now broad based support for syringe exchange programs. A survey released by the Kaiser Family Foundation in December 1997, found that 64% of the Americans polled favor syringe exchange programs to help stop the spread of HIV among intravenous drug users. More recently, this year, a Kaiser Family Foundation survey, found that 59% of the African Americans polled, favor syringe exchange programs. Last month, Representatives Waters and Becerra, Chairs of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Hispanic Caucus, wrote to the Secretary to urge her to make an immediate determination that syringe exchange programs reduce the risk of HIV transmission and do not promote the use of illegal drugs.

Leading national organizations, including the American Medical Association, the American Public Health Association, the American Psychological Association, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, the American Nurses Association, the National Academy of Science, the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, the U.S. Conference on Mayors, and the American Bar Association, have also considered the scientific evidence and support syringe exchange programs.

The moratorium imposed by Congress on federal funding for needle exchange programs will end on March 31, 1998. I urge you to act quickly and to lift the ban. The crisis we face demands that science, not politics, lead public health policy in this country. Tens of thousands of lives can be saved if you act now. Thank you for your leadership and commitment to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Sincerely,

Note: You can also adapt the letter above and send it to Secretary Shalala at:

The Honorable Donna E. Shalala
Secretary of the United States
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Madam Secretary

News Release

EMBARGOED UNTIL:

9:00 a.m. E.T.

Tuesday, March 26, 1996

2400 SAND HILL ROAD

MENLO PARK

CALIFORNIA 94025



For further information contact:

Matt James or

Tina Hoff

TEL 415 854-9400

FAX 415 854-4800

AMERICANS SUPPORT STRONG MEASURES TO PREVENT SPREAD OF AIDS: INCLUDING SEX EDUCATION, CONDOMS IN THE SCHOOLS, CLEAN NEEDLES, AND MORE CONDOM ADS ON TV

Parents Most Worried About Spread of AIDS Among Youth; The Number One Thing Parents Say They Need Help With Is Talking With Children About AIDS Prevention

Washington, D.C. -- To help fight the spread of AIDS, Americans today support a range of sometimes controversial efforts -- more condom ads on television, depictions of safe sex in the entertainment media, providing condoms and AIDS education in the schools, distributing clean needles to IV drug users, among others -- according to the latest public knowledge and attitude survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation. Americans are also grappling with AIDS at home. The number one thing parents say they need is help talking with their children about AIDS prevention.

Virtually all Americans (95%) think AIDS information should be provided in the schools, including 69% who think children should start receiving AIDS education at the latest by age 12; seven out of ten Americans (72%) think the major television networks should accept condom advertisements; two-thirds (66%) favor providing clean needles to IV drug users; and 63% say there should be more references to condom use in movies and television. However, when asked whether they thought high schools should provide condoms or just information about AIDS to teens, Americans were almost evenly divided: 49% say just AIDS/HIV information and 46% say making condoms available should be the priority. Support for AIDS prevention measures persists across demographic groups.

Eight out of ten (77%) parents with children under 21 years of age say they are concerned about their child getting AIDS, including 53% who say they are very concerned. When asked about the information they want most about AIDS, five out of ten parents (49%) say they need more information about "what to discuss with children about prevention." Getting information about where to go for help if exposed to the AIDS virus was the number two information need, picked by 12% of parents.

As part of the Kaiser Family Foundation's AIDS Public Information Project, announced at a press conference today in Washington, D.C., the Kaiser Family Foundation has produced a guide for parents on how to talk with their children about AIDS/HIV. *Talking With Your Kids About AIDS* is available free-of-charge to parents and others through the Kaiser Family Foundation's publication request line at 1 (800) 656-4KFF. Ask for the AIDS Public Information Kit.

-- more --

SENT BY AMFAR-DC 0-14-97 3-051M 202 002 1000-# 1/21

"As a nation, we should be proud of the job we've done to educate ourselves about AIDS. But, clearly, many Americans still want and need more information about this deadly disease, particularly when it comes to protecting our children," said Mark D. Smith, Executive Vice President, Kaiser Family Foundation. "Without a cure or vaccine, an informed public is still the best way to prevent the spread of AIDS."

