

Canada needs comprehensive AIDS blueprint

OTTAWA (CUP) — Researchers at hospitals and universities across the country are putting in overtime to get their first comprehensive report on the impact of AIDS in Canada ready for publication early in the new year.

"There is concern that funds are becoming available to combat the AIDS problem and they are not necessarily being wisely spent. We need to decide what is right for Canada," said M.R. Dence, executive director of the Royal Society of Canada.

The Society received a \$158,000 grant from the federal ministry of health and welfare to complete the study, which will examine the social, legal, ethical, medical, and economic impact of AIDS on Canadians.

"What is needed in Canada is a more comprehensive blueprint for what should be done about AIDS than what was coming out of current studies," said Dence.

Dence said existing studies like the Report on AIDS in Canada by the Standing Committee on National Health and Welfare and others by the National Advisory Committee on AIDS had too narrow a focus.

"We need a broader treatment"

"In each case (the studies were) too strongly focused on purely medical issues. We need a broader treatment, one that does not only look at the medical side of the story," said Dence.

Dence said the most important part of the study is the research into realistic projections of the spread of AIDS in Canada.

"We are trying to improve the forecasts. Just how serious is this? Is it the grave national crisis some view it as, is it something that can be taken in stride, or is it somewhere in between?"

"Most of our recommendations will be flavoured by the view we take on just how serious the problem is," said Dence. "For example, we must decide on whether everyone should be tested, which would cost thousands of millions of dollars, whether sufferers should be quarantined... There is the possibility of overreaction, as has been the case in some areas."

"fraught with uncertainty"

"Central" to the study, said Dence, is the sub-committee studying the economic impact of the disease.

Dr. Roderick Fraser, Dean of arts and sciences at Queens University, is chair of the subcommittee on epidemiology and economics for the study.

Fraser said the committee is trying to establish "as good a set of estimates as we can on the prevalence of persons with AIDS and the prevalence of those carrying the HIV-1 virus."

Fraser said current estimates are "fraught with uncertainty" and that we cannot depend on American projections.

"The New York Times Sunday Edition just reported that Haitian and Black communities had 18 to 20 times the levels of sufferers or carriers. Perhaps since Canada has a different racial mix, a more homogeneous population, there may not be these pockets where the situation is so serious," said Fraser, adding it is too early to draw conclusions, but these are the types of issues being studied.

Fraser also gave the example of intravenous drug users who contract the virus and the differences between American and Canadian users.

"There may be fewer users, proportionally in Canada, and those who are users are possibly healthier because of our health-care system. Canada may also be behind the U.S. in terms of the speed with which drug use is increasing. These are all questions that come under consideration when trying to provide accurate (Canadian) projections."

Fraser's committee is also looking at the major economic impacts of disease.

"We are trying to estimate as best we can the direct costs of health care for carriers or sus-

pected carriers by looking at the whole set of costs associated with health care. This includes hospitalization costs, drug costs, outpatient costs, screening costs, etc."

The committee is also researching the cost to society in terms of lost productivity resulting from individuals being so sick they cannot work, or dying prematurely.

"We have to estimate how many days of work would be missed, what are the average

salaries people with AIDS would have earned, how long these people would have been employed," he said.

To all students
The following is a list of hours for services at the two local synagogues:
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Mon. to Fri. 8 a.m. / 7 p.m.
Sat. 9 a.m.
(candle lighting 7 p.m. depending on sunset)
Sun. 9 a.m. / 7 p.m.
Public holidays 9 a.m.
Shaar Shalom (Conservative)
Fri. morning 8:15 a.m.
Sat. morning 9:15 a.m.
Rosh Hashanah
Sept. 23 — 7 p.m.
24 & 25 8 a.m. / 7 p.m.
Yom Kippur 6 p.m.
For further information, contact the synagogues.

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