VOLUME 1 ISSUE 4

ODC NEWS & VIEWS

JULY & AUGUST 2007

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- 2007 LEGISLATIVE UPDATES
- BIG NEWS FROM LOVE & ACTION
- MIND, BODY & SPIRIT

No Energy? Don't Forget Your Diet!

BY TIM HORN

HIV and "fatigue"—a general term used to describe feeling exhausted, sleepy, or a general lack of energy—often go hand-in-hand. In order for your body to perform normal functions, energy is required. And a key source of energy is nutrition.

If you have fatigue, you should make sure your diet is okay. First, you should make sure your weight is normal. There are also blood tests to look for important nutritional factors, such as albumin, potassium, and other important vitamins and minerals.

Protein, fatty acids, and carnation are important dietary

elements. If you're not eating enough of these, your muscles might not be functioning properly. This is called muscle fatigue. Certain vitamins and minerals have also been shown to be low in HIV+ people and are often associated with weight loss and fatigue. These include low levels of foliate; vitamins B12, A, and C; as well as substances such as carotene and zinc.

Working with a nutritionist, you can figure out what your dietary needs are. Talk with your doctor about seeing a nutritionist. Even if you do not suffer from fatigue, there is no time like the present to prevent it from happening in the first place.

Tim works for the Physicians' Research Network (PRN) in New York City.

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2007 Legislative Updates:

Illinois General Assembly Passes Key HIV/AIDS Legislation, Negotiations Continue

SPRINGFIELD, IL (June 13, 2007) —The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) monitored and responded to 50 legislative measures this year, including nearly a dozen bills pertaining to HIV testing. Key legislative accomplishments this year include updated provisions governing the offer of voluntary HIV testing, the creation of a new lottery game to finance community-based HIV prevention and care services, and expansion of Illinois' Medicaid buy-in program for people with disabilities. The legislature began its overtime session June 1 to finalize the state budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007. AFC will continue to monitor legislative activities, including action by Governor Rod Blagojevich on legislation cleared by both chambers. The list of bills AFC monitored and responded to this session follows below. For complete information on each bill, including a list of co-sponsors and the bill text, please click on the bill number or visit the Illinois General Assembly.

Stay tuned to AFC's Statewide Advocacy Network for the latest HIV/AIDS policy news in Illinois. Join the network at www.aidschicago.org.

Key: HB=House Bill; SB=Senate Bill; HR=House Resolution; SR=Senate Resolution; **Important legislation of note.

HIV TESTING

****Prenatal HIV Testing / HB1759 (House Sponsor: Rep. Mary Flowers, D-Chicago.)**

AFC Position: Support

Issue: Directs healthcare professionals who treat pregnant women to provide opt-out, voluntary HIV counseling and testing unless the woman has already been tested during pregnancy or refuses in writing. AFC, AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, ACLU of Illinois, Pediatric AIDS Chicago Prevention Initiative, Chicago Department of Public Health, Illinois Hospital Association, Illinois State Medical Society, and Illinois Department of Public Health assisted Rep. Flowers in developing an amendment to the bill to ensure that pregnant women receive pre-test counseling and are informed of their right to refuse HIV testing.

Status: The bill passed the full House unanimously on April 20 and the Senate unanimously on May 17. It awaits the Governor's signature.

HIV PREVENTION

****"Quality of Life" Scratch-off Lottery Game / HB 315 and SB 774 (House Sponsor: Rep. Karen Yarbrough, D-Broadview; Senate Sponsor: Sen. Jacqueline Collins, D-Chicago.)**

AFC Position: Support

Issue: Directs the Department of Revenue to create a "Quality of Life" scratch-off lottery game. Net revenue would be used to fund HIV prevention, care, research, and education via the Department of Public Health and through grants to other public or private organizations that serve populations at high-risk for HIV infection. View AFC's fact sheet.

Status: HB 315 passed the full House on May 2, 66-49, but was not heard in the Senate. SB 774 passed the Senate 37-13 on May 9 and passed the House 69-44 on May 31. It awaits the Governor's signature.

HEALTH CARE AND TREATMENT

****Health Benefits for Workers with Disabilities (HBWD) Expansion / HB1256 (House Sponsor: Sara Feigenholtz, D-Chicago. Senate Sponsor: Don Harmon, D-Oak Park)**

AFC Position: Support

Issue: HBWD is a Medicaid buy-in program that allows people with disabilities to work, while maintaining access to affordable healthcare through Medicaid and a sliding-scale premium. HB1256 expands HBWD eligibility to include people earning 350% of the federal poverty level, or about $35,000 for individuals (current eligibility is200% or $20,000.) The bill increases the level of assets an eligible person can hold and exempts their retirement and medical savings accounts from calculations. This bill is supported by a coalition led by Health and Disabilities Advocates and AFC.

