

Health care workers with serious communicable diseases – who is being protected ?

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Serious communicable diseases ?

- Tuberculosis
- HIV
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C



Risks ?

- Health care worker to patient transmission
- Patient to health care worker transmission



HCW to Patient Transmission

The Rules



Definition of Exposure Prone Procedures (EPPs)

- ..those invasive procedures where there is a risk that injury to the worker may result in exposure of the patient's open tissues to the blood of the worker. These include procedures where the worker's gloved hands may be in contact with sharp instruments, needle tips or sharp tissues(eg spicules of bone or teeth) inside a patients body cavity, wound or anatomically confined space where the hands or fingertips may not be completely visible at all times
- However, other situations, such as prehospital care should be avoided by HCWs restricted from carrying out EPPs, as they could also result in the exposure of the patient's open tissues to the blood of the worker



HIV

- HIV positive – no EPPs
- No routine testing at present except new entrants to NHS
- Duty to be screened if believe could be infected and seek appropriate advice re work



Hepatitis B

- No e-antigen positive HCW allowed to undertake EPPs, or clinical duties in renal units
- No s antigen positive HCW allowed to undertake EPPs or clinical duties in renal units without special screening
- Any HBV carrier associated with patient infection – excluded from EPPs



Screening of s-antigen positive EPP workers

- All screened for HBV DNA
- Testing done in reference laboratories only (Birmingham and Glasgow) - two samples
- Level greater than 1000 copies/ml – no EPPs
- Level less than 1000 copies/ml – EPPs allowed with annual retesting
- DH 2000



Hepatitis B infected health care workers and oral antiviral therapy

- Healthcare workers who are e-antigen negative and have pretreatment HBV DNA levels between 1000 and 100,000 geq/ml can return to EPPs while on oral antiviral treatment provided their HBV DNA falls to 1000 geq/ml or less on treatment
- Based on two consecutive tests not less than one month apart
- And subject to subsequent three monthly testing by OH, lab test done by reference laboratory
- Under supervision of a consultant occupational physician and a designated hepatologist
- DH March 2007




Hepatitis C

- All new entrants to NHS and HCWs entering into training programmes for careers which require EPP performance screened for Hepatitis C antibodies
- Those positive for anti-HCV, PCR screened
- PCR positive (ie infectious) – exclude from EPPS
- Known HCV PCR positive HCWs – no EPPs




Hepatitis C infected HCWs who have had antiviral therapy

- Hepatitis C infected HCWs who have had antiviral therapy and remain HCV RNA negative for at least six months after cessation of treatment are permitted to return to EPP work
- Must be shown to be HCV RNA negative six months later



So, if you do EPPs don't get screened, don't be a blood donor ?

- DH and professional guidance to be tested if you suspect you are infected
- If you suspect you are infected, stop EPPs immediately
- Seek appropriate clinical advice and testing
- If you are positive, seek OH advice – don't rely on colleagues or your own risk assessment
- Follow advice from OH and clinicians



Or leave the NHS and return, go abroad to work, or change to an EPP role if you don't do them now

- All new entrants including students who do not do EPPs screened for TB, immunised against HBV, and offered testing for HIV and HCV.
- All new entrants to NHS including health care students who will do EPPs to be screened for TB, HBV, HCV and HIV
- DH 2007 Health Clearance for TB, HBV, HCV and HIV : New Healthcare Workers



“New health care workers”

- Health care workers new to the NHS
- Those in NHS employment moving to a post or training which involves EPP work for first time in career
- Returning Health Care Workers depending on activity while away
- Health care students



Summary

- No routine screening of HCWs in employment
- New entrants to NHS screened according to work activity
 - EPP workers now checked on entry for BBVs
- All HIV positive HCWs excluded from EPPs
- All e-antigen positive HCWs excluded from EPPs and clinical work in renal units
- All HCV RNA positive HCWs excluded from EPPs
- S-antigen positive HCWs can do EPPs if level less than 1000 geq/ml and subject to regular blood testing and OH supervision



Is it working ?

HCW to Patient transmissions in UK

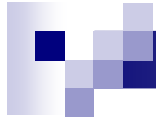
■ HIV None

■ Hepatitis B None since 2000

Restriction of S antigen positive HCWs in 2000

■ Hepatitis C None in last seven years

Restriction of Hepatitis C positive HCWs 2002



The Florida dentist

- 6 infected patients
- 2,140,000 entries on Google



HIV transmission to patients – worldwide

- An orthopedist in France – 1 case
- An Obs and Gyn doc in Spain – 1 case
- A nurse in France – how ?



However

- Health care workers infected with HIV in UK may not carry out exposure prone procedures



Exposure Prone Procedures

- Those where there is a risk that injury to the worker may result in exposure of the patients open tissues to the blood of the worker
- These include procedures where the worker's gloved hands may be in contact with sharp instruments, needle tips or sharp tissues(eg spicules of bone or teeth)inside a patients open body cavity , wound or other confined anatomical space where the hands or fingertips may not be completely visible at all times



In dentistry

- All procedures are EPP except
 - Examination using a mouth mirror only
 - Taking extra-oral Xrays
 - Visual and digital examination of head and neck
 - Visual and digital examination of the edentulous mouth
 - Taking impressions in edentulous patients
 - Construction and fitting of full dentures



Which doesn't leave much for an
HIV infected dentist to do ...

"It is the dental practice equivalent of clearing your desk and being escorted off the premises."

