



SHARP News



HIV and Health Care Workers

Excerpt from Surveillance of Healthcare Personnel with HIV/AIDS, as of December 2001 by CDC, March 2003

"Of the adults reported with AIDS in the United States through December 31, 2001, 23,951 had a history of employment in health care¹. These cases represented 5.1 percent of the 469,850 AIDS cases reported to CDC for whom occupational information was known (information on employment was missing for 337,225 reported AIDS cases).

The type of job is known for 22,420 (94%) of the 23,951 reported health care workers with AIDS. (See the box to the right.) The "other" category is comprised of maintenance workers, administrative staff, and other nonmedical staff. Overall, 73% of the health care workers with AIDS, including 1,384 physicians, 88 surgeons, 3,856 nurses, 378 dental workers, and 317 paramedics, are reported to have died.

Fifty-seven healthcare personnel in the United States have been documented as having seroconverted to HIV following occupational exposures... Twenty-six have developed AIDS. The exposures resulting in infection were as follows: 48 had percutaneous (puncture/cut injury) exposure; 5, mucocutaneous (mucous membrane and/or skin) exposure; 2 both percutaneous and mucocutaneous exposure; and 2, an unknown route of exposure. Forty-nine healthcare personnel were exposed to HIV-infected blood; 3, to concentrated virus in a laboratory; 1, to visibly bloody fluid; and 4, to an unspecified fluid.

In addition, 138 other cases of HIV infection or AIDS have occurred among healthcare personnel who have not reported other risk factors for HIV infection and who report a history of occupational exposure to blood, body fluids, or HIV-infected laboratory material, but for whom seroconversion after exposure was not documented. The number of these workers who acquired their infection through occupational exposures is unknown.

No new documented cases of occupationally acquired HIV/AIDS have been reported since June 2001. One new case of possible occupational transmission has been reported. The number of possible cases may decrease if individuals are reclassified when a nonoccupational risk is identified or may increase if new cases are reported."

For the complete report, including documented occupational seroconversions by occupation, see the CDC report at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/hip/BLOOD/hivpersonnel.htm>.

Sexual Health and Responsibility Program (SHARP)

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