

While it may be that the negotiation of a National Strategy requires bilateral discussions at the highest levels, we do not see why the FPT Committee should not also have been, and could not still be, a useful vehicle for some of the interchange, discussion and negotiation, at least on certain issues, that will be necessary to arrive at a truly comprehensive National Strategy. It should also have a role to play after the Strategy is fully developed. NAC-AIDS has suggested that the management body for the Strategy should report annually to a meeting of the ministers of health and social services, chaired by the Minister of National Health and Welfare. That would certainly give the implementation of the Strategy good public visibility and is an excellent suggestion, but it may be observed that much of the real implementation of the Strategy will take place at a lower level in the federal and provincial departments of health.

The membership of the FPT Committee would appear to include those federal and provincial senior health officials who will be a critical part of the effective implementation of a National Strategy. If decision-makers rather than observers from some provinces are needed, then this should be arranged; but so long as the federal government and the provinces with the majority of HIV and AIDS cases are so represented, the Committee should be able to do useful work. These senior officials will be key participants in the Strategy. Perhaps more importantly, they will have to be able to work together, sometimes in a committee forum.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

The Committee, having noted with concern that the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee has not met in over a year, recommends that this body be convened as soon as possible as an additional mechanism to facilitate the development and implementation of a National Strategy.

THE COORDINATION OF THE FEDERAL RESPONSE TO AIDS

The principal agency in the fight against AIDS in Canada, and the primary source of funding for that fight, is the federal Department of Health and Welfare (DHW). The Committee heard testimony from a number