

FACTORS INFLUENCING SPREAD OF STD

Epidemiological situation in high risk groups in Vienna

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ABSTRACT

The legal regulations and financial aspects of examining and treating prostitutes in Vienna are shortly reviewed. The epidemiologic situation, which has been under control, started to deteriorate with the inflow of foreign, medically not examined female sex workers from Africa, Asia and the Caribbeans attracted by the promises of a wonderful life in the rich West. They hesitate to ask for police help, if they are urged to render sexual services, out of fear to be punished by their contractors or expelled back home by the state authority. Since 1991 the borders of East-European countries have stood open and a number of young women are offering sex for money. About 50% of those tested were found to be infected with *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. The possibility of free examination and treatment together with further preventive measures provided by Public Health STD Clinics in Vienna and neighbouring countries has made possible the reverse of such a trend since 1993. Results of a comparative study including registered prostitutes, illegal prostitutes, club hostesses and other STD patients are reported.

KEY WORDS

epidemiological situation STD, influencing factors, high risk groups. comparative study, Vienna

INTRODUCTION

In a decree promulgated by the Imperial Government for Lower Austria and Vienna in 1887 regulating the medical examination of registered prostitutes it was stressed, that the examining physician should use this opportunity to inform these women about venereal diseases and their signs and symptoms and to instruct them how to reduce risks of infection by taking various hygienic measures. In 1978 it was made possible to treat prostitutes in the Public

Health facilities free of charge and without discrimination. This brought about the health-promoting impact that more and more of the clandestine prostitutes did not hesitate to admit their way of living and to appear for regular examinations.

In 1984 the federal finance administration found it right and useful to collect taxes from prostitutes. The Public Health Authority made it clear, that this measure would have an adverse effect on health-promoting measures and although our STD outpatient clinic did not reveal listed persons as requested by

