



## Global Campaign News – Issue #60 November 29, 2005

Welcome to the biweekly *Global Campaign News*! The *Global Campaign News* is a forum for international exchange on microbicide activities and information with an aim to build a more informed and integrated movement for microbicide development and other prevention options against HIV and STDs. This and previous issues of GC News are available online at <http://www.global-campaign.org/gcnews.htm>

---

### In this issue:

- FDA announces new draft guidance on condom labeling
- Rectal microbicides working group leads advocacy efforts
- Giving Women Power Over AIDS exhibit goes around the world
- Washington advocates host community forum: *The Future of HIV Prevention*
- Planning U.S. organizing for 2005-2007
- New factsheet on microbicides for medical students and health care providers
- British students get campaigning
- In Memoriam: Janherman Veenker

### FDA announces new draft guidance on condom labeling North America

Against a background of pressure from social conservatives, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has proposed changes to the existing labels for male condoms. The proposed rules were published in the Federal Register on November 14<sup>th</sup> (<http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/comp/guidance/1548.pdf>) and are subject to a 90-day comment period during which the public can respond.

The proposed guidance reflects a good faith effort to address specific legislative mandates imposed in 2000. That language required the FDA to reexamine existing condom labels with respect to condoms' "effectiveness or lack of effectiveness" in preventing sexually transmitted diseases, including human papillomavirus (HPV). The FDA has complied with the legislative mandate.

Political pressure on the FDA is expected to continue. For example, on November 10, when the proposed guidelines were announced, Senator Coburn quickly released a statement denouncing the agency for "embracing exaggerated claims of condom effectiveness." The reality is that the FDA-proposed guidance is based in science and does not overstate the risks of pregnancy or acquiring HIV.

The guidance rightly recommends that the package insert warns consumers, "You should not use condoms with Nonoxynol-9 (N-9) for anal sex". In 2002 the Global Campaign—along with more than 80 scientists and public health organizations—launched a campaign to caution the public about the appropriate use of N-9. Studies show that even at low doses, N-9 can cause massive, short-term damage to the rectal epithelium (lining), thereby increasing an individual's risk of contracting HIV and other STIs during anal intercourse. We see this new aspect of the guidance as a victory for our collective advocacy efforts.

We are concerned, however, that the guidance fails to make clear that women using N-9 during vaginal sex are at increased risk for HIV/AIDS only if they have sex several times a day. N-9 contraceptive products designed exclusively for vaginal use remain an important option for pregnancy prevention for women who have sex infrequently and are at low risk of HIV infection.

Several groups, including the American Social Health Association, the Guttmacher Institute, and the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association, will be writing comments in the coming months, and there will likely be a "sign-on" letter generated. Once the guidance has been analyzed further, we will be posting additional information in future issues of GC News.

## Rectal microbicides working group leads advocacy efforts

### Global

In 2004, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) and the Global Campaign for Microbicides launched LifeLube ([www.lifelube.org](http://www.lifelube.org)), a multifaceted project designed to energize discussion in the gay community around the need for new prevention technologies and harm-reduction options for sexually active gay and bisexual men. Many gay and bisexual men have turned away from condoms for a variety of reasons, making the need for new ways to prevent HIV among this population more important than ever. Heterosexual women also have a need for rectal microbicides, with almost a third of American women reporting anal intercourse at some time in their lives.

As implied by its name, LifeLube promotes the use of lube as an interim strategy for making sex safer, when used with and without condoms. While lubricant use alone cannot protect individuals from HIV, it can minimize abrasions and trauma in the sensitive rectal canal that facilitate infection. LifeLube also promotes understanding of other methods to reduce harm, including HIV status disclosure, sero-sorting and "strategic positioning" for men who have already chosen not to use condoms.

The primary goals of LifeLube, however, are to accelerate research and development of an effective rectal microbicide and to engage gay men in microbicide advocacy efforts. Rectal microbicides are moving closer to Phase I clinical testing, with an exploratory safety study set for June of 2006 that will test the anti-HIV compound UC781, a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor in development by Biosyn, a subsidiary of Cellegy.

In order to expand the reach of LifeLube and push forward with a formalized advocacy strategy, the Rectal Microbicides Working Group was created in the spring of 2005. Its North American membership consists of leaders in HIV prevention and gay men's health from Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Miami, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, DC and Ottawa. Throughout the last several months, the Working Group has begun coordinating advocacy efforts with its counterparts in the United Kingdom and Nigeria. Together, they are shaping and expanding the LifeLube project and facilitating the dissemination of timely information around the advancement of rectal microbicides. Regular conference calls feature presentations from top researchers, representatives of bio-tech companies working to create safe, effective rectal microbicides and policy experts. The next call is set for January 23, 2006. For more information on LifeLube and the Rectal Microbicides Working Group, please contact Jim Pickett at [jpickett@aidschicago.org](mailto:jpickett@aidschicago.org).

