

Expert Panel on HIV Infection of Health Care Workers

Department of Health

Chairman : Dr. LAI Sik-to, Thomas
Secretary : Dr. CHAN Chi-wai, Kenny
Consultant (Special Preventive Programme)
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Members: Dr. HO Mang-yee, Mandy, J.P.
Dr. LO Yee-chi, Janice, J.P.
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Dr. TSANG Ho-fai, Thomas

Our Ref. : () in DH ACA/100/3 (2018-2020)

20 December, 2019

Prof. Agnes TIWARI
The Chairperson
The Nursing Council of Hong Kong
1/F, Shun Feng International Centre
182 Queen's Road East
Wanchai, Hong Kong

Dear Prof. TIWARI,

Expert Panel on HIV Infection of Health Care Workers

The Expert Panel on HIV Infection of Health Care Workers (Panel) was formed in 1994 by the Department of Health in accordance with the recommendations of the Hong Kong Advisory Council on AIDS (ACA), with the primary function of assessing and advising on the need of job modification of HIV infected health care worker and lookback investigation. The attending doctor of an HIV infected health care worker has to make anonymous referral to the Panel, which will be examined on a case-by-case basis with all information treated in strict confidence. The recommendations will be conveyed to the attending doctor and respective professional body if any.

For 2019 and up to 20 December, 2019, there were three referrals to the Panel being nurses or nursing students. Neither job modification nor lookback investigation was recommended.

The Panel considers it necessary to keep health care professional bodies and workers abreast of the subject of HIV infection and health care workers from time to time, and would like to stress herewith three points: (a) the importance of adherence to standard infection control practices to minimise transmission of blood-borne pathogens including HIV in health care settings; (b) the need for the attending doctor (medical or dental profession in particular) to refer infected health care worker anonymously to the Panel for assessment; and (c) the health care workers' duty of care to patients and the need to seek HIV testing, care and treatment as appropriate if they have reason to suspect that they are HIV infected or at risk of infection.

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Further information can be accessed via our webpage –

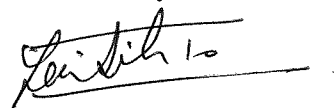
English version : <https://www.aids.gov.hk/english/hcw.html>; and

Chinese version : <https://www.aids.gov.hk/chinese/hcw.html>.

Two local recommendations are of relevance. They are the “*HIV infection and health care workers - Recommended Guidelines*” by the ACA (October 2015) (accessible at <http://www.aca.gov.hk/publication/278.pdf>) and the “*Principles of consent, discussion and confidentiality required of the diagnostic HIV test*” by the ACA and the Scientific Committee on AIDS and STI. (July 2011) (accessible at http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/principles_of_consent_discussion_and_confidentiality_required_of_the_diagnostic_hiv_test_r.pdf).

I shall be grateful for your assistance to disseminate the messages to members of your profession, and to contact the Panel when the need arises. As always, the Panel maintains confidentiality of the information. Should you have any question, please do not hesitate to contact the Panel Secretary Dr. Kenny CHAN at tel: 3143 7289.

Yours sincerely,



(Dr. LAI Sik-to, Thomas)

Chairman

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