

TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES

*MAN TO MAN Workplan
April, 1994 - March 1995*

February, 1994

500
AID
1994



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The staff and volunteers of AIDS Vancouver's MAN TO MAN program welcome your input. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions about this report or any aspect of our work, we encourage you to contact us.

Additional copies of this report are available by contacting MAN TO MAN at the address below.

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A NOTE ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT
*Grant Writing from a Health
Promotion Model*

take
Pride in
take yourself
Care
of each
other

This document has two very distinct purposes.

It has been prepared to describe our thinking and activities to date as well as our workplan for 1994/95. It became clear soon after we began this process that the information we were compiling and the thinking that we were putting down on paper would be useful to a wider audience than the small group of government representatives charged with the task of assessing requests for 1994/95 funding.

MAN TO MAN receives many requests from other groups who work within gay communities throughout B.C. and across Canada and beyond, for information about our strategies and activities. Because of the more pressing needs requiring our attention and time to be addressed locally, we have, until now, not been able to provide a simple document that summarizes our rationale and describes our work.

This document, then, attempts to improve communication between people working with men who have sex with men, and thus strengthen community action within gay male communities and contribute to skill development and strategizing within similar programs working elsewhere within the epidemic.

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CONTENTS

I Overview in Brief.....	iv
II Introduction and Background:	
<i>Getting Here: The Last 10 Years</i>	1
III Strategic Outline and Rationale:	
<i>Turning Obstacles into Challenges.....</i>	5
IV 1994 Activity Plan:	
<i>Doing The Work.....</i>	8



OVERVIEW IN BRIEF

AIDS Vancouver's MAN TO MAN program promotes sexual health for gay and bisexual men, and for men who have sex with other men (MSM) but who do not self-identify as either gay or bisexual.

MAN TO MAN volunteers work as peer educators in a variety of projects, including staffing display tables, maintaining information centres around town and distributing safer sex information at community events. In a peer education project entitled *Operation Latex Shield*, volunteers receive ongoing training to equip them to work as sexual health educators and peer counselors in bathhouses and public sex environments, providing one-on-one education and resource referrals.

In addition to coordinating these volunteer activities, the staff of the MAN TO MAN program are engaged in a variety of community development initiatives: researching community needs; creating print materials and advertising campaigns promoting safer sex and self-esteem for gay and bisexual men; facilitating workshops, community forums and trainings addressing issues affecting the gay community; as well as coordinating the distribution of these materials and human resources throughout the province of British Columbia.

I INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

GETTING HERE: THE LAST TEN YEARS

Background

Eleven years ago, the first prevention education responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Canada were generated by the lesbian and gay communities of Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. These cities, with the largest and most organized gay communities in the country, had produced a cadre of experienced community organizers who had spent the previous decade learning how to set up organizations and lobby for political recognition. (Adam, 1992)

Given this history, when it became obvious that gay men were the group most acutely affected by AIDS and that governments would be slow to respond, it was a logical response for the communities themselves to take action. (Rayside and Lindquist, 1992)

The most pressing need at that time was to give gay men accurate information about how HIV was transmitted and how to have sex safely in light of this frightening new disease. Gay communities in North America, refusing to acquiesce to the erotophobic and homophobic advice of public health departments, pioneered the concept of "safer sex". The first print materials were direct, explicit and sex-positive, unlike any public health sex education literature that had ever been produced before.

Gradually the federal and some provincial governments responded to the growing crisis by providing organizational funding. In addition to the three

The Big Picture

In Canada, HIV infection and AIDS have primarily affected men who have sex with men (MSM).¹ As of December 1993, 9,083 cases of AIDS had been reported (Health and Welfare Canada, 1994). Of the reported cases in adults, 94% were male, and 81% of these occurred among MSM. In British Columbia, MSM men accounted for 92% of AIDS cases.

Cases of AIDS do not reflect the current status of all HIV infection, and accurate estimates of the presence of HIV are not possible because studies have not yet been conducted in the broad population. At present, Canadian estimates of the incidence of HIV infection among MSM rely predominantly on reports compiled from voluntary test seeking (Myers et al, 1993).

¹ The behaviour-based phrase "men who have sex with men" is used here to describe that broad continuum of men whose sexual identity diverges from their sexual behaviour. It includes therefore, community-identified gay men as well as non-community identified men who have sex with men.

largest urban centres, AIDS organizations were set up across the country, with dual mandates of providing support services and prevention education programs. Responding to funding pressure to broaden their mandates, many community-based AIDS organizations began to focus primarily on education of the "general public." As a result, they allocated fewer resources to targeting men who have sex with men, the population still most overwhelmingly affected.

