# NOTES OF DISCUSSION REGARDING SOUTHERN GAY HEALTH PROJECT. (16th July 1997)

Present: Arthur, James, Ronan and Kieran.

## WHAT SGHP IS DOING

- Hep. B, concentrating on national campaign
- Stall at disco twice a month
- Setting up married gay mens group
- Providing more direct support to Gay information Cork
- Colleges; Welfare Day; Sexual Health; Relaunch Aids Awareness Soc. Tried to work with Tralee RTC
- Working with STD clinic to access PLCs
- Good liaison with STD clinic, new staff come and meet project
- Care & Support, Hospice, a lot of work but does not seem to be diverting energies.
- UCC Social Studies, speakers invited, also community & youth work course, and, social. work.
- Some work done with Careers Guidance Teachers
- Distribution of condoms: free and via machines (2)
- Distribution of Gay Poz and Positive Nation magazines
- Make sure other agencies have gay safer sex information and packs ( 3 condoms & 3 cubes - £1)
- Liaise with GHN (time consuming)
- Informal Youth Work, support for gay men e.g. going to STD clinic (time consuming, can happen in pub by talking to people)
- Acting as information centre
- Relating to Alliance
- Supporting community centre (Other Place) – part of our strategy
- Absence of Consultant for a long time has been a barrier, the appointment of Mary Horgan will now give a sense of direction

- Family & Support group needs survey carried out and to be published – Focus Group have discussed these issues.
- Small Focus Group – HIV Plan – moved away from it

**WHAT ARE THE NEEDS?**

1. ***Plan and Strategy – Define Aims***
2. ***Identify Resources***
3. ***Put in place Structure or Process for Partnership between Gay Community and Health Board and other Agencies***

- Aim – for example early HIV prevention work in schools, (very difficult)
- Aim – Ensuring effective care & support for HIV positive people (Advocacy)
- Huge vacuum in wider Health Board region (e.g.: Kerry)
- Keying into other agencies in those areas (where no gay groups) & also in city
- GHS should develop policies at national level to be used regionally as models of good practice
- Higher profile for project, so people can access information (e.g.: teachers), and know what project can offer
- We are not just an AIDS organisation, can provide other support
- Support & Evaluation for this project, need more open critical discussion, internal evaluation
- GHN takes a lot of work, (practical gain is condom packs and ads in GCN)
- Define aims as sharply as possible

    1. To provide effective HIV prevention for gay men
    2. To ensure effective care and support –
    3. Then series of objectives to implement these aims

- Issues can be quite personal in terms of lobbying and advocacy in Cork – friendship networks – also negative side and limitations of this closeness.
- The appointment of the Consultant will lead to major changes.
- Infrastructure will be more comprehensive as a result (better?)

- Have to work with that new context

- Youth related work in city done by Alliance – need gay awareness in that work

- An example regarding Health Promotion Unit (HPU) is leaflets; a standard text should be added stating something like – "more detailed info for gay men available from ..."

- **HOW DO WE MOVE THE PROCESS FORWARD?**

- Facilitate other agencies especially Health Board etc to define aims & strategies

- Southern Gay Health Project is mostly reactive, need to lobby for other agencies to be more responsive/accessible for gay men?

- Problem of going to youth groups and talking about AIDS first, it is not the best introduction for young gay people

- Need for national programmes/policies which local gay groups says can use to access local youth projects

- Agreed that Kieran would type up this discussion and set out some ideas for moving the process forward.

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