

# AIDS - New Zealand

## INTRODUCTION

This, the eighteenth issue of 'AIDS - New Zealand', provides information about the occurrence of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in New Zealand to 30 June 1993.

These reports are produced quarterly by the AIDS Epidemiology Group, which is jointly funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand and the Public Health Commission. We aim to give timely and relevant details about the problem of HIV/AIDS in New Zealand and elsewhere. Not all tables and figures will be

updated in every issue.

In this issue we report the results of the first study of the occurrence of HIV infection at sexually transmitted disease clinics.

## AIDS IN NEW ZEALAND

Nineteen people were notified as having AIDS in the second quarter of 1993. All were male. The total number notified since monitoring began, to 30 June 1993, was 392.

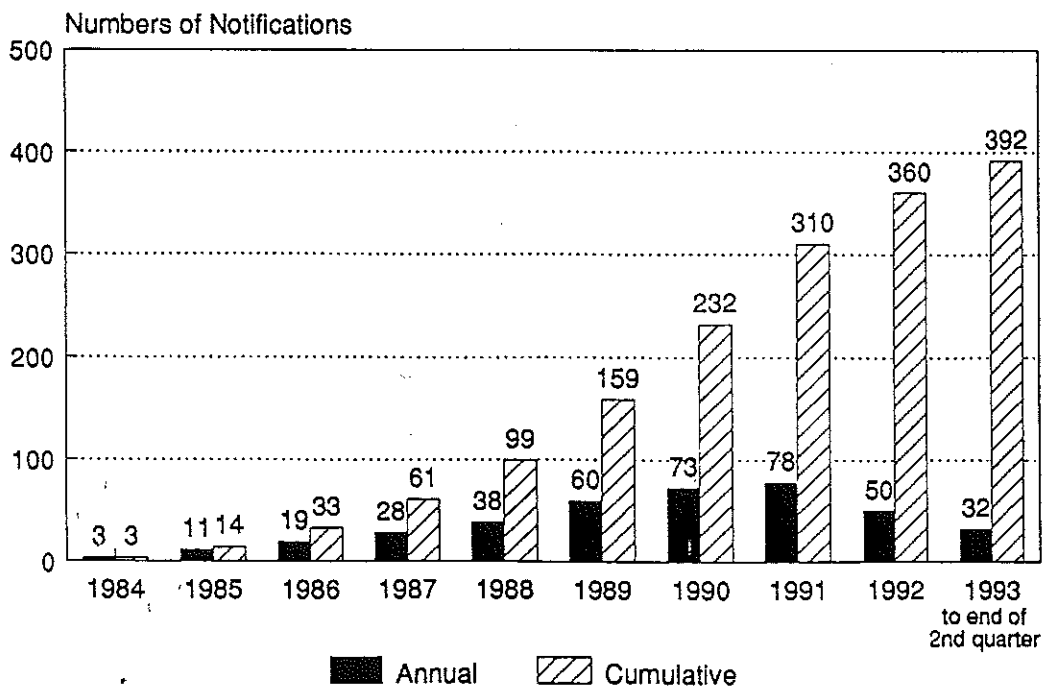


Figure 1 AIDS notifications in New Zealand

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Figure 1 shows the annual and cumulative numbers of notifications since 1984.

The year relates to that of notification, which does not always correspond to the year of diagnosis, due to delays in reporting.

#### HIV POSITIVE TESTS

In the three months to 30 June 1993, 24 people were newly found to be infected with HIV. Of these 20 were male, three female, and the sex of one person was not stated.

Through our contact with clinicians caring for people with haemophilia, it seems likely that three people infected through the receipt of blood products were counted twice in previous reports. This has been now been corrected in Table 1. Thus the total number of people found to be infected in New Zealand to the end of June 1993 was 864.

As always care must be taken in interpreting the HIV antibody data. Not all at risk will have been tested, and testing may not be requested until many years after infection has occurred.

#### RISK BEHAVIOUR CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS AND INFECTED WITH HIV

Of the 19 men notified with AIDS in the second quarter of 1993, 14 reported having had sex with other men (two of these also reported injecting drug use); two men (both with haemophilia) were infected through the receipt of infected blood products; two were reported to have been infected through heterosexual contact; and one was an injecting drug user.