Prevention education initiatives in the first decade of AIDS in Canada were marked by several characteristics:

- 1) *a sense of urgency that favoured action over careful planning;*
- 2) *little evaluation of the impact of programs;*
- 3) *a dependence on print material production as a major strategy;*
- 4) *a predominate focus on gay-community identified men; and*
- 5) *programs with little grounding in theories of sustained behaviour change.*

By the end of the 1980s, changes in assumptions about prevention education programming for gay men had begun to occur. It was clear that men who identified with the gay community were only a portion of a larger population. Research began to confirm that the stigma attached to homosexuality prevented many men from hearing messages originating in the gay community.

At the same time, many AIDS organizations across the country began to face complaints that they had lost touch with their original constituency and that gay men were being ignored in education efforts. In response, AIDS service organizations began to conduct needs assessments of their local communities to help them decide on the most appropriate programs for the future. The first such needs assessment was conducted at AIDS Vancouver in 1989 (Marchand, 1989). Since that time, others have followed in provinces across the country.

MAN TO MAN: The First 3 Years, 1990 - 1993



Much community consultation, a review of epidemiological trends with respect to MSM in the province of B.C., as well as analysis of the data collected by AIDS Vancouver's *Gay Community Needs Assessment*, resulted in the development and implementation of a specialized HIV prevention project targeting MSM in Greater Vancouver. MAN TO MAN was the name developed for this program.

From its inception, the MAN TO MAN model was based on four strategic assumptions:

- 1) *In order to provide a framework within which educational initiatives can take place, every effort must be made to assist in the affirmation, validation and empowerment of the gay community.*
- 2) *There exists within this target community a variety of learning needs, abilities and challenges, all of which need to be reflected in the overall strategy.*
- 3) *Successful intervention is dependent on the active and ongoing involvement of the community itself.*
- 4) *A consistent and long-term commitment to health education within the target community is required.*

As soon as MAN TO MAN's initial three year proposal was submitted by AIDS Vancouver and subsequently funded by the B.C. Ministry of Health through the City of Vancouver Health Department, work was under way to develop and deliver MSM-specific materials, workshops and direct outreach interventions.

As this work was proceeding locally, collaboration was under way nationally with the Canadian AIDS Society and its other member groups in *The Canadian Survey of Gay and Bisexual Men and HIV Infection: MEN'S SURVEY*.

1993 Highlights

- 25 regular and 10 occasional volunteers logged more than 1700 hours of service.
- More than 20,000 condoms and in excess of 25,000 brochures were distributed at gay venues and community events throughout the year, and across the province.
- Four independent print campaigns were developed and delivered.
- Vancouver's first gay community forum was organized and delivered around the question: "Why are Fags Still Fucking Without Condoms?"
- Papers and workshops were presented at: B.C. AIDS Conference, Vancouver; Tuberculosis and HIV: Emerging Issues Conference, Toronto, and at CAS Annual General Meeting in Montreal.
- Negotiations took place with F212° to secure our own room in the new bathhouse.
- A monthly column, entitled *Doing it With Pride* was established in Xtra West.
- Staff and volunteers participated in professional development through attendance at the National Gay and Lesbian Health Conference in Houston, Texas.
- Active participation on the part of MAN TO MAN contributed significantly to the evolution of AIDS Vancouver, as well as the Pacific AIDS Resource Centre (PARC).
- Collaboration and partnership with the AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) and Montreal's Sero-Zero led to the second national prevention campaign: *Take Pride in Yourself, Take Care of Each Other*.

Towards a Framework for Health Promotion

The *Men's Survey* follow-up discussions confirmed a rethinking in HIV/AIDS prevention education taking place in Canada. This new approach was first crystallized in the AIDSIDA Consensus Forum on prevention education in Quebec in 1992. Both the AIDSIDA Consensus report *The Voices of Experience* and the Men's Survey follow-up report *Gaily Forward* stress the importance of putting education and behaviour change into the context of the sociopolitical environment. There is a growing recognition among educators of the need to take an integrated community development approach to social and behaviour change.

This move away from a narrow focus on individual behaviour change to a broader focus on health promotion marks a significant reorientation to a process of enabling people to control and improve their own health. Strategies that promote health include building healthy public policy, creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, developing personal skills and bringing about appropriate changes in health services.

The conceptual framework of health promotion has provided a creative push for re-thinking prevention education programming. Already Health Canada's *AIDS Community Action Program (ACAP)* has recognized the importance of community development and mobilization as a basis for more effective initiatives aimed at reducing the rate of HIV transmission between men. For example, the recently funded *British Columbia Community Action Plan Pilot Study* (1994) developed by AIDS Vancouver is focussed on building community support systems for MSM throughout B.C. Implicit in this initiative is the assumption that HIV/AIDS education and support is just one of many health needs for MSM.

