

AIDS PREVENTION AND CARE PROGRAMME IN SLOVENIA

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SUMMARY

One of the objectives of the Slovene National AIDS Prevention and Care Programme is to prevent the spread of HIV infection. The prime focus of action for interrupting transmission is promotion of safe sexual behaviour: condoms and lubricants must be provided, good STD care must be available and STD care seeking behaviour must be promoted, voluntary confidential and anonymous HIV testing and counseling must be available, and partners of HIV infected persons should be notified. Educational and other relevant preventive measures should be available to, and understood by everyone in the community, which we aim for with mass media campaigns targeted at general public. Groups at higher risk of becoming infected through unprotected sex with multiple partners are sex workers and their clients, men who have sex with men, travelers to countries with high HIV prevalence, and injecting drug users. Youth is considered a vulnerable group and they should be educated about sex, family planning, STD, HIV and AIDS before becoming sexually active.

KEY WORDS

acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, prevention and control, HIV infection, sexual transmission, Slovenia

INTRODUCTION

According to available information on reported acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and HIV infection cases in Slovenia (1) and to the results of unlinked anonymous testing for antibodies to HIV in different sex groups (2) the AIDS/HIV infection epidemic is at its very early stage. However, in future we can expect more extensive spread of HIV infection, particularly in groups at higher risk. Thus, it is important to develop strong and com-

prehensive national AIDS prevention and control programme (3) to effectively control the epidemic.

AIDS is essentially a sexually transmitted disease (STD) (4). As we can not cure it, the prime focus of action for interrupting transmission is obviously to promote safe sexual behaviour (5).

The Slovene AIDS Prevention and Care Programme has always been integrated within existing health care structure and also some other governmental sectors, for example education. Also many non-governmental organizations have contributed signi-