Losing your livelihood just twenty minutes from now

How would you feel if you had just been diagnosed with a life-altering or threatening condition? Understandably, you would probably be fairly distressed.

What if you were then told in the next breath that by law you had to stop practising dentistry immediately and for good? Distressed or beside yourself with despair as you begin to realise what will happen to you and your dependents, how would you then feel to be told that there is no evidence-base to support this ruling? Obscure plot in a novel? Nightmare scenario? No, it actually happens right here in the UK.



BEIJING DECLARATION 2009

The participants of the 6th World Workshop on Oral Health & Disease in AIDS, which took place from 21-24 April 2009 in Beijing, China, welcomed the opportunity to assess the evidence relating to the transmission of HIV in the dental setting from oral health care professionals to patients.

The participants from over 30 Countries noted and considered the inconsistencies in the regulation of the ability of an HIV positive oral health care professional to continue practice.

Having analysed the scientific evidence that has become available over the last 20 years, the participants of this workshop conclude that the evidence now supports the view that Oral Health Care Professionals with HIV do not pose a risk of transmission to patients in the dental setting.

They can continue a career in clinical practice, provided that the following criteria are met:

- 1) The individual is under ongoing care by a suitably qualified HIV Health Care Professional
- 2) The individual remains aware of his/her health status and acts appropriately
- 3) Standard Infection Control is observed
- 4) Scientific evidence related to HIV transmission will continue to be reviewed.

HIV nurses are no risk, says health authority
By Jeremy Laurance, Health Editor

A health authority that is allowing trainee nurses infected with HIV to treat patients insisted yesterday there was no risk to the public.

Wolverhampton Health Authority said between five and 10 men and women with the illness were currently either working at hospitals in the city or completing a three-year nursing course. The nurses had been recruited from Africa, most in Zimbabwe, and their infection had not been discovered until they were screened after entering the country.

Zimbabwe has one of the highest rates of HIV in the world, with one in five of the adult population infected.

Dr Isabel Gillis, consultant in communicable disease control for Wolverhampton Health Authority, said there were strict rules on the employment of HIV-infected health workers, which banned them from engaging in invasive procedures, such as surgery, midwifery and dentistry.



THE INDEPENDENT

The views of patients arriving for treatment yesterday at New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton were mixed.

Caroline Dickens, 43, said: "I would refuse to be treated by them. If you are HIV positive you are putting the public at risk."

Sharon McCourt, 28, who has two children, said: "It wouldn't bother me in the slightest. I would allow myself and my children to be treated as long as they take the necessary precautions.'

Ian Jackson, 31, said: 'When people read about it they are obviously very concerned but as long as the people infected do not come into contact with blood I think it would be OK.'



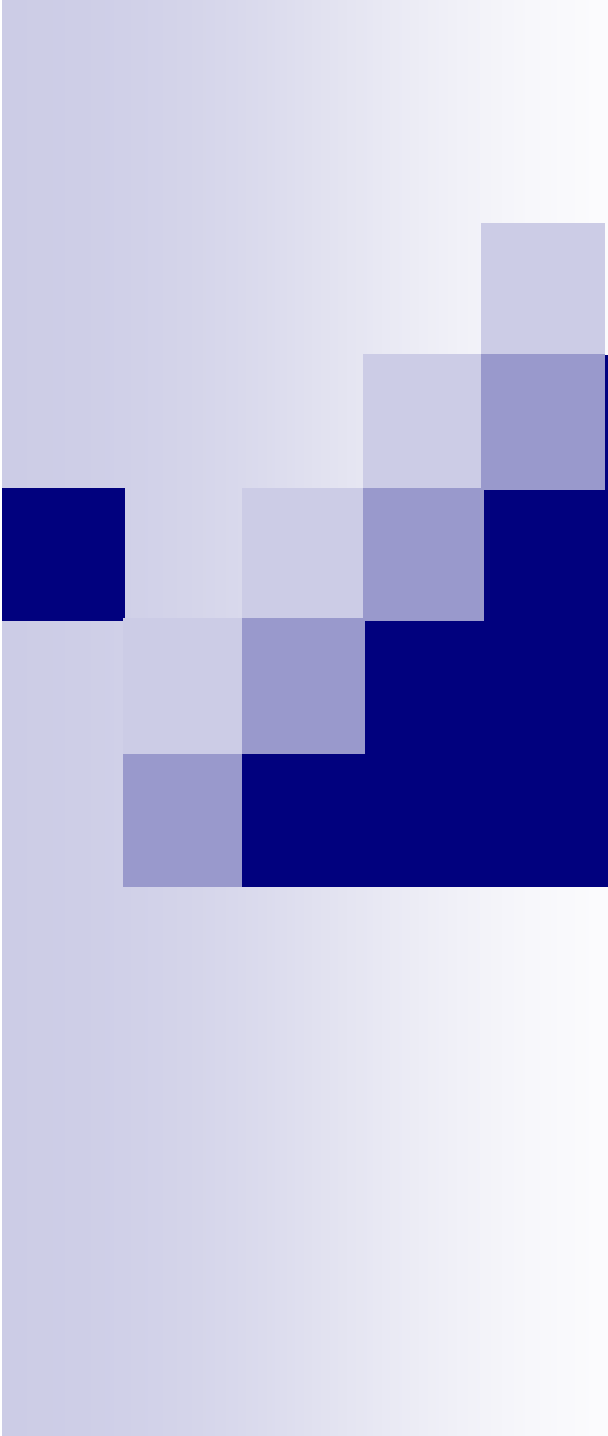
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