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MISSION STATEMENT

By promoting health and community development, AIDS Vancouver's MAN TO MAN program exists to assist members of British Columbia's gay male communities and other men who have sex with men in reducing the rate of HIV transmission between men.

As a community development program and health promotion initiative, MAN TO MAN's primary objective is:

To assist in the process of reducing the rate of HIV transmission by enabling MSM and the gay community itself to increase control over the determinants of health, by:

- 1) Assisting with the creation and maintenance of supportive environments;
- 2) Assisting with the promotion of health through public policy in all sectors;
- 3) Assisting with the development of personal, social, and political skills enabling individuals to take action to promote health;
- 4) Assisting with the orientation of health services by focussing attention away from curative and clinical services and towards the goal of health promotion;
- 5) Strengthening community action by supporting concrete and effective community action in defining priorities, making decisions, planning strategies and implementing them to achieve better health.

II STRATEGIC OUTLINE AND RATIONALE: *TURNING OBSTACLES INTO CHALLENGES*

Introduction

Although much of the literature offers reasons why MSM are not able to consistently practice safer sex. The most common reasons cited are alcohol and drug use, resistance to using condoms, problems with negotiating safer sex as well as temptation and pressure from partners difficult to turn down, it is clear that long-term maintenance of safer sex behaviours between men involves a complex (and not yet fully understood) psychosexual dynamic.

A recent San Francisco study of MSM (San Francisco Department of Public Health, 1993), set out to look beyond objective behaviour in an attempt to identify the deeper, underlying feelings, beliefs, and psychological factors that have developed within the gay male community after more than ten years of AIDS, and now interfere with the ability of MSM to maintain safer sex practices. In addition, a growing body of psychological literature exploring and describing the effects of a decade of disease, disfigurement, despair and death within the gay male community, points to the need for AIDS educators to rethink approaches developed earlier in the epidemic. (for example, Odets, 1993)

Outlined below are several key strategic issues arising out of these and other studies. Together they form the strategic outline of MAN TO MAN's 1994 objectives:

- 1) AIDS Education must evolve with the gay community as it moves into the second decade of the epidemic.

MAN TO MAN will continue to address the reality of the evolving needs of all groups of MSM by producing materials and outreach activities that maintain a cultural, linguistic and symbolic relevance to these target groups and their individual members.

- 2) Empowerment, self-esteem, community, and hope for the future.

MAN TO MAN will work towards increasing individual resolve with respect to health in general and safer sex in particular by recognizing and valuing the experiences of MSM in dealing with the epidemic, building self-esteem, strengthening ties to the community, building a future and creating a stronger identity for the community apart from the epidemic.

3) Social networks

MAN TO MAN will build on existing social networks between MSM, as these entrenched interpersonal relationships are the most effective routes of communication.

4) Personal responsibility

MAN TO MAN will encourage the maintenance of safer sex behaviours by acknowledging the enormous difficulties involved and by reinforcing a sense of responsibility equal to the task: every effort will be made to encourage MSM in the realization that they do have control over the type of sex they have and that others ask of them, and that it is within their power to sustain healthy choices.

5) Increased visibility

MAN TO MAN will endeavour to make its materials and activities more widely visible. All messages including the most basic information will be designed, distributed or delivered with as high a public profile as possible.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 1994

In 1994, MAN TO MAN will:

- In partnership with ACT produce a print resources campaign targeting MSM in relationships - *CAN YOU RELATE? Safer Sex in Gay Male Relationships*.
- In collaboration with the B.C. Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS and the B.C. Persons With AIDS Society, undertake a qualitative research project to identify the sexual needs and psychosexual environments of persons living with HIV in B.C.
- In partnership with CAS and members of the Tri-City Initiative, develop and deliver a national print resources campaign aimed at raising the self esteem of MSM - *KEYWORDS: Self Esteem and Safer Sex*.
- As part of the Tri-City Initiative, undertake the organization of a working meeting of gay men's health educators from across Canada as a satellite of the B.C. AIDS Conference.
- In consultation with the Gay Youth Advisory Committee, develop Vancouver's first safer sex campaign targeting young MSM.
- Remain responsive to the community's requests for both material resources (ie. print materials and condoms) and human resources (ie. workshops and trainings).
- Maintain a consistent volunteer presence at bars, bathhouses and community events, and coordinate three more "Hard Facts" Community Forums, in an on-going effort to actively engage MSM in dialogue about sexual health issues.
- Step up our outreach efforts and volunteer recruitment in public sex environments and university and college campuses.
- Formalize documentation on our approach to workshops and volunteer training, and create a "manifesto" explaining what we do and how and why we do it, which will allow us to export our work to other agencies.

6) Normalization of latex

MAN TO MAN will continue to distribute condoms and lubricant in an effort to further normalize these materials within the gay community. Community businesses will be encouraged to take responsibility for this role through partnership with the program.

