

Left: Photo by Dr. Marjorie Funk of hospital staff caring for a patient at the Second Hospital in Chengsha, China; **Middle and Right:** In November, 2002 ysn Associate Dean Paula Milone-Nuzzo (center) accompanied Dr. Ann Williams (right) to the First Annual Chia Fellows Workshop in Chengsha, China, where they presented on the role of research and evaluation in community health.



Curbing the spread of an epidemic in China

Ann Bartley Williams, RNC, ED.D, the Helen Porter Jayne and Martha Prosser Jayne Professor at ysn and a Trustee at the Yale-China Association, has long been acknowledged as a pioneer in HIV/AIDS research, both in the United States and abroad. For over 20 years in the Yale community she has worked as a nurse practitioner caring for persons with AIDS in New Haven, San Francisco, and in countries around the world. Her program of research is a direct outgrowth of that clinical work. She designed and conducted some of the earliest studies of AIDS among drug users. Her work in China, South Africa, Vietnam, Thailand, and Poland supports ysn's international effort to limit the spread of HIV and to improve the care of those already infected.

Professor Williams's current work in the People's Republic of China (PRC) addresses the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in that country. Recent social and economic changes have significantly increased the number of sexually transmitted disease cases in the PRC. As of June 2001, only 26,036 cases of HIV/AIDS were officially reported. That number, a gross under estimate, nevertheless reflected a 30 percent annual increase since 1985. Chinese authorities recently acknowledged that actual HIV cases may exceed one million; while experts warn that this number could rise to twenty million by the year 2010 in the absence of an effective response.

Professor Williams and her colleagues at the Yale-China Association have recently been awarded \$100,000 by the World AIDS Foundation to implement the "HIV/AIDS Train-the-Trainer Program for Chinese Nurses" in the PRC. The objective of this program is to strengthen the ability of the Chinese health care system to respond to the growing HIV epidemic by providing training for Chinese nurses in HIV/AIDS

prevention and care. The program will be offered in partnership with the National Nursing Center of China, which is affiliated with the Ministry of Health. The "Train-the-Trainer" program will consist of a weeklong workshop conducted once each for nurses in Yunnan, Guandong, Xinjiang, and Henan provinces. Each workshop will provide training to fifty Chinese nursing leaders and educators from local hospitals and health education institutions. Participants will receive didactic HIV/AIDS information and will learn teaching strategies to train others. In addition, the program will support the continuing development of holistic HIV/AIDS nursing practices in China by conducting two workshops on HIV counseling and psychological interventions for a total of fifty nurses currently caring for AIDS patients in major Beijing hospitals. The training program will use a culturally specific curriculum and extensive materials developed in pilot programs in Hunan Province by Dr. Williams and colleagues from the Yale-China Association and Xiangya School of Medicine. It is anticipated that training nursing leaders to train their colleagues will exponentially increase the knowledge and skills of nurses throughout the PRC, and will greatly improve the ability of the Chinese health care system to respond to the growing epidemic.

"China stands on the precipice of an HIV epidemic of enormous consequence," said Professor Williams. "Although it is certain that a multifaceted and complex epidemic is already well underway in the PRC, it is not too late to forestall many of the most catastrophic social consequences. The actions taken, or not taken, over the next eighteen months will be crucial in determining the ultimate course of the Chinese epidemic."

EAST ASIA



People's Republic of China