

AIDS ACTION NOW! ANNUAL RETREAT
November 12, 1995

ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

Our continued existence
Trillium Drug Plan
Mike Harris meeting
Abbott campaign
Increase in anonymous testing sites
ATIS to CATIE
Increase in services to women
Public Health changes
Visibility and stature of group in lobbying efforts
Links with ASOs
DQTC meeting--increased drug coverage
Speaker at housing demo
Federal research funding campaign
Financial health of organization
NDP convention action
Pride Day action

CHALLENGES WE FACE FOR NEXT YEAR

How to connect better with other groups
Visibility
Technical aspect of getting the message out
Making connections with the needs of non-middle class
Sustaining ourself as an organization
Getting more people involved
AIDS in context of much broader social changes (cuts)
Keeping motivated when holding the line is a measure of success
Advocacy no longer our personal territory
Becoming more proactive
How to educate ASO about activism
Keeping our focus in a time of broader mobilization against the cuts
Encouraging more direct participation and mobilization
Developing an overall plan

POLITICAL PRIORITIES FOR 95-96

Poverty issues: the question of disability

- We must clarify what we mean by disability before the government does
- Need for consultation with PWA, ARCH, ACT
- This is the most concrete and pressing aspect of income maintenance
- We must maintain balance between co-alition work and mobilizing our own base
- Housing is also a pressing issue

National AIDS Strategy and research funding campaign

- Maggie to contact Arn re CAS group
- Do we need to set up a national coalition?
- Vancouver conference must be a focus, our last chance to embarrass the government
- Post card campaign must continue
- Should we set up a working group to co-ordinate?

Treatment activism

- TAAR to continue work
- Need to develop closer link to CATIE resources

Health care services coordination and vision

- Ask Health Promotion Network to come up with vision
- Meeting of ASOs to get everyone on board
- With these groups develop strategy for action

Operational/Organizational Issues

Steering Committee

Concerns were expressed that the current meeting format was unappealing for wider involvement, partly because so much meeting time was devoted to administrivia or reports.

► **Recommendation:** To restructure the steering committee and meeting format by creating a smaller steering committee which would look after administrative and routine matters. This committee would meet at least once a month, and possibly take some time as part of the second monthly meeting. The bulk of the second monthly meeting, however, would be for a larger general meeting which would look at policy issue in depth or develop strategies or campaigns. It was also noted that good facilitators for the larger meetings would be important.

► **Implementation:** Brent Patterson, Craig McClure and Peter Amenta will develop the proposal further for the next steering committee meeting prior to the Annual Meeting.

► **Recommendation:** To develop job descriptions for the smaller steering committee, with both member-at-large and specific responsibilities outlined.

► **Implementation:** Glen Brown, John Miller and Peter Amenta will develop this idea further.

► Recommendation: To consider providing fax or internet technology to people on the steering committee whose responsibilities would warrant it, such as the co-chairs.

► Recommendation: To consider priority setting or evaluation exercises periodically during the year to ensure consensus on priorities is maintained.

Administration

It was agreed that the time has come to hire a part-time staff person to attempt to make AAN more efficient and to ease the burden on active members. The treasurer noted that we were in a financial position to afford a half-time position without having to do additional fundraising.

► Recommendation: To proceed with hiring a part-time staff person to do committee support work and administration. We will clearly not want this position to be a policy position; the staff person should not represent the organization at meetings or to the media, and should not write policy papers. We will investigate a contractual arrangement with another organization such as CATIE

► Implementation: John, Glen and Peter will develop a proposal for a job description, hiring process and supervision.

Recruitment

It was agreed that we need to be more consistent and effective in our outreach.

► Recommendation: To form a recruitment committee to identify and approach potential new activists, to improve liaison other organizations, to ensure orientation of new members, and to consider constituency-based (eg the PWA food bank) recruitment or liaison campaigns.

Community Links

It was agreed that AAN should be seen as accessible by the communities and community organizations with which we work.

► Recommendation: To continue to participate in the Metro ASO forums which have recently begun; to ask for time at one of the upcoming forums to get feedback on our priorities and positions; to host a community forum on our advocacy agenda. It was also agreed that an AAN policy discussion on our relationship to OAN, CAS and other allies should be held soon. It was also suggested that we explore the use of internet to keep other organizations posted on our efforts and issues.