7) Partnerships with the media

MAN TO MAN will continue to demand that the gay press expand their coverage and analysis of the epidemic in ways that help build the self-esteem and future of the community it serves, and provide a thoughtful dialogue on relevant issues.

1994 Target Groups

MAN TO MAN will continue to provide current information, ideas and activities for all MSM through its existing projects. In 1994, MAN TO MAN will concentrate its energies, activities and resources on the following target groups:

- 1) *MSM in relationships, especially short-term and serially monogamous relationships*
- 2) *Young MSM, particularly gay community-identified young men*
- 3) *HIV antibody positive MSM*
- 4) *MSM in rural communities*
- 5) *Gay community-identified MSM who require additional support in sustaining long-term behaviour change.*

Homophobia

Homophobia is a major barrier to health promotion targeting MSM. A significant part of the work of MAN TO MAN is confronting such forms of homophobia and heterosexism. We address homophobia in a variety of ways: in the workshops and training we facilitate, the articles and letters we write, and the print materials we distribute.

"In this society, AIDS originated in the gay community. Its impact is dramatically exacerbated by society's attitudes and laws regarding gay men and lesbians. For many of us, the struggle against AIDS is firmly connected with the struggle against homophobia . . . working to have society accept the reality of HIV / AIDS without accepting the sexual orientation of those most affected by the disease is working to perpetuate a grand deception on the mainstream. And the struggle is not furthered by deception."

- Michael Battista, Toronto
(Letter to the Editor, *Xtra!*, January 21, 1994)

III 1994 ACTIVITY PLAN:

DOING THE WORK

Introduction

Sociological research and epidemiological data clearly indicate that MSM in Canada have made significant efforts to come to terms with the personal and social risks and challenges of HIV/AIDS. Similar studies, however, have also demonstrated the difficulty many MSM are having maintaining these behaviour changes over time.

Clearly, there is an evidenced need for sustained and targeted health promotion initiatives aimed at MSM as we enter the second decade of this epidemic.

MAN TO MAN's proposed activities for 1994 are outlined below and have been divided into two distinct but interrelated categories: Print Resources and Outreach Activities

A Print Resources

A1 Print materials remain the most cost-effective communication vehicle available. In 1994 we will develop, deliver and evaluate the effectiveness of five print media campaigns:

A1.1 MORAL MAJORITY/FAMILY VALUES/RIGHT TO LIFE

- continued from 1993 until end of March, 1994
- produced in cooperation with the San Francisco AIDS Foundation

A1.2 CAN YOU RELATE? *Safer Sex in Gay Male Relationships*

- from April 1 until the end of June, 1994
- produced jointly with the AIDS Committee of Toronto

A1.3 KEYWORDS: *Self-Esteem and Safer Sex*

- from June 25 until the end of September, 1994
- produced as a Tri-City initiative with ACT and Sero-Zero, Montreal, and as part of larger CAS Demonstration Project

- A1.4 *GO DEEPER: Safer Sex for Men in the 90s* (tentative title)
- September 9 - year end, 1994 and beyond
- produced by MAN TO MAN (and available for export)

- A1.5 *YOUTH CAMPAIGN* (title/slogan to be determined)
- October until year end, and beyond

A2 In addition to these larger campaigns, we will also produce a series of general materials:

A2.1 **PRIDE BROCHURE SERIES**

- a series of brochures for widespread distribution, produced "in-house" and printed inexpensively in one colour
- information-based addressing current topics:
 - a) Oral sex
 - b) Anal sex: risks for insertive partner
 - c) MAN TO MAN program description, volunteer opportunities, and available speaks/workshops.
 - d) Poppers and recreational drug use
 - e) Sexual risk and maintaining safer sex
 - f) Grief, loss and sex - the "worried well"
 - g) Viral load theory and the risk of reinfection

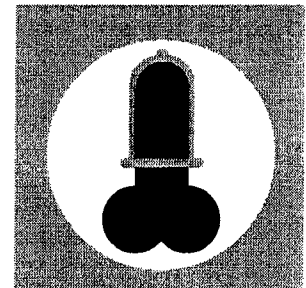
A2.2 **CONDOM PACKET**

- A new condom packet will be produced. Based on the design of the Take Care/Take Pride triangle logo (illustrated at right), the condom pack will be large enough to contain two condoms and lube.
- our popular condom keychains will be reprinted using this same logo



A2.3 **STICKERS**

- Two different logo stickers will be produced for use throughout the West End: a) Danish "dicktogram" logo (illustrated at right) for use in T-rooms and Public Sex Environments (PSEs), and b) Take Care/Take Pride triangle for general distribution (this logo will be used on all print materials to effect continuity from one campaign to the next.