Americans Concerned About AIDS Both Personally and for the Nation

Strong public support for specific actions may be driven by the fact that many Americans continue to report they are personally concerned about the spread of AIDS:

- Four out of ten say they are concerned about getting AIDS themselves, including 22% who are "very concerned" and 18% who are "somewhat concerned." (In a 1991 survey conducted by the Roper Organization, 27% of Americans said they were "very concerned" and 18% said they were "somewhat concerned about getting AIDS);
- 43% say AIDS is a "very serious" problem for people they know;
- 39% say they personally know or have known someone with AIDS or the HIV virus;
- Three quarters (74%) agree that "people who get AIDS are no different from people like me in their values and goals."

Minorities and those with low incomes and less education are most likely to be personally concerned about AIDS. A majority (55%) of African Americans and 38% of Hispanics say they are personally "very concerned" about getting AIDS, as compared to 16% of whites. More than a third (35%) of people with annual incomes under \$10,000 say they are "very concerned," as compared with only 14% of those with incomes over \$50,000 per year. Similarly, while 34% of those without a high school degree say they are "very concerned" about getting AIDS, only 14% of college graduates say they are.

Four out of ten (44%) of Americans name AIDS as the "most urgent health problem facing this nation" -- more than any other health issue, including cancer (27%) or rising health care costs and lack of health care coverage (27%). (Multiple responses accepted.) These ratings are generally consistent with earlier survey findings from six years ago, when 49% of Americans named AIDS as "the most urgent health problem" over other health concerns (*Los Angeles Times* poll, 1/90). Moreover, many Americans (48%) fear that the country is "losing ground" in the fight against the disease. Perhaps as a result, half of the population thinks federal spending to fight AIDS is "too low" as compared with spending on other health and medical problems.

AIDS in America. Last year the number of reported AIDS cases in the United States passed the half million mark. More than 300,000 people in the U.S. have died from AIDS. Recent trends in the epidemic include an increase in the proportion of cases occurring among women (now 18% of all AIDS cases) and a growing impact on minorities. The prevalence of AIDS is six times higher among African Americans and three times higher among Hispanics than among whites.

Americans Perceive Some Progress in Fight Against AIDS

While many Americans don't seem to see larger gains in the fight against AIDS, they appear to be encouraged by the progress that has been made to date in some aspects of AIDS prevention and treatment. Significant percentages of Americans think at least "some" progress has been made in:

- protecting people who get blood transfusions from AIDS-tainted blood, 87%;
- keeping people who have AIDS alive longer, 70%;
- reducing the spread of AIDS among gay men, 65%;
- reducing the spread of AIDS to sexually active heterosexuals, 64%;
- reducing the spread of AIDS from pregnant women to their children, 62%;
- reducing the spread of AIDS among teenagers, 59%;
- reducing the spread of AIDS among IV drug users, 48%; and
- finding a cure, 47%.

Furthermore, eight out of ten Americans (81%) say a greater investment in AIDS research would be effective in fighting the spread of AIDS and most (58%) say federal spending on AIDS research and treatment of people with AIDS has been worth the cost.

Americans Generally Informed about AIDS/HIV, Although Some Gaps in Knowledge Persist

Surveys generally find that Americans are ill informed about most national issues, but not when it comes to AIDS/HIV. Most Americans are fairly well-informed about the disease itself -- the transmission, prevention, and treatment of AIDS/HIV. They know that:

- AIDS can be transmitted during sexual intercourse, 97%;
- a pregnant woman with AIDS can pass the virus to her baby, 94%;
- no vaccine is currently available to protect a person from getting AIDS, 88%; and
- drugs are available that can "lengthen the life of a person infected with AIDS," 75%.

Most people (54%), however, think 100,000 or fewer Americans have died from AIDS, when in fact it's more than three times that number. While underestimating the number of lives lost to AIDS, many Americans (51%) overstate the impact here relative to the rest of the world, believing that half or more of all AIDS cases occur in this country. In reality, 38% do.