## Giving Women Power Over AIDS exhibit goes around the world

Over the past year, we have included updates on how advocates around the U.S. have been using the Giving Women Power Over AIDS exhibit to increase awareness and generate public support for microbicides. We are pleased to announce that we have worked with partners to develop two additional versions of the exhibit – one for circulation in Europe and a French/English bi-lingual version for circulation in Canada. We will continue to include updates about how advocates around the world are using the exhibit in innovative ways at press events, legislative venues, conferences, and possibly shopping malls.

### Ottawa, Canada

On 28 October as part of the Canadian National Skillsbuilding Conference at the Delta Centre-Ville Hotel in Montreal, the Canadian AIDS Society (CAS) and the Microbicides Advocacy Group Network (MAG-Net) launched the Canadian tour of the exhibit - in French, *Donner du pouvoir aux femmes contre le sida*.

The speeches and personal testimonies shared with the audience were powerful and filled with hope for improved prevention options for future generations. Speakers included Anna Forbes of the Global Campaign for Microbicides, Marc-André LeBlanc of CAS, Marie Anésie Harerimana of the Centre of Resources, Interventions and Services in Sexual Health (CRISS), and Sue Secord-Paul, a Canadian woman living with HIV featured in the exhibit who stated, "My greatest hope is that when my daughter grows up, she will have more options to protect her health than I did."

The Canadian adaptation of the exhibit is displayed in both French and English and will be travelling throughout Canada during 2006, including a showing at the International AIDS Conference in Toronto next August. For more information about the exhibit's Canadian tour, please contact Marc-Andre LeBlanc at [marcl@cdnaids.ca](mailto:marcl@cdnaids.ca)

## London, UK

On 30 November, to mark World AIDS Day, the exhibit will receive its official European launch during a gala evening reception at Somerset House, a 500 year old former palace in London. The event, hosted by the All-Party Parliamentary Groups on Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS, will be attended by members of the UK and EU Parliaments as well as prominent scientists and other policy makers. Focusing on 'HIV prevention: Promises, Progress & Reality', the high-level event will address key issues dealing with HIV prevention, including microbicides.

The exhibit will tour several European capitals throughout 2006. To receive more information about the exhibit's European tour, please contact Arwa Meijer - [ameijer@path.org](mailto:ameijer@path.org)

## California, U.S.

The California Microbicide Initiative (CaMI), a project of the Public Health Institute, will work with partners across the state of California to host the exhibit between December 2005 and February 2006. The AIDS Research Alliance is kicking off the California tour with a reception on World AIDS Day at the Los Angeles City Hall, followed by a two day showing at the University of Southern California's Hoffman Medical Research Center. In January, the exhibit will travel up north to Planned Parenthood Mar Monte in San Jose and a Junior League regional meeting in Palo Alto. During the month of February, the exhibit will be a part of the Women and HIV event at the University of California Berkeley's International House, and then move to Sacramento where it will be shown at the Student Union at Sacramento State. Additional events are pending confirmation. For more information, please contact Bethany Young-Holt at [byh1@comcast.net](mailto:byh1@comcast.net)

## Washington advocates host community forum: *The Future of HIV Prevention* North America



On November 3, the Northwest Microbicides Coalition, the Washington state Global Campaign site, in partnership with Gay City Health Project (a Seattle-based gay men's health organization), the Seattle HIV Vaccine Trials Unit (HVTU) and the Seattle HIV Prevention Trials Unit (HPTU), hosted a community forum to discuss vaccines, microbicides and other innovations in HIV prevention. Over 70 individuals attended this event, primarily from the local LGBT community. In addition, representatives were present from several community based organizations, as well as from the Seattle Gay Men's HIV/STD Prevention Task Force and the HIV/AIDS Program at Public Health, Seattle & King County.

The forum featured presentations by Anna Forbes from the Global Campaign who spoke about rectal microbicides, Gary Chovnick from the Seattle HVTU who spoke about HIV vaccines, and George Froehle from the Seattle HPTU who spoke on other breaking issues including circumcision and the LINK study (to explore the link between HIV and HSV). The presentations were followed by an animated open discussion with audience members, with questions focusing on the expected safety of new products, opportunities for involving gay men in clinical research and advocacy, effectiveness of behavioral interventions, and condom migration.

The Northwest Microbicide Coalition will continue working with Gay City and other coalition partners to develop a local microbicide advocacy agenda that will incorporate gay men's perspectives and needs in relation to microbicide development. This event was co-sponsored by PATH, Planned Parenthood of Western Washington, Aradia Women's Health Center, Brother to Brother, the Seattle LGBT Community Center, UW Student AIDS Action Network and Lifelong AIDS Alliance.