Status: The bill passed the House on March 22, and passed the Senate on May 16. It awaits the Governor's signature.

****Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Prevention / SB 937 (Senate Sponsor: Sen. Debbie DeFrancesco Halvorson, D-Chicago Heights. House Sponsor: Rep. Beth Coulson, D-Glenview)**

AFC Position: Support

Issue: Requires Illinois insurance companies to cover vaccination for HPV, a sexually transmitted infection that is linked to cervical cancer. IDPH is required to provide HPV vaccine educational materials to all girls entering the 6th grade.

Status: The bill passed the Senate 40-15 on March 30, and passed the House unanimously on May 29. The bill awaits the Governor's signature.

****Supplemental Medicare Coverage for People with Disabilities / SB 873 (Senate Sponsor: Sen. M. Maggie Crotty, D-Oak Forest; House Sponsor: Rep. Elaine Nekritz, D-Des Plaines.)**

AFC Position: Support

Issue: Requires Medicare supplemental insurance plans to be offered to people under 65 who qualify for Medicare due to disability, including people living with HIV/AIDS, at the same price charged to seniors. Currently, disabled people under 65 must pay significantly higher rates for Medicare supplemental insurance plans. This bill will significantly expand access to more affordable supplemental insurance plans for disabled individuals under 65.

Status: The bill passed the Senate unanimously on May 29, passed the House unanimously on June 1, and awaits the Governor's signature.

(Continued on page 3)

2007 Legislative Updates:

Continued from page 2

School Health Center Act / SB 715 (Senate Sponsor: Donne Trotter, D-Chicago; House Sponsor Sara Feigenholtz, D-Chicago)

Issue: Requires the Department of Human Services to initiate 20 new school health centers over a 5-year period beginning July 1, 2007, and build capacity with existing school health centers in the state. School health centers provide critical health services, including medically accurate HIV and STD prevention services and information.

Status: SB 715 passed the House and the Senate on May 31, 2007 and awaits the Governor's signature.

Health Facility Language Assistance / SB 544 (Senate Sponsor: Sen. William Delgado, D-Chicago.)

AFC Position: Support

Issue: The bill helps to ensure access to healthcare for limited-English and non-English speaking people, as well as deaf individuals.

Status: The bill passed the House and Senate and awaits the Governor's signature.

Health Data Task Force / SB 547 (Senate Sponsor: Sen. William Delgado, D-Chicago. House Sponsor: Rep. Julie Hamos, D-Evanston)

AFC Position: Support

Issue: Creates a task force to develop a linked data system to measure, analyze and report on the health of Illinois residents.

Status: The bill passed the Senate and the House unanimously and awaits the Governor's signature.

CIVIL RIGHTS & PROTECTIONS

****Human Rights for People with Disabilities / SB 593 (Senate Sponsor: Sen. John Cullerton, D-Chicago.)**

AFC Position: Support

Issue: Makes it a civil rights violation to deny or refuse a person with a disability full and equal enjoyment of goods of any public place or accommodation. The bill also prohibits discrimination, including HIV-related discrimination in medical offices. AFC is actively supporting this bill in coalition with Health and Disability Advocates and ACLU of Illinois.

Status: The bill passed both chambers unanimously and awaits the Governor's signature.

Short-term Guardianship / SB 913 (Senate Sponsor: John Cullerton, D-Chicago. House Sponsor: Barbara Flynn Currie, D-Chicago.)

AFC Position: Support

Issue: Allows a child with a short-term guardian to establish residency at the short-term guardians' home to allow the child to attend the local public school. Permanent guardianship must be established within one year (currently 60 days).

Status: Passed the House and Senate, and awaits the Governor's signature.

Continue Adoption Payments after an Adopted Parent's Death / SB 68 (Senate Sponsor: Mike Jacobs, D-Moline; House Sponsor: Sara Feigenholtz, D-Chicago).

AFC Position: Support

Issue: Previously, adoption payments ceased upon the death of the parent of an adopted child. This legislation will allow those adoption payments to continue until the child's new adoption is finalized. This bill will help children whose adopted parents are living with HIV/AIDS or other diseases.

Status: The bill passed the House on June 1, and awaits Senate approval of amendments made in the House.

Safe Homes Act Domestic Violence Amendment / SB 534 (Senate Sponsor: Raoul, D-Chicago)

AFC Position: Support

Issue: Authorizes tenants to request that landlords change the locks on the tenant's apartment if the tenant is under imminent threat of domestic or sexual violence, including when the threat is from another lessee under the same lease.

Status: SB 534 passed both chambers unanimously and awaits the Governor's signature.