Some important gaps in knowledge about the prevention and treatment of AIDS persist:

- Seven out of ten Americans do not believe (or are unsure whether) a pregnant woman with AIDS can "reduce the risk of her baby being born infected by taking certain drugs." (In February 1994, the National Institutes of Health released the findings from clinical trials indicating that zidovudine (AZT) therapy reduced by as much as two-thirds the risk of perinatal HIV transmission from infected pregnant women to their infants);
- A majority (52%) think "on average" AIDS symptoms develop within 5 years of HIV infection, including 12% who think symptoms usually appear much sooner, within 6

months or less. (On average, AIDS symptoms develop between 5-10 years after infection); and

- Half of the population (51%) incorrectly thinks a person can get AIDS while “giving or donating blood for use by others.” (There are no known cases of HIV transmission as a result of donating blood. Some of the confusion may be related to perceived risk of receiving blood transfusions. Even so, according to a recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the actual risk of HIV transmission in a Red Cross center is one for every 450,000-660,000 donations of screened blood.)

“As the findings about Americans’ awareness about preventing the spread of AIDS from mother to child indicate, being ‘aware’ of a problem – or, in this case, even that progress is being made – does not necessarily translate into knowledge about what options exist,” said Dr. Smith.

Significant Percentages of Americans Distrustful of Information About AIDS/HIV

Although most Americans believe they are receiving accurate information about the AIDS epidemic, significant percentages are dubious about what the government and media are telling:

- More than a third (34%) do not believe the government is telling the whole truth about AIDS; and
- A quarter do not believe the media is telling the whole truth about AIDS.

In addition, fewer but still some Americans question the origins of the epidemic:

- Eighteen percent believe there is some truth to reports that the AIDS virus was produced in a germ-warfare laboratory; and
- Twelve percent believe that AIDS came from God to punish homosexual behavior.

Methodology

The Kaiser Survey on Americans and AIDS/HIV was a national random-sample telephone survey of 1,511 adults, 18 years and older, including over samples of 250 African Americans and 250 Hispanics. The survey was designed by the Kaiser Family Foundation and conducted by the Foundation and Princeton Survey Research Associates (PSRA) between November 27-December 17, 1995, prior to Magic Johnson’s announcement that he would resume playing professional basketball. The margin of sampling error for the national sample is plus or minus 3 percent. The margin of sampling error may be higher for some of the sub-sets looked at in this analysis, which have smaller populations.

* * *

The Kaiser Family Foundation, based in Menlo Park, California, is a non-profit, independent national health care philanthropy and is not associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries. The Foundation's work is focused on four main areas: health policy, reproductive health, HIV, and health and development in South Africa.

Copies of the actual questionnaire and top line data for the findings reported in this release are available by calling the Kaiser Family Foundation's publication request line at 1 (800) 656-4KFF and asking for the AIDS Public Information Kit. Included in this kit are: the *Talking With Your Kids About AIDS* guide and fact sheets on the HIV epidemic and specific topics related to AIDS prevention and treatment. Currently the fact sheets are available online at www.kff.org.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, August 18, 1997

Contacts: Mike Shriver 1-202-898-0414; Communication Works 1-415-255-1946

**U.S. Needle Exchange Programs Successfully
Approach Nine-Year Mark; Prove Efficacy*****Public Health Experts Urge Clinton Administration
to Lift Federal Ban on Funding of Syringe Exchange*****WHEN:** Wednesday, August 20th, 1997; 11:30am**WHERE:** Zinger Room, National Press Club, 529 14th St., NW

WHAT: Public health officials, doctors, researchers, AIDS activists and drug treatment professionals will discuss nine years of successful and safe operation of U.S. syringe exchange programs, and urge the Clinton Administration to lift the ban on Federal funding for such programs. The group will highlight the extensive body of scientific evidence which demonstrates that removing HIV contaminated syringes from circulation and replacing them with sterile ones is the most effective form of AIDS prevention for drug users, their sexual partners and their children; and that needle exchange programs do not encourage drug use. In fact, such programs provide a gateway to drug treatment.

