

PLATO wins award for cop training

by Greg Halinda

The Edmonton Police Department's success with a U of A-developed, computer-based training program has resulted in an award for the two men who developed the program.

Michael Szabo, manager of the U of A's Instructional Systems Group, and Willie Wosar from the training section of the EDP, won the Exemplar Project Award for their introduction of an effective system of instructorless training to the EPD.

Police officers use the university's PLATO computer to enhance their training in areas such as weapons offences, powers of arrest, and use of the dog unit in investigations.

The EPD has used PLATO since 1983 and estimates it has saved them over \$300 thousand in training costs.

The Exemplar Award is given by the Association for the Development of Computer-Based Instruction Systems (ADCIS). It recognizes strength, uniqueness, clarity, and effectiveness of computer-based training (CBT) projects.

"We submitted a paper to the international ADCIS conference which met in November 1986," said Szabo. He just found out about the award last Friday.

"It's just recognition, no cash," he said.

The co-developer of the project, Willie Wosar, was a student of Szabo at the U of A before he graduated and left for the city police department. Wosar, a special

list in education, is not a police officer.

The EPD wanted a new way to train its officers, both in sharpening skills and preparing for promotional examination.

Conventional training methods consisted of a two-week classroom course that an officer would have

to take every five years. Six full-time instructors were required to administer the courses to the 1100-person police force.

With CBT, no instructors are needed. Each officer takes a one-hour lesson per month on a PLATO terminal at his or her convenience.

The system automatically records

the officer's progress. The EPD reports scores on promotional exams for constables up nearly 10 percentage points.

On-the-job performance increased too. For instance, after the course "Dog Handling at the Scene of a Crime" was introduced, both requests for and apprehensions

with the dog unit rose by 27 and 45 per cent, respectively.

The Instructional Systems Group at U of A is considered one of the top five computer-based instruction services in North America. Clients include major corporations and universities throughout the world.

Hepatitis shot to cost more

by Laurel Tokuda

Budget cuts may even be affecting your health.

Immunization for the sexually transmitted disease, hepatitis B, currently available free at all provincial health clinics, may soon cost \$150 for three shots because of funding cuts.

Only people in the high-risk groups require immunization. These groups are: homosexual and bisexual males, multi-partnered heterosexuals, intravenous drug abusers, dentists, hospital staff, and anyone else working with blood products or secretions of the human body.

Dr. Predy, at the Edmonton Board of Health, said that employers (such as hospitals) would probably pay for their employees' shots as a job-related risk, but "people who are at risk through their lifestyles would have to pay for their own."

If people in the high-risk groups

were not immunized and were infected, a "small proportion" would not build immunities and re-infection could "develop (into) chronic hepatitis", says Dr. Barbara Romanowski of Sexually Transmitted Disease Control.

She adds that re-infection is a "danger to the individual who does

not practice safe sex."

"The vaccine is expensive to produce" because it is "processed from human plasma," says Dr. Predy.

He adds, "The average person would not need the vaccine" because there is such a low risk for them to contract the disease.

Tom Gale from the AIDS Network of Edmonton says that hepatitis B is a concern but "gay STD's are at an all-time low."

The most noticeable symptoms of hepatitis B are jaundice, white stools, and black urine. Chronic hepatitis can lead to permanent liver damage.



The equipment and the vaccine against a deadly virus

photo Paul Menzies

ACT petition never meant to ask for 6 percent fee increase

by John Watson

Asking for a six per cent tuition fee increase was not what the Anti-Cutbacks Team (ACT) had intended to do when writing its petition, currently signed by about 2,500 people.

According to Martin Levenson, ACT chairman, ACT thought it was asking for no tuition fee increase this year.

Although the letter of the petition does not specify this, says Levenson, "you still have to look at the spirit of (the petition)."

Alberta government guidelines allow the university to increase tuition fees by one and a half times the increase in the university's budget for the previous year.

The U of A's operating grant increased by four per cent this year over last. Under the guidelines, next year's tuition increase could be up to one and a half times that (six per cent).

Levenson said ACT thought this year's tuition increase would be based on this year's university budget. The U of A will receive a three per cent cut in funding — that would translate into no tuition fee increase.

Advanced Education minister Dave Russell has told university officials the tuition fee guidelines will be removed (meaning the six per cent is no longer the maximum increase).

"We'd be happy if we only got a six per cent increase," said Levenson.

According to Levenson anybody who signed the petition but misunderstood its intent can have their names removed.

"If people want to take their name off the list they should come

and see the ACT," said Levenson. The ACT office is in Room 280 SUB.

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