

# VT Health Department

Continued from page 1

"AIDS is a community issue," Lottero stated and emphasized that community involvement is needed if resolution is going to be achieved. Otherwise, he continued, "We will lose this fight, and we currently are losing this fight."

The focus of the workshop was upon finding effective ways to involve those who are at risk as well as those who are already infected. To do that, Lottero suggested that a dramatic shift in paradigms will be needed. One of those shifts is away from a perception of "clients", "consumers" or "patients" as liabilities. The presenter spoke of the need to "map community assets" instead of continuing to create a dependency culture.

rethinking prevention strategies because often a conflict exists between "priorities that negate someone else's value system" and undercut effective prevention. "Far too many communities are in denial about the risks and about the persons who are at risk," he concluded.

Since last May, the HIV Prevention Community Planning Process Committee, created by the Vermont Department of Health, has undertaken several tasks:


- the assessment of present and future impact of HIV/AIDS in all Vermont communities;
- the identification of existing HIV prevention resources and unmet prevention needs within a wide variety of populations;
- the definition of specific prevention strategies and interventions for the various populations; and
- the development of a comprehensive statewide prevention plan.

Lottero maintained that providers must look for the assets possessed by those persons who are at risk, and through those positive characteristics and qualities, prevention strategies will have a much higher chance of being successful. ▼

Lottero affirmed that educational systems operate on many faulty assumptions, one of which is an "I know best" attitude in which information is presented in abstractions. "We mystify everything," he said. This results in systems set up to push out people who appear to be failures. He cited the long history of unsuccessful programs and reaffirmed that HIV prevention is really about who survives the AIDS epidemic and who does not.

"When people get a different message, they will feel invited to participate." In considering this shift in paradigms, Lottero suggested that three specific perspectives must change - that of government as the source of funds, that of the provider of the service, and that of the consumer.

Lottero summarized the importance of



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Pen Dragon

### Bennington

Bennington Free Library  
Bennington College  
Bennington Library  
Record Rack  
Southern Vermont College

### Brattleboro

Brattleboro Food Coop  
Common Ground  
Everyone's Books

### Burlington

Burlington College  
Chassman & Bem  
Fletcher Free Library  
Onion River Co-op  
Partners in Recovery & Growth  
Peace & Justice Center  
Pearls  
Planned Parenthood

### Castleton

STEP Learning Center

### Chester

Misty Valley Books Chester

### Craftsbury

Craftsbury Public Library

### Center Rutland

Rutland Area Gay/Lesbian Connection

### East Hardwick

Greenhope Farm

### Fair Haven

Fair Haven Free Library

### Hardwick

Buffalo Mountain Coop  
Galaxy Books

### Lyndonville

Jon's Automotive  
Project EXCEL, Lyndon State College

### Manchester Center

Northshire Bookstore

### Middlebury

Addison County Women in Crisis  
Ilsley Public Library  
Middlebury Natural Food Coop  
Storm Cafe

### Montpelier

Bear Pond Books  
Horn of the Moon Cafe  
Rivendell Books  
Woman Centered

### Morrisville

Morristown Centennial Library

### Newfane

Moore Free Library

### Northfield

Brown Public Library

### Norwich

Social Alternatives for Gay Men

### Plainfield

Woman's Study Program

### Putney

Putney Library

### Randolph

Kimball Public Library

### Rutland

PFLAG  
Rutland Free Library  
United Methodist Church  
Grace Cong. United Church of Christ

### St. Johnsbury

LUNA/NEVGALR c/o Umbrella  
Natural Provisions  
Regional Library  
St. Johnsbury Athenaeum

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