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A2.4 CALLING CARD

- A new "calling card" will be produced incorporating the Take Care/Take Pride logo. The purpose of this publication is to provide an easy opportunity for MSM to introduce the topics of HIV/AIDS and safer sex into the negotiation early in the arousal continuum.

A2.5 HEALTHY SEXUALITY BROCHURE FOR HIV+ MSM

- MAN TO MAN will be involved with the AIDS Committee of Ottawa in producing a brochure targeting at HIV+ MSM.

A2.6 GET IT ON: *Condoms & Safer Sex for Gay Men* brochure

- Borrowed from ACT and reprinted with local contact information, this brochure will replace our current and dated *Choices For Life* brochure.

B Outreach

Introduction

MAN TO MAN's outreach efforts can be divided into two broad categories: *initiated outreach* and *reactive outreach*. This is admittedly a somewhat artificial distinction, as there is considerable overlap between the two. Nonetheless, clear differences exist which warrant dealing separately with each.

The volunteers and staff members of the MAN TO MAN program are constantly planning and carrying out a variety of outreach projects of our own initiative. These efforts are developed and delivered in response to the perceived needs of our community, as articulated by the data presented in such research documents as the *Men's Survey*. This "initiated outreach" takes a variety of forms, principally: distributing safer sex supplies in bars; setting up information displays at community events; and providing peer education in bathhouses and public sex environments.

At the same time, it's crucial that we be responsive to the on-going and often unpredictable needs expressed by member of our communities. MAN TO MAN is therefore always open to requests from individuals and organizations, which we do our best to fulfill. We frequently receive requests for copies of the materials we have created and for those we distribute; we often receive requests to facilitate workshops or provide staff trainings; and we occasionally receive requests for our volunteers and/or our materials to be present at upcoming community events. Responding to these demands from the communities is what is meant by "reactive outreach."

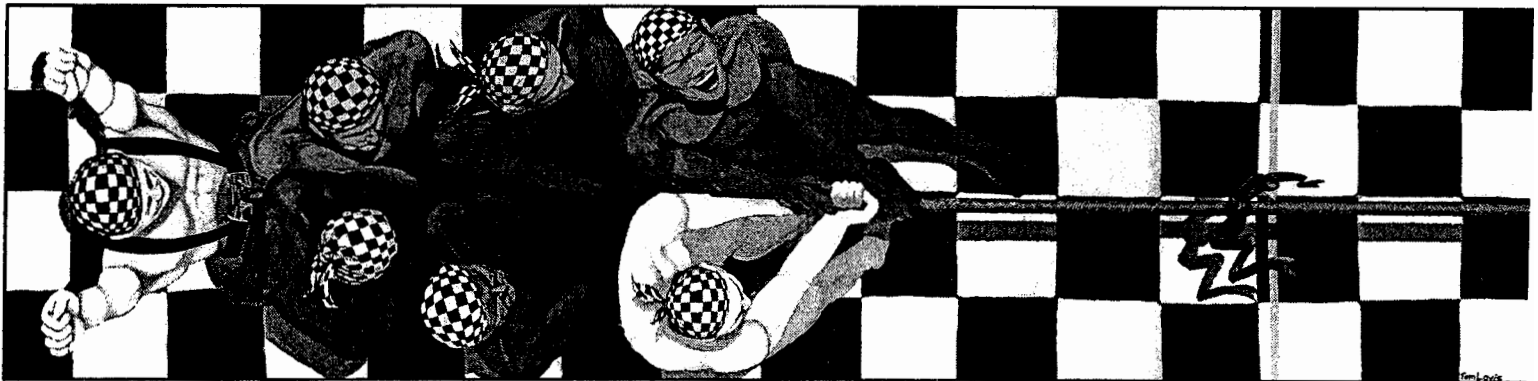
Man to Man's initiated outreach activities are volunteer-driven. While staff and volunteers work together closely in planning and executing most of the projects we undertake, it is worth noting that the majority of reactive outreach is seen to by staff members and the majority of initiated outreach is carried out by our volunteers.

Our outreach activities can accurately be characterized as an on-going dialogue between our program and the consumer group (ie. men who have sex with men). Our volunteers and staff members are very much a part of the community within which we operate. While we are continually attempting to educate and inform our target population, our interaction with community members provides us with an increasingly profound understanding of the issues we are trying to address.

Our relationship with the community we serve is embodied within a dialectic. We draw our volunteer pool from the very venues in which our outreach takes place, and our presence in these venues is both shaped by and helps to shape the community. This translates into an outreach program that operationalizes the model of health promotion: empowering individuals and communities to identify their needs and act collectively to make informed decisions regarding their health, and in so doing, effect social change.