Table 1 shows the likely risk behaviour categories of the people notified with AIDS, and those found to be infected with HIV.

Table 1 Category of risk behaviour by date of notification of people with AIDS, and those identified as HIV antibody positive

	AIDS		Total to		HIV antibody positive			
	12 Months to 30.6.93		30.6.93		12 Months to 30.6.93		Total to 30.6.93	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Homosexual or bisexual	41	71.9	327	83.5	55	53.9	494	57.1
Homosexual & IDU	2	3.5	9	2.3	2	0	9	1.0
Injecting drug user (IDU)								
Male	1	1.8	6	1.5	4	3.9	18	2.1
Female	1	1.8	3	0.8	1	1.0	5	0.6
Blood Product Recipient+	2	3.5	6	1.5	0	0	28	3.2
Transfusion Related								
Male	0	0	1	0.3	0	0	2	0.2
Female	0	0	1	0.3	0	0	5	0.6
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0.6
Heterosexual								
Male	4	7.0	14	3.4	4	3.9	13	1.5
Female	6	10.5	12	3.1	5	4.9	23	2.7
Perinatal								
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Female	0	0	1	0.3	0	0	1	0.1
Not stated or unknown								
Male	0	0	12	3.1	27	26.5	236	27.3
Female	0	0	0	0	2	2.0	14	1.6
Unknown	0	0	0	0	2	2.0	10	1.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>100.0</b>

+ All male

**AGE AND SEX OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS**

Table 2 presents the age and sex of those notified with AIDS.

**Table 2 Age and sex of people notified with AIDS to 30 June 1993**

Age (years)	Male	Female	Total
0-9	1	2	3
10-19	3	0	3
20-29	66	5	71
30-39	154	5	159
40-49	106	3	109
50-59	36	2	38
60 or more	9	0	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>392</b>

**ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS**

Table 3 shows the ethnic groups of people with AIDS. When the age distribution of the various ethnic groups is taken into consideration, AIDS is not found to be significantly more common in any group. Ethnicity is not recorded for the people reported as being HIV antibody positive.

**Table 3 Ethnic groups of people notified with AIDS to 30 June 1993**

	No.	%
European/Pakeha	324	82.7
Maori	44	11.2
Pacific Islander	7	1.8
Other	10	2.6
Unknown	7	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**OUTCOME OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS**

Of the 392 people notified as having AIDS, 79 were believed to be alive, 301 had died, nine had left the country, and the

outcome of the remaining three was not known, at the time of publication.

**UNLINKED ANONYMOUS MONITORING OF HIV PREVALENCE AT SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE CLINICS**

The AIDS Epidemiology Group has recently reported (in the New Zealand Medical Journal, 11 August 1993) the results of a study to determine the prevalence of HIV infection among patients attending the four sexually transmitted disease (STD) clinics in Auckland and Christchurch.

The population studied were those attending because of concern about a possible new episode of an STD and who had blood taken for hepatitis B (or syphilis) testing. The study involved unlinked anonymous testing of left-over blood samples, following ethical guidelines proposed internationally.

Among 8478 samples tested, 23 (2.7 per 1000) were found to be HIV antibody positive. The seroprevalence rates (per 1000) among homosexual or bisexual men, heterosexual men, and women were 44, 1.3, and 1.1, respectively. All but five of the infected people were either known to be HIV positive or had an identifiable test during their clinic attendance.

The seroprevalence rates are similar to those reported from STD clinics in England, and suggest that heterosexual transmission of HIV infection has not yet been extensive in New Zealand. Repeated surveys of this kind will help chart the course of the epidemic.

