

APA condemns use of AIDS epidemic for prejudice, discrimination

Given current evidence that persons do not become infected with the AIDS virus through casual contact, "the American Psychological Association deplores the exclusion of persons with AIDS or those suspected of having AIDS from housing, employment, education or necessary professional services," says a resolution adopted by the National Association of Psychologists.

APA "condemns use of the AIDS epidemic as a vehicle for fostering prejudice or discrimination against any group or individual," says the resolution adopted February 1 by the APA Council of Representatives, the policy-making body of the 61,000-member professional and scientific society. "Until there are empirical data linking specific tests with the eventual development of AIDS, the American Psychological Association condemns indiscriminate testing to detect exposure to AIDS."

APA says that psychosocial and mental health aspects of AIDS should be stressed in treatment, research, and prevention programs, and urges that mental health services for persons with AIDS, AIDS-related conditions or an exaggerated fear about the threat of AIDS "should be widely available." However, while noting that identification of persons exposed to the AIDS virus is "a major public health goal," APA urges that the confi-

dentiality of patient records be protected.

APA supports increased funding for public education regarding AIDS and calls on psychologists "to combat irrational public fears" of AIDS through teaching, public lectures, counseling and therapy, consultation, and research. The resolution was developed by the APA Committee on Lesbian and Gay Concerns and the APA Board of Social and Ethical Responsibility for Psychology.

APA is the nation's major psychology organization and is the world's largest association of psychologists. Its membership includes more than 61,000 clinicians, educators, researchers and consultants and 20,000 teacher, student, and foreign affiliates. Through its divisions in 42 subfields of psychology and affiliations with 53 state and Canadian provincial psychological associations, APA works to advance psychology as a science, a profession, and as a means of promoting human welfare.

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From both sides of the mouth

On February 5 President Reagan requested the Surgeon General prepare a "major" report to the American people on AIDS. On the same day, he went on to propose citing the federal budget for AIDS research and care programs. The original Reagan budget for AIDS research and treatment for fiscal year 1986 was \$85 million. Congress subsequently appropriated \$234 million. This year's Reagan budget proposes \$213 million on AIDS, or \$21 million less than Congress allocated last year.

The proposed cuts include \$14 million from research into therapeutic drugs. The U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. C. Everett Koop, has had to date little involvement in AIDS research or publicity.

Reagan claims, "One of our highest public health priorities is going to continue to be finding a cure for AIDS."

Gay vets get base exposure

The Gay Veterans Association is placing an information brochure in two hundred military installations across the United States. This action comes after several meetings with the GVA and the Director of Legislation and Legal Policy for the Department of Defense, Colonel Thomas R. Cuthbert.

GVA President, John Paine, says the decision on the part of the Department of the Defense represents an important milestone for the Gay Vets in their quest for formal recognition by the armed services and veterans organizations.

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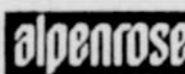
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