Outreach Projects

- Annual Events
- Bar Outreach
- Bathhouse Outreach
- Community Forums
- Condom Blitzes
- Condom Requests
- Display Tables
- Info Centres
- Material Requests
- Prison Outreach
- Public Sex Environment Outreach
- Trainings
- University & College Outreach
- Volunteer Recruitment, Volunteer Training Workshops



B1. Reactive Outreach

MAN TO MAN receives two basic types of requests from the community: either for material resources such as condoms and print materials; or for human resources in the form of workshops and trainings. We respond to both types of requests to the best of our abilities, as both provide opportunities for reaching our target audience in markedly different ways.

The principal distinction between workshops and trainings is the amount of time available: the workshops we offer are generally between one and three hours in length, while trainings are usually one or two full days (of which we may be asked to provide only a single component). We find these workshops and trainings to be as beneficial to our work as we hope they are for our audience, as they serve as a forum in which we are able to refine and articulate our own understandings of the complex issues we face.

B1.1 Workshops

There has been a shift in thinking over the past few years regarding the role of workshops in our outreach efforts. Early efforts to promote sexual health within the gay community focused primarily on information dissemination and attempts to eroticize latex in a light-hearted way, as typified by the *RubberWear Home Parties* which MAN TO MAN formerly offered. Within the past year we have re-visioned our workshops as arenas in which MSM can discuss the real-life difficulties of sustaining behaviour change in the midst of the epidemic. This "lived approach" has proven to be difficult to package and market. Unlike many other AIDS service organizations, we have consciously avoided producing a standardized workshop manual, as each of the workshops we facilitate is tailored to the specific needs of the group we are addressing. Our work is continually evolving and maturing to reflect the changing needs of the community, and we recognize that by the time a manual is

Workshops Available

Condom Marketing & Distribution
(eg. Emily Carr College of Art & Design)
Cross-Cultural HIV / AIDS Issues
(eg. Crossroads International participants)
General AIDS Information
(eg. New Roots Adult Day Care Centre)
General HIV Risk Reduction Strategies
(eg. "Prisoners of HIV," Matsqui Institution)
Homophobia/Heterosexism
(eg. Home Care Support Workers Training)
Homophobia within AIDS Education
(eg. Volunteer In-Service)
How HIV / AIDS has Impacted the Gay Community
(eg. Parents & Friends of Lesbians & Gays)
Safer Sex for Gay & Bisexual Men
(eg. Prime Timers)
Sero-Status and Gay Male Relationships
(eg. Gays, Lesbians & Bisexuals of UBC)
Sustaining Risk Reduction Behaviour
(eg. BiSafe Bisexual Network)

produced it will be immediately obsolete. See the sidebar on page 12 for a list of workshops offered by MAN TO MAN in 1993. A priority for the coming year is to produce a brochure describing the various workshops we offer.

B1.2 Trainings

We have been involved in two types of trainings: internal and external. Internal trainings include the quarterly General Volunteer Training Program, which is organized by Volunteer Resources in cooperation with Speakers' Bureau and other programs of AIDS Vancouver. External trainings are, for the most part, organized by Speakers' Bureau, in cooperation with Project Sustain. MAN TO MAN is often called upon to provide specific components of these trainings, namely sensitizing participants to issues facing the gay community such as homophobia and heterosexism. See the sidebar at the right for a list of trainings in which MAN TO MAN staff were involved in 1993. Our priorities in this area for the coming year include our annual MAN TO MAN Specialized Training weekend followed by staff trainings for the two bathhouses with which we work.

Trainings Conducted in 1993

Core Training

- for all AIDS Vancouver volunteers
- takes place four times per year
- organized by Volunteer Resources

Correctional Services of Canada

- training for prison guards
- offered on demand

Home Care Support Workers Training

- for caregivers of PLWAs
- organized by Speakers' Bureau

Ministry of Social Services

- for financial assistance workers & social workers
- with Speakers' Bureau & Project Sustain

Volunteer In-Services

- for all AV volunteers
- organized by various programs
- take place sporadically throughout the year
- eg. - Basic Counselling Skills
- Effective Communication
- Homophobia/Heterosexism
- Outreach to Gay Asian Men
- Self-Defence & Assertiveness
- Women and MSM

Specialized Training Weekend

- for MAN TO MAN volunteers
- takes place annually

B1.3 Community Forums

In September '93 we organized our first Community Forum, provocatively titled *"Why are Fags still Fucking without Condoms?"* While not in direct response to a specific request, we include it here under the category of Reactive Outreach as it represents the culmination of the thinking behind our workshops and trainings. Hosting a community forum is a way of opening up the arena of discussion to a wider audience than would ordinarily be present at a workshop. The media attention this attracts further publicizes the issues addressed. September's forum was the first in a planned series of such events,

three of which are scheduled for 1994. Falling under the collective title, "*Hard Facts*," future topics will likely include the on-going debate over the risks associated with oral sex, and the impact of mixed sero-status on gay men's relationships.

