

## ASSOCIATION OF NURSES IN AIDS CARE

### POSITION STATEMENT

#### **Black Men Who Have Sex With Men at Risk for HIV/ AIDS**

Adopted by ANAC Board of Directors, February 2006

Reviewed and Revised by the ANAC Board: June 2006, September 2006, (September 2008)

#### **Position:**

*It is the position of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care that:*

- *The health care rights of Black men who have sex with other men (Black MSM) must be supported.*
- *HIV and AIDS pose a significant risk to Black MSM's.*
- *Black MSM's require access to the full spectrum of care and prevention.*
- *Services must be developed that are Black MSM specific and culturally appropriate.*
- *Prevention interventions must be developed that are not only culturally appropriate but indigenous to the Black MSM population.*
- *Resources (financial and human) specifically targeting the Black MSM population must be made available at the national, state, and local levels.*
- *Racism, homophobia, stigma, and sexual objectification all impact the healthcare of Black MSM and must be acknowledged and addressed when working with this population.*
- *Governmental agencies such as the CDC and NIH should continue to consult with informants indigenous to the Black MSM community for feedback and planning strategies related to HIV/AIDS.*

#### **Statement of Concern:**

Human immunodeficiency syndrome virus (HIV) infection among Black men who have sex with other men (Black MSM) continues to be a major and growing health concern in the United States. The AIDS case rate is the highest for Black males at 82.9 per 100,000 persons, compared to only 11.2 per 100,000 for White males, 31.3 per 100,000 for Hispanic males, 12.2% for American Indian/Alaskan males and only 7.5 per 100,000 for Asian Pacific Islander males (CDC, 2003). As of 2006 there were a total of 143,799 Black men estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS and 70,242 (49%) had as their primary risk factor having sex with other men (CDC, 2006).

#### **Background:**

On June 24, 2005 in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) the CDC presented the results of a five city study (follow-up to the seven city study in 2001) about HIV prevalence among MSM. The study was a part of the ongoing National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS) system that focused on HIV testing data from five of 17 participating cities (Baltimore, Los Angeles, Miami, New York City, San Francisco). The results of the study revealed that 450 (25%) of the 1,767 MSM tested were HIV+. More concerning was the HIV prevalence rates among the racial subsets of MSM. HIV prevalence was 46% among Black MSM, 21% among White MSM, and 17% among Hispanic MSM. The majority (n=217, 48%) of those who tested positive were unaware of their HIV infections and over the age of 30 (n=340, 76%). These results underscore the rising HIV infection rates among MSM especially Black MSM.

In response to these findings, the CDC called for a special consultation meeting with leaders of the Black gay community and their allies. Close to 70 leaders assembled in Atlanta for the two and half day consultation. At the end of the meeting, leaders delivered a list of recommendations to the CDC leadership on how to best address the HIV crisis among Black MSM. The list of recommendations set forth priorities that should be undertaken in terms of programming and funding needs at the local, state, and national levels. The primary recommendation was to establish a goal for the reduction of new HIV infections among Black MSM by 50% by the year 2010. The second recommendation was the redirection of funding to CBO's working with Black MSM in order to build capacity and implement culturally relevant intervention programs. As of this update in 2008 the above recommendations have yet to be implemented fully. The position of ANAC is to support the direction and spirit of the expert group as reflected below.

**References:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2006). *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report* (Vol.18). Atlanta, GA.: Department of Health and Human Services.

MMWR, (2005). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *HIV Prevalence, Unrecognized Infection, and HIV Testing Among Men who have sex with men---Five U.S., Cities, June 2004-April 2005*, (Vol 54, 24), Pages 597-601. Atlanta, GA.: Department of Health and Human Services.