

From left, Eric Landon, Chris Clement, Steve Carroll and Fred Schaich strategize during a recent AAPNW meeting

living AIDS or HIV and asking them what they see as their primary need. Housing, of course, is a big thing, but what is housing without life? If you can't sustain your medication, in six months you won't need housing."

From their informal poll, drug assistance held the highest priority, followed by health insurance, ambulatory outpatient medical care and case management. Gathering this type of feed-

back about day-to-day priorities will be the first step toward collecting more solid data to identify and demonstrate need while ensuring that existing programs are being administered correctly and fairly.

Chris Clement, another board member, says: "As the state recovers and people start integrating into other systems of care, there has to be somebody watching and asking, 'Are they get-

ting treatment? Do they have access? Is it quality care?"

Accountability, they hope, will increase accessibility.

The organization also hopes to increase the visibility of HIV/AIDS consumers in their communities across the state and ensure that consumers are represented in all groups making decisions that affect services and policies. While AAPNW intends to promote the development of service providers, the organization firmly intends to remain independent of any agency providing HIV services, in order to monitor agencies on behalf of individual consumers.

"The best heard voices," Carroll asserts, "are those who are affected." ■

For more information about AIDS ACTION PROJECT NORTHWEST call 503-252-7980 or 888-824-5611 or visit [www.aapnw.org](http://www.aapnw.org).

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Chris Clement (left) and Eric Landon formed AIDS Action Project Northwest in January

PHOTOS BY MARTY DAVIS

## Paying for a short stay

In another stopgap measure, a package of bills recently was approved by the Oregon Legislature and signed by Gov. Ted Kulongoski that restores some services, including prescription drug benefits for Oregon Health Plan "standard" clients and limited prescription coverage for former clients of the Medically Needy program. For the latter group, coverage will include necessary antiviral drugs for HIV/AIDS patients. The Oregon Department of Human Services says this action will probably take effect no sooner than April 1 and may not last beyond June 30.

At press time Meador's coverage had not been reinstated.

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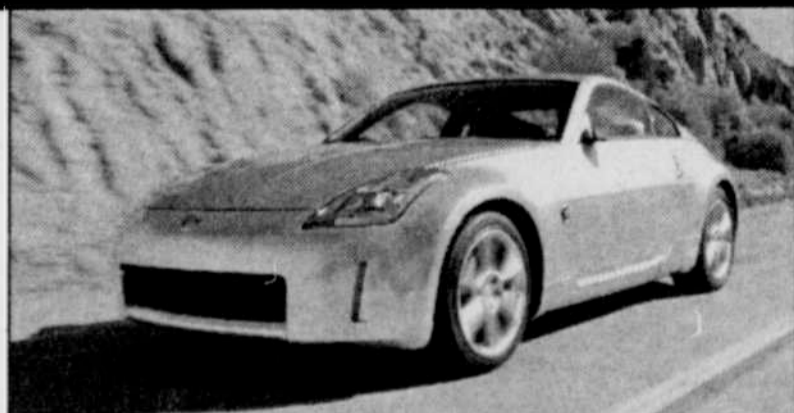


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