B1.4 Prison Outreach

Since late 1992 we have been conducting workshops and staff trainings in federal and provincial correctional institutions in reaction to the demands we have received. These requests have come largely from nurses in the prison health care units as well as from the inmates themselves. Although inmates have not been identified as a target priority for the MAN TO MAN program, we have been responding to such requests on a piece-meal basis for two reasons: because it falls under our general mandate to educate MSM; and because no other program exists to do such work, despite the clearly evidenced need. We have since negotiated with Speakers' Bureau to allow such workshops to fall under their supervision. See the sidebar above for a list of the correctional institutions with which we have dealt in 1993. In the coming year we hope to see prison outreach taken on by another organization or a coalition of concerned parties.

Prison Outreach

Fraser Regional Correctional Centre, Maple Ridge
Matsqui Institution, Abbotsford
Mission Institution, Mission
New Haven Correctional Centre, Burnaby
Regional Psychiatric Centre, Abbotsford
"Prisoners of HIV," Matsqui Institution,
Abbotsford

B1.5 Condom Requests

MAN TO MAN receives more requests for condoms than the program is able to accommodate. Each request is individually considered based on how closely it matches our mandate. Requests which we are unable to fill are referred to other sources, such as other programs & organizations within PARC, the Ministry of Health, and the Vancouver Health Department. We prefer to distribute condoms in packages as opposed to simply loose; these packages contain water-based lubricant, safer sex information, and the number of the AIDS Vancouver HelpLine. In 1993 we distributed over 20,000 condoms throughout the province, mostly in the lower mainland. In an effort to recover some of our costs, we try to charge bar owners and event organizers for condom packages on a sliding-scale basis, although most of the people requesting condoms from us express an inability to pay for them. In 1994 we intend to continue meeting such requests to the best of our abilities, which will be made easier by the fact that we have recently formalized the process by which we respond to such requests.

B1.6 Material Requests

MAN TO MAN regularly receives requests for materials from individuals, groups and other community-based organizations. The majority of these are orders for finished products such as posters, brochures and condom packages. We are, however, receiving an increasing number of requests for back-up documentation (ie. materials explaining how we do what we do) and any other materials we can provide which will assist other groups start similar work or incorporate our approaches into their work. These requests are mainly from other AIDS service organizations across the country and around the world, particularly from rural BC and the United States. In order to adequately respond to such requests, resources are first needed to properly document both the logistics of our work and the theoretical framework which supports it. This has been identified as an outreach priority in the coming year, as it will allow us to export not only our materials but also our way of thinking to a wider audience than would be otherwise possible.

B2. Initiated Outreach

MAN TO MAN's outreach initiatives encompass a wide range of venues in an effort to reach a variety of target populations. The majority of our initiated outreach efforts fall under the collective project title *Operation Latex Shield* (or OLS). The principal venues targeted by OLS are gay bars, bathhouses and public sex environments. While maintaining a consistent presence in these venues remains a priority for the MAN TO MAN program, in the past year we have also put additional energy into raising our profile at community events such as artistic performances and fundraising dances.

Following is a brief explanation of each project:

B2.1 Annual Events

A number of events take place annually within the gay community, many of which MAN TO MAN is involved with every year. Our level of participation varies depending on the wishes of the organizers, the

Annual Events

Out Week at UBC:	February 5 to 10
Gay Ski Week in Whistler:	February 6 to 13
Valentine's Day:	February 14
Coronation Ball:	March
Gay & Lesbian Film Festival:	May
Stonewall Festival:	June 25
Canada Day Parade:	July 1
WKGL Annual Inner-Tube Float:	July 30/31
Gay Pride Parade:	August 1
Pacific National Exhibition:	August/September
Walk for AIDS:	September
AIDS Awareness Week:	October 3 to 9
Vancouver Int'l Film Festival:	October
Halloween:	October 31
World AIDS Day:	December 1
Christmas/Chanukkah:	December
New Year's Eve:	December 31

suitability of the environment and our own specific objectives; generally it takes the form of a display table and/or condom blitz. Some events involve considerable preparation on the part of our volunteers, as evidenced by our colourful entry in the Gay Pride Parade in August. We are also directly involved with the organizing of certain events, such as the Stonewall Festival in June and the Walk for AIDS in September. Our volunteers are always encouraged to play a visible, participatory role in these events, to reinforce the fact that we are a peer education program.