WHY: The Clinton Administration has the opportunity to save, literally, tens of thousands of lives in the next several years, if it lifts the ban now. Secretary Shalala, in a February 1997 report to Senators Specter and Harkin, concluded that needle exchange programs can be effective. To date, however, despite a growing chorus of voices urging her to do so, the Secretary has not acted. The assembled group will urge the Clinton Administration to consider the science, not politics, when it comes to matters of public health. Current information indicates that:

- Syringe exchange, according to every study of such programs in the United States, reduces the transmission of AIDS and does not increase drug use
- Cases of AIDS to date are related to needle sharing behavior, or one third of the total; injection drug use or sex with an injector accounted for over 90% of new AIDS cases among women from July 1994 to July 1996 (where an exposure category was identified); over 93% of new AIDS cases in the same period among children was related to injection drug use by parent or parents' sexual partner (where parental exposure category was identified)
- Each preventable case of AIDS costs American taxpayers conservatively \$100,000, while the cost of a syringe is as low as 10 cents; and
- Two previous polls, conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Tarrance Group/Lake Sosin Snell & Associates, both found that a majority of the American public favors needle exchange programs to stop the spread of AIDS.

WHO: Speakers (list in formation):

Mohammad Akhter, MD, MPH, Executive Director, American Public Health Association
Victoria L. Sharp, MD, Director, AIDS Center Program, St. Lukes-Roosevelt Hospital
Denise Paone, Ed.D, Assistant Director of Research, Beth Israel Chemical Dependency Institute
Jane Silver, MPH, Public Policy Director, American Foundation for AIDS Research
Harry Simpson, Executive Director, Community Health Awareness Group, Detroit, MI
Jim Graham, Executive Director, Whitman-Walker Clinic, Washington, DC

Sponsors:

AIDS Action Council, National Association of People with AIDS, National Coalition to Save Lives Now!



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN

1101 14th Street NW
Washington, DC 20005
website <http://www.hrc.org>
phone 202 628 4160
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Action Alert

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, Nov. 25, 1997

Contact: Sloan C. Wiesen
Phone: (202) 216-1553

URGE SHALALA TO CONFIRM NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS DO NOT PROMOTE ILLEGAL DRUG USE

Give Congress Sound Basis for Approving Use of Federal Funds for NEPs

As part of the appropriations process in the first half of the 105th Congress, federal legislators delayed until March 31 the authority of Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala to approve federal funding for needle exchange programs aimed at limiting the spread of HIV and AIDS.

The Human Rights Campaign is disappointed that the committee needlessly delayed the secretary's authority. The science exists right now to demonstrate that needle exchange programs are effective and do not increase illegal drug use. This delay will only mean that more people will become HIV-infected.

HRC has called on Shalala to issue a report immediately stating that needle exchange programs are effective and do not increase illegal drug use. This would lay the groundwork for her approval of the use of federal funds on March 31.

Needle exchange programs provide intravenous drug users with sterile syringes in exchange for used ones. Such programs have been implemented in more than 100 communities around the country, and have been shown to stem the spread of HIV and other blood-borne diseases transmitted through the sharing of injection equipment.

Approximately one-third of reported AIDS cases are related to intravenous drug use.

In February, a report by HHS found that needle exchange programs are effective in slowing the spread of HIV and AIDS. Six federally funded studies have reported that needle exchange programs reduce HIV transmission and do not increase drug use.

Also in February, a panel of public health experts at the National Institutes of Health concluded that needle exchange programs are a powerful and proven weapon in the war against HIV and AIDS.

In July, the American Medical Association endorsed needle exchange programs, joining such groups as the American Public Health Association, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. The American Bar Association endorsed them in August.

Plus, a majority of the American public — 55 percent — favors needle exchange programs as a method to curb the spread of HIV and AIDS, according to a bipartisan poll conducted for the Human Rights Campaign.

Act Now

Call Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala and urge her to issue a report immediately stating that needle exchange programs are effective and do not increase illegal drug use.

Secretary Shalala's office can be reached at (202) 690-7000. Or write to her at the Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20201.

