N.S.W. PRISON A.I.D.S. PROJECT

EX INMATE SUPPORT, TRAINING AND RE INITIATIVE

APRIL 1990 TO JUN. 19:

KIM MANNION
A.I.D.S. CO-ORDINATOR
NORTHERN REGION, N.S.W.
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES
BACKGROUND TO THE PROGRAM:

The Prison AIDS Project is a N.S.W. Corrective Services Department Initiative designed to provide HIV/AIDS information and education within the State’s Correctional Centres. To facilitate this initiative N.S.W. has been divided into three regions and under the auspices of the AIDS Project Manager each region has its own AIDS Co-ordinator.

A major part of the HIV prevention campaign in N.S.W. Correctional Centres has been the formation of AIDS Action Committees within each institution with a combined representation of inmates, custodial and professional staff. The Prisoner HIV/AIDS Peer Education Program in addition to offering front line support for other HIV/AIDS educational strategies.

As a direct result of exposure to and involvement with the AIDS program inmates have indicated that the program not only benefits those persons within the Prison system, but may be used as a HIV/AIDS educative and preventative strategy for marginal community groups.

To achieve this strategy, some inmates have expressed their willingness to become involved in such a program when they are released from prison.

THE PERCEIVED NEED FOR THE EINSTEIN PROGRAM:

- 80% of N.S.W. prisoners are in gaol for drug related offences.
- on release many of these ex inmates continue to have contact with intravenous drug users.
- inmates involved in the Prison AIDS Project have expressed concern regarding their peers on the outside who they feel lack:
  
  - HIV/AIDS information
  - accurate HIV/AIDS information eg. 'grim reaper' hysteria stuff 'it's a poofter's disease', or 'its a white man's disease'. scapegoating.
  - information regarding existing community services available and how to access these.
  - would not access formal information/education programs.

PLANNED PILOT:

- five suitably interested and ‘motivated’ people located by Tamworth Probation and Parole Office.

PROGRAM:

- facilitate the establishment of a group structure, nurturing the group process and including P/P Officer as Program Co-ordinator.
- HIV/AIDS information sessions with the group on a regular basis.
- complete a needs analysis of more exact content required for a 'formal' Peer Education Program.
develop a relevant PEER EDUCATION PROGRAM which will also provide some suitable counselling and education skills both encouraging and supporting participants in the transference of information to Peers and marginal community groups.

Implement the program
- participants will receive formal acknowledgment for completing the course satisfactorily.

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM:

1. This would be attended in three stages.
   - constant monitoring of the group process
   - regularity of attendance to meetings by participants
   - motivation level of the group
   - completion of tasks
   - level of group support

2. Evaluation of participants knowledge of HIV/AIDS
   - prior to any HIV/AIDS information sessions after HIV/AIDS information sessions
   - at various stages throughout the Peer Education Program
   - approximately 4 to 6 weeks after the course

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

3.
- The number of contacts given HIV/AIDS information by the participants.
- Number of people participating in program.
- Ongoing program.

LIMITATIONS:
- With such a small number of participants it would not be possible to notice an increase in use of community services/resources however it is hoped that this will occur.

REPORT:
- At the conclusion of the program and evaluation a report will be compiled for the AIDS PROJECT MANAGER requesting consideration for funding the implementation of OPERATION EINSTEIN state wide, from July 1990 onwards.