

Dealing with a positive result: Routine HIV testing of pregnant women in Vietnam

Oosterhoff P., Hardon A.P., Nguyen T.A., Pham N.Y., Wright P.

Medical Committee Netherlands Vietnam, Hanoi, Viet Nam; University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam School for Social Science Research, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Hanoi Medical University, Hanoi, Viet Nam; Department of Sociology, Hanoi National University, Hanoi, Viet Nam; Vietnam eMedical Committee Netherlands Vietnam, Hanoi, Viet Nam

Abstract: HIV testing is an essential component of PMTCT. It can be offered to pregnant women through different testing models, ranging from voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) to routine and mandatory testing. This study was conducted in Hanoi, Vietnam, where HIV-prevalence is low among the general population, but high among young, urban, sexually active, male intravenous drug users. Women who want to deliver in a state hospital are routinely tested for HIV in the absence of well-defined opt-out procedures. In-depth interviews with a convenience sample of 38 seropositive pregnant women and mothers and 53 health workers explored the acceptability of routine testing. Patients and healthcare workers appeared to accept routine 'blood' tests (including HIV tests) because they feel uncomfortable discussing issues specific to HIV/AIDS. To avoid having to inform women directly about their HIV status, health workers at routine testing sites rely on the official notification system, shifting the responsibility from the hospitals to district and commune health staff. The notification system in Hanoi informs these local officials about the HIV status of people living in their catchment area without patients' consent. Our study shows that this non-confidential process can have serious social, economic and health consequences for the HIV-positive women and their children. © 2008 Taylor & Francis.

Author Keywords: PMTCT; Routine testing; Stigma; VCT; Vietnam

Index Keywords: adult; article; attitude to AIDS; blood examination; clinical article; confidentiality; controlled study; female; health care personnel; health personnel attitude; human; Human immunodeficiency virus infected patient; Human immunodeficiency virus infection; infection prevention; pregnant woman; priority journal; Viet Nam; virus diagnosis; virus transmission; Adult; AIDS Serodiagnosis; Female; Health Knowledge, Attitudes, Practice; HIV Seropositivity; HIV-1; Humans; Infant, Newborn; Infectious Disease Transmission, Vertical; Mandatory Testing; Patient Acceptance of Health Care; Patient Care Team; Pregnancy; Pregnancy Complications, Infectious; Prenatal Diagnosis; Questionnaires; Substance Abuse, Intravenous; Truth Disclosure; Vietnam

Year: 2008

Source title: AIDS Care - Psychological and Socio-Medical Aspects of AIDS/HIV

Volume: 20

Issue: 6

Page : 654-659

Cited by: 4

Link: [Scopus Link](#)

Correspondence Address: Oosterhoff, P.; Medical Committee Netherlands Vietnam, Hanoi, Viet Nam;
email: Pauline_Oosterhoff@yahoo.com

ISSN: 9540121

CODEN: AIDCE

DOI: 10.1080/09540120701687026

PubMed ID: 18576166

Language of Original Document: English

Abbreviated Source Title: AIDS Care - Psychological and Socio-Medical Aspects of AIDS/HIV

Document Type: Article

Source: Scopus

Authors with affiliations:

- Oosterhoff, P., Medical Committee Netherlands Vietnam, Hanoi, Viet Nam
- Hardon, A.P., University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam School for Social Science Research, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- Nguyen, T.A., Hanoi Medical University, Hanoi, Viet Nam
- Pham, N.Y., Department of Sociology, Hanoi National University, Hanoi, Viet Nam
- Wright, P., Vietnam eMedical Committee Netherlands Vietnam, Hanoi, Viet Nam

References:

- Bayer, R., Fairchild, A.L., Changing the paradigm for HIV testing: The end of exceptionalism (2006) *New England Journal of Medicine*, 355, pp. 647-649
- Branson, B.M., Point-of-care rapid tests for HIV antibodies (2003) *Laboratoriumsmedizin*, 27, pp. 288-295
- (2006) Revised recommendations for HIV testing of adults, adolescents and pregnant women in health-care settings, , <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5514a1.htm>, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Atlanta, September
- Hien, N.T., Giang, L.T., Binh, P.N., Devillé, W., van Ameijden, E.J.C., Wolffers, I., Risk factors of HIV infection and needle sharing among injecting drug users in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam (2001) *Journal of Substance Abuse*, 13, pp. 45-58
- Hien, N.T., Giang, L.T., Binh, P.N., Wolffers, I., The social context of HIV risk behavior by drug injectors in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam (2000) *AIDS Care*, 12, pp. 483-495
- Jayaraman, G., Preiksaitis, J.K., Larke, B., Mandatory reporting of HIV infection and opt-out prenatal screening for HIV infection: Effect on testing rates (2003) *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 168, pp. 679-682
- Khuat, T.H., Nguyen, T.V.A., Ogden, J., (2004) Understanding HIV and AIDS-related stigma and discrimination, , Washington DC, USA: International Center for Research on Women
- Ministry of Health, Vietnam (2006a). Decision 214/2006/QD-TTg. Approval for the proposal Manage vocational training and job advocacy for ex drug users in Hanoi. Hanoi: MOH Ministry of Health, Vietnam (2006b). Five-year review workshop on HIV/AIDS prevention and control in 2001-2005 and action plan for 2006-2010. Hanoi: MOH(2006) Law on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control, , Ministry of Health & Department of Health Legislation, Vietnam , Hanoi: MOH
- Drug and Prostitution Control & Ministry of Health Five-year review workshop on HIV/AIDS prevention and control in 2001-2005 and action plan for 2006-2010. In: 149/BC-BYT, , National Committee for AIDS, Hanoi: MOH
- Nguyen, T.H., Situation of HIV/AIDS/STI surveillance in Vietnam (2007) National Conference on HIV/AIDS Monitoring and Evaluation, , Paper presented at the, Hanoi
- Simpson, W.M., Johnstone, F.D., Goldberg, D.J., Gormley, S.M., Hart, G.J., Antenatal HIV testing: Assessment of a routine voluntary approach (1999) *British Medical Journal*, 318, pp. 1660-1661
- (1995) Ordinance on the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS, , Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Hanoi: National Assembly's

Standing Committee

- (2005) Second country report on following-up the implementation to the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS January 2003-December 2005, , Socialist Republic of Vietnam , Hanoi: MOH
- (2006) Law on HIV/AIDS prevention and control, , Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Hanoi: MOH
- Tran, T.N., Detels, R., Long, H.T., Lan, H.P., Drug use among female sex workers in Hanoi, Vietnam (2005) *Addiction*, 100, pp. 619-625
- Tung, N.D., Tuan, N.A., Hien, N.T., Hoang, T.V., Thang, B.D., Chung, A.K.T., Behavioural survey in Vietnam 2000 (2001) National AIDS Standing Bureau, , Hanoi: NASB, Family Health International
- Walmsley, S., Opt in or opt out: What is optimal for prenatal screening for HIV infection? (2003) *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 168, pp. 707-708
- Weiser, S.D., Heisler, M., Leiter, K., Percy-de Korte, F., Tlou, S., Routine HIV testing in Botswana: A population-based study on attitudes, practices and human rights concerns (2006) *PLoS Medicine*, 3, pp. e261
- (2007) Guidance on provider-initiated HIV testing and counselling in health facilities, , WHO/UNAIDS , Geneva: WHO