Then, urge your U.S. senators and representative to consider the scientific evidence and support Shalala's authority to allow federal funds to go to local communities for responsible needle exchange programs.

Call your senators and representative through the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121. If you aren't sure who your members of Congress are, just ask the switchboard operator and you will be informed and then connected. You can also send electronic messages to Congress through the Human Rights Campaign's online action center at <http://www.hrc.org>. Write to Congress through the mail as well. Include your name and address, and send your politely worded letter to:

The Honorable _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that lesbian and gay Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community. To join, call (800) 777-4723.

- 30 -

FRC Press Release
Re: Needle Exchange

Richard Socarides 08/13/97 02:55:51 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: FRC Press Release on Needle Exchange Programs

----- Forwarded by Richard Socarides/WHO/EOP on 08/13/97 02:54 PM -----



Doug Case @ sdsu.edu
08/13/97 01:31:00 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Stuart D. Rosenstein, Richard Socarides

cc:

Subject: FRC Press Release on Needle Exchange Programs

FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL
PRESS RELEASE

Received From: Family_Research_Council@townhall.com

Reply-To: corrdept@frc.org

Subject: Press Release - Needle Exchange Programs

If you have any questions or comments about this press release
or about the Family Research Council, please visit our web
site at:

<http://www.frc.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 13, 1997
CONTACT: Kristin Hansen, (202) 393-2100

Media Advisory

ARE TAXPAYERS READY TO SUBSIDIZE HEROIN ADDICTS?

FRC TO INTRODUCE NATIONAL POLL ON
NEEDLE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Donna Shalala is feeling the heat. The
American Medical Association, the National Institutes of

Health, the U.S. Conference on Mayors, and others are "strongly urging" her to lift the ban on federally funded needle exchange programs (NEPs). Last month, the Washington Post said that "study after study shows that the exchanges do not promote greater use of illegal drugs" (July 14). On July 8, the Los Angeles Times reported that "several major studies have shown that the programs that give addicts clean needles in exchange for used ones decrease HIV infection in injected-drug users by 30%." And Rep. Elijah Cummings told USA Today that NEPs have "cut the spread of the virus while not increasing drug use" (August 5). But is this the whole truth? Are NEPs stopping the spread of AIDS?

In 1986, Switzerland began implementing NEPs. Chaos resulted. Syringes were made available in every pharmacy, and then in public vending machines. Zurich's Platzpitz Park was opened as a "safe haven" for Zurich's own drug addicts and needles were distributed freely. The city was soon flooded with foreign addicts and the number of exchanged needles skyrocketed to 12,000 per day! In 1992, the city closed the distribution center and thousands of addicts relocated to a nearby abandoned railway station called Letten. There, it evolved into a war zone among gangs dealing drugs, while the number of exchanged needles reached 15,000 per day. By February 1995, Letten was closed. Addicts were moved to government-sponsored centers and "shooting galleries."

The result -- Switzerland now claims the highest number of heroin addicts and the second highest HIV infection rate in Europe. It also experiences Europe's highest heroin drug overdose death rate each year.

Now, the United States may be on the verge of federally funding NEPs, but the Family Research Council will fight to keep this from happening.

On August 20, FRC will release an unprecedented national poll declaring what the American people really think about needle exchanges. Anti-drug leaders will join FRC's president Gary Bauer and senior policy adviser Robert Maginnis to brief the press on this urgent matter. The meeting will be held in the National Press Club's Conference Room at 10 a.m.

This message has been forwarded as a free informational service. Please do not publish, or post in a public place on the Internet, copyrighted material without permission and attribution. Forwarding of this material should not necessarily be construed as an endorsement of the content. In fact, sometimes messages from anti-gay organizations are forwarded as "opposition research."



