

Private Members' Business

The Bureau of Communicable Disease Control has dedicated \$450,000 for five years to fund research in the area of sexually transmitted diseases. Recently two professional schools were funded for research that will study sexually transmitted disease education currently being provided within universities.

The outcome of this research will be published in academic journals and will be another step in the fight against sexually transmitted diseases. The Canada youth and AIDS study has implications for all areas of sexual health.

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A secondary analysis of the Canada youth and AIDS study of college and university students was funded and the findings published in June 1990. Analysis of the data revealed that many students are engaging in high risk sexual behaviour, despite being quite knowledgeable about safe sexual practices. Of particular concern was the finding that among college women, as the numbers of partners increase, there is a parallel increase in the use of oral contraceptives, but condom use declines.

Another secondary analysis in process will compare street youth, school dropouts, and grade 11 students. All of these studies that the government has supported have direct application to the primary prevention of sexually transmitted diseases.

An expert working group sponsored by health and welfare is currently developing national guidelines for sexual health education. The impetus for this project arose from a recommendation of the expert interdisciplinary advisory committee on sexually transmitted diseases in children and youth and will fulfil one of the recommendations made by the federal, provincial and territorial working group on adolescent reproductive health. These guidelines will be addressed to multi-sectoral groups implementing sexual and reproductive health programs. The guidelines will enhance the knowledge base of community workers and will assist with the development of sexual health educational programs in schools, in the work place, and in communities. These guidelines will also promote the comprehensive approach to sexual health as an important principle.

The recently published "Sexually transmitted diseases" pamphlet is an educational tool available for teenagers, parents and service providers. This pamphlet was a collaborative effort within National Health and Welfare and with the sexually transmitted disease directors from the provinces and territories. It describes the types of sexually transmitted diseases, as well as ways to prevent and treat them. The pamphlet will be distributed across Canada to school boards, public health agencies and organizations involved in sexual health education.

In another area the royal commission on new reproductive technologies is examining not only reproductive technologies but is placing a strong emphasis on the prevention of reproductive health problems, including sexually transmitted diseases. The final report is due in October 1992. The recommendations will have important implications for sexual health education.

Research in the area of sexual and reproductive health is an essential component of program planning and of implementation for governments, voluntary agencies and community groups. In turn, improved services and better information will help to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancies, unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and can lead to healthy sexual development.

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to Motion No. 44 put forward by my hon. colleague. To put the debate in perspective, I would like to read the content of this motion, and I quote:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of taking action to reduce the numbers of unwanted pregnancies in our society by reinstating a Family Planning Division at Health and Welfare Canada; reinstating funding to the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada at its previously adequate levels; establishing new programs to combat sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies; establishing a national clearing-house on family planning; and increasing funding for research on safe and effective methods of birth control.

The motion tabled by my colleague from British Columbia is extremely important considering the present situation in our society. Let me give a few examples of problems of sex and sexuality among young people today.

First of all, at least one out of five 14-year-olds and 50 per cent of young Canadians 16 years old and over are sexually active. This means it just is not true to say that young people are not interested in sex or sexuality. They