House Joint Resolution Urging Solution to Extreme Poverty / HJR 46 (House Sponsor: Rep. Will Davis, D-East Hazel Crest)

AFC Position: Support

Issue: The resolution recognizes the efforts of the Lieutenant Governor's office to organize and facilitate public hearings on extreme poverty in Illinois and urges General Assembly members to participate.

Status: The resolution was adopted in the House on June 1, 2007.

OPEN DOOR CLINIC

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UPCOMMING EVANTS

JULY

02 - Mixed Support Group 5:30p (A)

03 - Mixed Support Group 5:00p (E)

06 - Mixed Support Group 5:00p (A)

13 - Prairie State Legal 1:00p—3:00p (A)

16 - Mixed Support Group 5:00p (E)

17 - CAC Meeting 6:00p (St. Charles)

19 - Bingo 5:30p to 8:00p (E)

20 - Mixed Support Group 5:00p (A)

27 - Prairie State Legal

(A) Aurora

(E) Elgin

Dates are subject to change

Please call to verify dates

AUGUST

01 - Mixed Support Group 12:00p (A)

03 - Mixed Support Group 5:00p (A)

06 - Hispanic Support Group 5:00p (A)

07 - Mixed Support Group 5:00p (E)

10 - Prairie State Legal 1:00p—3:00p(A))

16 - Bingo 5:30p to 8:00p (E)

17 - Mixed Support Group 5:30p (A)

20 - Mixed Support Group 5:00p (E)

24- Prairie State Legal 1:00p—3:00p (A)

24 - Newsletter Released Available at Clinics

31 - Mixed Support Group 5:30p (A)

Big News from Love & Action

We are having an all-day RETREAT at Riverwoods Christian Center! The date is September 22, the time is 9am to 9 pm or a bit later. Riverwoods is located north of St. Charles, right on the Fox River. What will we do? Just sit and enjoy the beautiful, natural surroundings, take a walk through woods on trails, maybe a canoe ride and answer some important questions. We all know that babies don't stay babies very long! Neither should baby Christians! So now, how do we grow? What next? Come, find out and enjoy good food and time together. See you there. Call 584 5380 if you need a ride.

Ladies lunches at Bergs in St. Charles, Wednesdays at noon. July 11, August 15 and September 12.

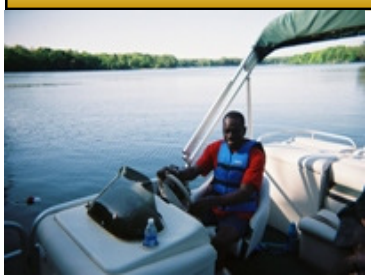
We would like to resume our men's Bible studies. But this time, we are going to invite the gals as well. For the summer months, we will try meeting at Open Door in Elgin right after the monthly Wednesday meeting with Marcus. Dates are July 11 and August 1. We will see how this time works and listen to any suggestions as to time in the fall.

Check out our Love and Action website. www.loveandaction.net

We said goodbye to George Blankenship on June 26 in Elgin. George was a faithful Love and Action volunteer and supporter.

We will always remember George as the man with a cheerful smile and a kind word for everyone. He was a servant and a follower of Christ, so we know that George is with his Savior, enjoying the mysteries and joys of heaven. Goodbye, George

Mind, Body & Spirit



BY Louis Hobson

The retreat was held May 17-20, 2007 at Timber Pointe Campgrounds on Lake Bloomington, in Houston Illinois. The purpose was to enlighten and uplift individuals whose lives have been affected by HIV.

The retreat was attended by HIV survivors from all across the state. Stories were shared by the participants, these stories offered hope and insight to all. Many of the participants had suffered the same trial and tribulations, but their unique stories of survival were a true inspiration to us all.

All the participants were encouraged to participate in classes that informed them on the virus topics, such as; HIV+ Back to Work Issues, Family and Children AIDS Network, Humor and Your Immune System and Nutrition and You.

Participants had leisure time activities that they could take part in including boating, canoeing, swimming, massages, dancing, and arts and crafts as well as various other activities.

The retreat ended with a closing promise of hope and determination for a better and more fulfilling life.

BY Kim

The retreat is something that every one should attend at some point. It was the most relaxing three days. It was worry free, because everyone was exactly the same, whether they were Black, Hispanic, or White, gay or straight. Everyone was treated the same. We made so many friends with the other clients as well as the staff.

We walked, hiked, swam and attended small groups. Sometimes we simply just sat and talked to get to know each other.

When you arrive you might be shy, quite or to yourself, but somehow everyone makes you feel so comfortable that you come out of your shell so far that you don't turn back. Believe me you bring that peace home with you. It has been two months and I am still feeling the peace within.