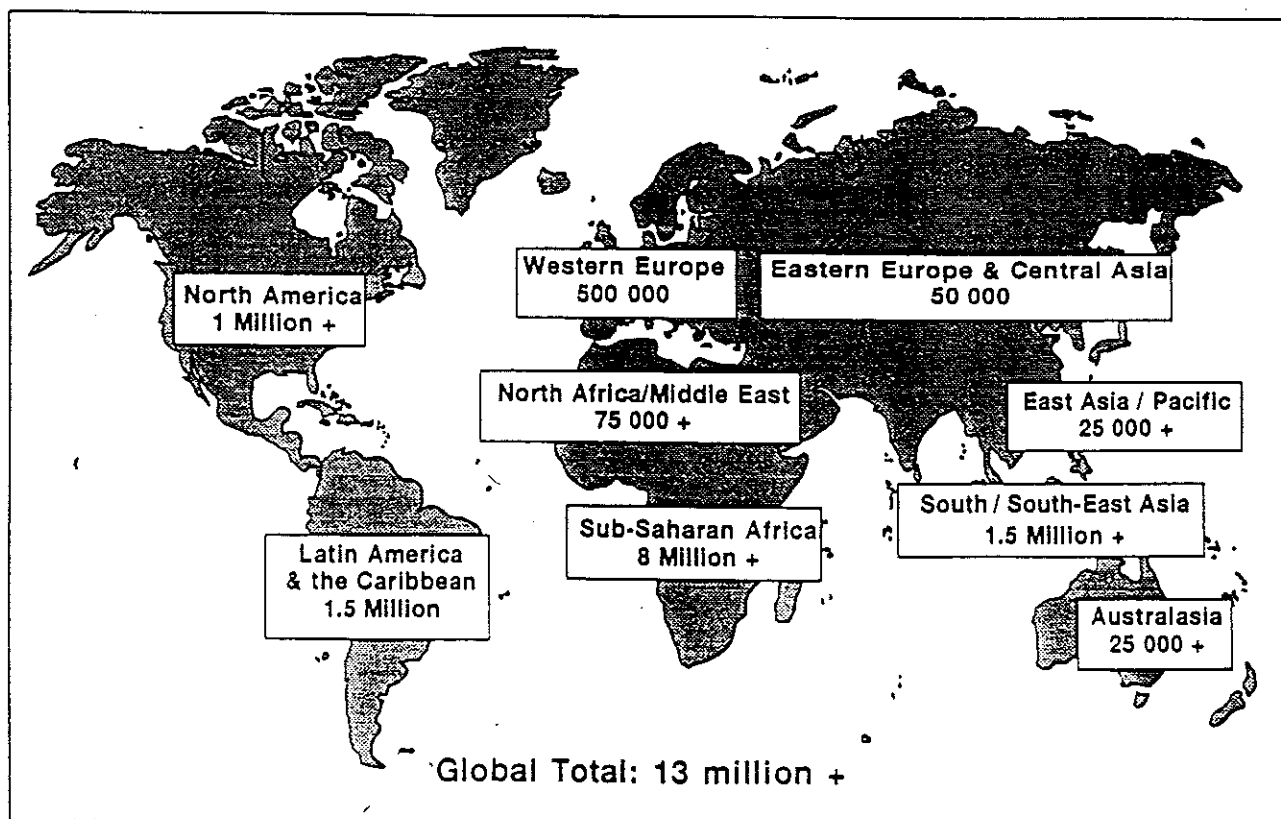
**World Health Organization  
overview of HIV/AIDS epidemic**

By the beginning of 1993 more than 600,000 AIDS cases had been reported worldwide to the World Health Organization. This is considered to greatly underestimate the real number, which may be as high as 2.5 million. Of these, more than 500,000 are estimated to have occurred in children resulting from mother to child transmission, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is estimated that over 13 million adults worldwide have by now been infected with HIV. Figure 2 shows the estimated global distribution of these

infections. In total about 60% of the infected adults are men and 40% women, this proportion varies in different regions of the world.

In South and South-East Asia, the number of cases of AIDS reported to January 1993 was 1443, although the true number is considered to be much higher. Currently it is estimated that there are over 1.5 million people infected in that part of the world. The relatively small number of cases of AIDS compared to people with HIV infection, is because the infection became established later there than in other regions.



**Figure 2** Estimated global distribution of adult HIV infections, by continent or region - mid 1993. [Source - World Health Organization]

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