081312DO.TX

Message Sent To:

Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
Sandra Thurman/OPD/EOP
Todd A. Summers/OPD/EOP
Christopher C. Jennings/OPD/EOP
Joshua Gotbaum/OMB/EOP
Maria Echaveste/WHO/EOP

[16] From: "aidsact@CritPath.Org" <aidsact@CritPath.Org> at -FABRIK/Internet 8/24/97 11:18PM (3072 bytes: 66 ln)

To: Jay Blotcher at AMFAR-NY,

"Multiple recipients of list" <aidsact@critpath.org> at -FABRIK/Internet
Subject: FRC: Decapitation to Stop AIDS

----- Message Contents -----

From: aidsact@CritPath.Org

Date: Sun, Aug 24, 1997 11:18 PM

Subject: FRC: Decapitation to Stop AIDS

To: Jay Blotcher; Multiple recipients of list

The briefing materials distributed by the Family Research Council at their press conference on August 20th included a paper prepared by Robert Maginnis entitled "Will Exchanging Needles Save America's Future?" The conclusion, the final paragraph, of this long piece, which 'reviews' the existing arguments for needle exchange, falsely describes the Zurich needle park experiment as a 'needle exchange' and expresses concern about the 'message sent to America's youth' is as follows:

"In April 2, 1995, Saudi Arabia BEHEADED three drug smugglers. A little earlier, Singapore did the same. There are no NEPs in Riyadh and a few addicts on Singapore's streets. Neither contry has an AIDS epidemic."

It is interesting to note that during the FRC's press conference, mcginnis urged the Clinton administration to support the position of General McCaffrey, and resist lifting the ban on needle exchange. That same day, McCaffrey released a statement which, according to USA Today, 'says that at a time when he is pushing for a \$170 million ad campaign to keep teens off drugs, syringe exchanges send "the wrong message."'

So far this is the only official Clinton Administration statement on needle exchange. I wonder if McCaffrey, and the Clinton Administration, also support the introduction of decapitation as a viable AIDS prevention strategy.

SEPTEMBER 17TH, NOON, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, WASHINGTON, DC.
EVERYONE DESERVES TO LIVE.

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National Coalition to Save Lives Now!
22 West 27th Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10001
212.213.6376
fax 212.213.6582
email: ncsln@dti.net

website: <http://www.safeworks.org/savelivesnow/>
DISCUSSION: email "ncsln-request@drugtext.nl" with the line "join ncsln"

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(8.8.5/pe/sol2/mh/970318) with SMTP

id CAA01334; Mon, 25 Aug 1997 02:18:16 -0400 (EDT)

Date: Mon, 25 Aug 1997 02:18:16 -0400 (EDT)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Sue Rochman
Communications Director
415-255-4547**

Gay Physicians Praise U.S. Mayors' Call for Lifting the Ban on Federal Funding for Needle Exchange Call on Secretary of Health and Human Services to Take Action

SAN FRANCISCO (June 24, 1997) — In light of the U.S. Conference of Mayors' resolution to seek an end to the current restrictions on the use of federal funds for needle exchange, the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association today again called on U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala to permit federal funds to be used for needle exchange programs.

Since 1987, GLMA, the San Francisco-based national organization of more than 1,800 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender physicians and medical students, has urged public officials throughout the country to implement needle exchange programs to help decrease the spread of HIV and thereby save tens of thousands of lives each year.

"It is long past time to stop playing politics with public health," said GLMA Executive Director Ben Schatz, a member of the President Clinton's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS. "The public health consensus has long been that needle exchange is critical to reducing HIV transmission. The resolution reaffirms that there is political consensus as well. The administration should realize that there is no excuse for any further delay."

Many GLMA members have been at the forefront of HIV prevention and treatment since the onset of the AIDS epidemic. "It is clear to physicians
(more)

who are on the front lines that any new infection through the exchange of needles could have been prevented," said GLMA President Jocelyn White, MD, a Portland, Ore., internist. "It is significant for us as physicians that the mayors of our cities, who have seen first hand the devastation the HIV epidemic has brought to their own communities, have the political will to stand up for what they know to be good public health policy."

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The Gay and Lesbian Medical Association is an organization of more than 1,800 lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered physicians, medical students, and their supporters in all 50 U.S. states and 12 countries. Founded in 1981, GLMA works to combat homophobia within the medical profession and in society at large and to promote quality health care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered patients.