B2.2 Bar Outreach

Volunteers distribute packages containing condoms, lubricant and safer sex information in gay bars. This is done to coincide either with special events taking place in the bars, or seasonal events such as New Year's Eve and Valentine's Day. The materials contained in the condom packages are campaign-specific and/or seasonally-specific. Our objectives are at least two-fold: to get latex into the hands of MSM in the venues in which they are meeting; and to normalize the presence of latex in social environments. Last year MAN TO MAN volunteers distributed over 8,000 condoms in this manner.

B2.3 Bathhouse Outreach

Trained as sexual health educators, MAN TO MAN volunteers take weekly shifts in two of Vancouver's four bathhouses, which allow us to access MSM, many of whom are not active within the gay community and would therefore have no other opportunities to access our materials. Our volunteers offer peer counselling, resource referral, and a sex-positive affirmation of people's choice of sexual expression. Bathhouse outreach has long been the mainstay of MAN TO MAN's outreach initiatives, and this work has recently been both validated and made easier by our having secured our own permanent room in the city's newest bathhouse. Last year MAN TO MAN volunteers worked 95 bathhouse shifts and recorded over 600 contacts. Although we plan to take on a similar number of shifts in the coming year, the number of contacts we make should increase as we now have two venues in which to work.

B2.4 Display Tables

We are often invited to set up information displays at community events, particularly at fundraisers. Colourful, portable, and less threatening to many people than more aggressive modes of outreach, display tables are an effective method of launching new campaigns and getting our materials into the hands of the people we are trying to reach. By raising the profile of our program within the community, they also serve to recruit new volunteers. Last year we distributed nearly 5,000 brochures in this manner.

B2.5 Info Centres

Three years ago, permanent information display boards were installed in local gay male venues. (See sidebar at right.) Volunteers visit Info Centres weekly and keep them stocked with brochures, posters and condom packages. The bulletin boards are also used to post announcements of upcoming community events, particularly fundraisers and events of interest to people living with HIV/AIDS. Last year MAN TO MAN volunteers distributed over 15,000 brochures and 2,500 condoms through the Info Centres.

Info Centre Locations

(as of February '94)

Celebrities
Chuck's Pub
(Heritage House Hotel)
Club Vancouver
Denman Station
Drake Street Clinic
Little Sister's Book & Art
Emporium
Ms. T's
Numbers
NuWest Baths
Richard Street Service Club
The Dufferin Hotel
The Edge Coffee Bar
The Odyssey
The Royal Hotel

B2.6 Public Sex Environment Outreach

Equipped with safety alarms and self-defense training, MAN TO MAN volunteers work in pairs to access MSM in (PSEs). A cross between bathhouse outreach and bar blitzes, PSE outreach has in the past proven to be difficult due to unpredictable weather and the constant danger of gay-bashing. Our objectives are similar to our bathhouse outreach: we offer one-on-one education and resource referral, along with a non-judgmental validation of people's sexual choices. Last year we made a concerted effort to step up our outreach into public sex environments, with modest success; in 1994 we intend to focus even more of our energy on PSE outreach.

B2.7 University & College Outreach

Our interaction with university and college groups has until recently been ad hoc and reactive. We have offered workshops and display tables upon demand. In 1994, however, we plan to make a more concerted effort to establish and sustain links with post-secondary students, via gay & lesbian groups, student health clinics, and student unions. A MAN TO MAN volunteer has recently been identified to act as our post-secondary institution liaison.

B2.8 Volunteer Recruitment, Orientation & Training

MAN TO MAN is a volunteer-driven program; our volunteers collectively determine the direction of the program. Volunteer Team Captains coordinate each of the above project areas. As our outreach efforts are based on a model of peer education, we recruit our volunteers from the same environments in which we focus our outreach. New volunteers are incorporated into the program work once they have been interviewed and oriented, and they become familiar with the program by working alongside more experienced volunteers. Our upcoming Specialized Training will be coordinated by existing volunteers, allowing them to pass on their expertise to the new volunteers. On-going training takes place throughout the year in frequent in-services on topics which the volunteers themselves identify as areas of concern.

EVALUATION & ASSESSMENT

Are we making a difference?

Is all of this work making an impact? Are some projects more effective than others? Which activities are most cost-effective? How can we work "smarter"?

As MAN TO MAN moves into the second decade of the AIDS epidemic, and as it evolves with the community of which it is a part, gaining answers to these and many other questions has become critical.

To date, AIDS Vancouver's MAN TO MAN program has not conducted a detailed evaluation and assessment of its activities and resources. Statistics detailing the "what", "when", and "how" of our activities are collected on an on-going basis. But these limited data fall far short of an accurate measure of our efforts with respect to risk-reduction within our community.

At the time of writing, terms of reference for an independent evaluation of past and current work are in development. This proposed evaluation project is scheduled for implementation in September, 1994, pending successful funding through *Health Canada's AIDS Community Action Program* (ACAP).

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