## Planning U.S. organizing for 2005-2007 North America

Over the past several months, the Global Campaign secretariat initiated a strategic planning process with sites and partners to create a plan for 2005-2007 that reflects the best approaches for moving our U.S. strategies forward. In two documents that are available on-line, [www.global-campaign.org/GCNorthAmerica.htm](http://www.global-campaign.org/GCNorthAmerica.htm), we reviewed current sites and

partners, goals and strategies for the next two years, and questions that we will require further discussion. U.S. organizing is organized around two goals:

1. Increase U.S. government investment in microbicide research and development by building political support through grassroots awareness raising and then demonstration of demand.
2. Sustain support for microbicides in the long run (through successes and setbacks) by building our allies' understanding of the microbicide development and trial process and their ability to be vocal spokespeople as needed.

Key strategies for the coming years will include working with traditional allies while building relationships with new allies. The secretariat will strengthen relationships with partners at the national level as well as develop materials and advocates' capacity to address the long-run nature of microbicide development. Finally, funded sites will be encouraged to conduct regional level outreach, beyond the previous city based advocacy. We look forward to working with our many partners and endorsers over the coming years.

## **New factsheet on microbicides for medical students and health care providers**

### **Global**

Working with the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals, the Global Campaign is pleased to announce a new fact-sheet designed for health care providers, medical students, educators and researchers working in the field of reproductive health. This new resources provides a quick (2 page) synopsis of mechanisms of action, current status of development, access and accessibility issues, condoms and cervical barriers, and finally, what people can do to get involved in the microbicides field.

This fact sheet is one of the newest "What you Need to Know" publications from ARHP and adds to the collection of resources available at the Global Campaign download center. You can download this new resource at both of our websites: [www.global-campaign.org/download.htm](http://www.global-campaign.org/download.htm) or <http://www.arhp.org/factsheets/index.cfm> Many thanks to Sarah Wilhelm and Amy Swann for their help in envisioning and executing this collaboration.

## **British students get campaigning**

### **Europe**

A new resource on HIV/AIDS aimed at students has been launched by the UK Student Stop AIDS Campaign in the lead up to World AIDS Day. Entitled the 'World is Watching', the Campaign Pack contains detailed information about AIDS, an action guide and a DVD of short films, including the Global Campaign's short film on microbicides, *'In Women's Hands'*.

Students have strongly welcomed this new resource. According to Pete Kingsley, a student at Birmingham University, "the Stop AIDS pack is a really great collection of some of the best campaign ideas around. It's helping Stop AIDS student societies understand the crisis through an up-to-date briefing, and helping them pull off bigger and better events with the action guide."

The Student Pack was produced by Fionnuala Murphy and Patrick Dawes at Christian Aid and other members of the Student Stop AIDS campaign. It was designed by Liam Purcell of the Student Christian Movement.

To order a campaign pack, visit: <http://www.studentsac.org/>. Copies are free to those teaching or studying at a school, college or university in the UK. If that doesn't apply to you but you would still like a pack, email and let them know how you will use it: [info@studentsac.org](mailto:info@studentsac.org)

## **In Memoriam: Janherman Veenker**

### **Europe**

On 15 November, our friend and colleague Janherman Veenker died in the Slotervaart hospital in Amsterdam. Janherman was the manager of Stop Aids Now!, one of the organizations sharing the Brussels office in which

Global Campaign/Europe is based. His initiative and involvement was crucial to setting up the collaboration in 2003 that enabled four organizations; Stop AIDS Alliance, International Partnership for Microbicides, Global Campaign for Microbicides and International AIDS Vaccine Initiative; to co-locate staff in one office – thus facilitating our ability to share information, strategies and expertise as well as to minimize costs.

Fifty five years old this year, Janherman's position at Stop AIDS Now! was only one aspect of his long career as an AIDS activist and policy advocate. In 1987, he joined the governing board and eventually became the secretary of the Commission Aids-Bestrijding, an governmental advisory body that assists with the development of Dutch AIDS policy. In addition to working with a number of other organizations, he also served from 1992 to 2002 on the governing board member of AIDS Fonds, the Netherlands' leading AIDS NGO and a critical Global Campaign partner. On 21 June 2003, Janherman received a national award (the Order of Oranje-Nassau) in recognition of his outstanding work in the fight against AIDS and for "the emancipation of homosexual men and women".

European colleagues have expressed particular appreciation for Janherman's strong and consistent support for collaborative efforts and his wonderfully straightforward Dutch approach. At the Global Campaign, we are grateful to have had the opportunity to know and work with him, and we offer our sincere condolences to his life-partner, family and his many friends and colleagues as they mourn his loss.

---

We welcome your input and contributions for future issues! Please send emails to: [info@global-campaign.org](mailto:info@global-campaign.org). If you would like to unsubscribe to the Global Campaign News, please reply to this e-mail with the subject line: UNSUBSCRIBE.