



Department of Health and Human Services/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Global AIDS Program (GAP)

Under the direction of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator's Office, the HHS/CDC Global AIDS Program (GAP) is a proud partner in the unified U.S. Government effort to implement the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. GAP helps resource-constrained countries prevent HIV infection; improve treatment, care, and support for people living with HIV; and build capacity and infrastructure to address the global HIV/AIDS pandemic.

How does CDC promote injection safety?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has worked with several partners to promote injection safety and reduce the risk of medical transmission of HIV. The CDC and the World Health Organization took lead roles in creating the Safe Injection Global Network (SIGN), which developed injection safety strategies. In addition, CDC partnered with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to develop an injection safety plan that includes training personnel to improve medical safety and strengthening systems to reduce unsafe injections.

Injection safety strategies CDC supports include:

- ◆ Encouraging countries without national safe-injection policies to design activities using SIGN principles;
- ◆ Assisting facilities to safe injection practices among healthcare workers and community members;
- ◆ Assisting facilities to purchase safe injection equipment and supplies;
- ◆ Assisting facilities to safely manage the disposal of sharps.

About Our Work: Preventing Medical Transmission of HIV

Medical transmission of HIV through procedures such as unsafe blood transfusions or unsafe medical injections is preventable. Interventions to prevent medical transmission of HIV are key components of a comprehensive national strategy to prevent and control HIV/AIDS.

The U.S. Government (USG), through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Global AIDS Program (GAP), is working to address several major challenges to maintaining adequate supplies of safe blood and safe injection practices in many developing countries, including:

- ◆ insufficient numbers of low-risk volunteer blood donors;
- ◆ Inconsistent electricity and refrigeration;
- ◆ minimal funding for necessary equipment and supplies;
- ◆ limitations in healthcare systems.

To address these challenges, the USG assists host countries to establish well-functioning blood supply systems that include low-risk blood donor selection, blood banking, and blood safety training. The USG also provides additional support to international blood safety organizations to help countries develop comprehensive systems to prevent medical transmission of HIV.

In addition to infected blood and blood products, HIV-contaminated injection equipment can also transmit HIV to patients and healthcare workers. Injections are among the most frequently used medical procedures and unsafe injections potentially stand to expose millions of people to infection each year. According to the World Health Organization, the global burden of disease from unsafe injections worldwide accounts for an estimated 5% of HIV infections.

In Kenya, with USG funding, GAP . . . helped establish a transfusion medicine training fellowship for physicians from developing countries in collaboration with Emory University in Atlanta.

In Uganda, with USG funding, GAP . . . provided blood donor recruitment education and support through an agreement with the American Red Cross.

In India, with USG funding, GAP . . . helped to conduct an assessment of the India Red Cross blood services and to develop program activities to improve the operational process of blood donor screening and testing.

Last Updated January 2005

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