

HIV infection

In 1999 a total of 273 first-time HIV-positive persons were notified, 177 men (65%) and 96 women (35%). The median age was 38 years for men and 33 years for women. The proportion aged 25-39 years was 50% for men and 65% for women, this being largely unchanged from 1998. 51% were domiciled in greater Copenhagen, a lower proportion than in 1998 (61%). Of the notified persons 168 (62%) were Danes and 97 (36%) immigrants. In 3 cases no information was given, and 5 persons were short-term visitors to Denmark. Immigrants are thus continuing to make up a large and rising proportion of newly diagnosed HIV-infected persons, EPI-NEWS 40/99. The distribution of cases by mode of infection and place of birth is shown in Table 1. 58% of Danish men were infected by homosexual contact, making up 43% of all newly diagnosed HIV-infected Danes.

Table 1. Notified first-time HIV-positive persons by sex, mode of infection and place of birth, 1999

	M	F	Total
Heterosexual	66	74	140
- Born in DK	(36)	(24)	(60)
Homosexual	92	-	92
- Born in DK	(73)	-	(73)
IVDU	9	15	24
- Born in DK	(9)	(15)	(24)
Other/unstated	10	7	17
- Born in DK	(8)	(3)	(11)
Total	177	96	273
- Born in DK	(126)	(42)	(168)

15 Danish men were infected by heterosexual contact abroad, 8 in central Africa, 3 in Thailand, 1 in Holland and 3 in an unstated country. Thus just over 40% (15/36) of heterosexually infected Danish men were infected outside Denmark. Two persons, both immigrants, were probably infected by blood transfusions given abroad some years before. There were 13 pregnant women; 10 of these were foreigners.

HIV testing

129,934 HIV tests were performed in 1999, excl. blood donors, which is a small rise from 1998 and similar to testing activity in 1997. What determines who and how many people opt for testing in a given year is un-

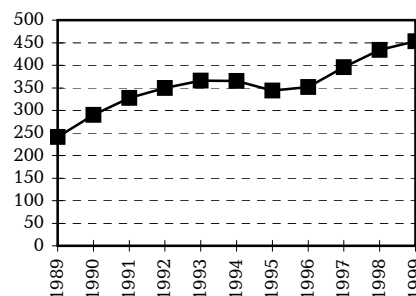
HIV/AIDS IN DENMARK 1999

known. If the approx. 130,000 voluntary tests in 1999 are added to the estimated 250,000 donors that are tested annually, this means that about 10% of the adult Danish population are tested each year. Many of these tests are, however, performed on previously tested persons, this naturally applying not only to many donors but also to those who are tested voluntarily. Of the newly diagnosed HIV-infected persons, 115 (43%; 74 men and 41 women) had previously been tested HIV-negative. Proportions of homo- and heterosexually infected persons who had previously been HIV-tested were 49% and 34%, respectively, while this proportion was 79% for i.v. drug users.

AIDS

71 patients were diagnosed as having AIDS in 1999, 17 women (24%) and 54 men (76%). The annual number of new AIDS cases is thus remaining quite low. By the end of 1999 a total of 2264 persons with AIDS had been diagnosed in Denmark. The median age of patients diagnosed as having AIDS in 1999 was 36 years for women and 42 years for men. Of the men, 31 were homosexually and 13 heterosexually infected. Most (53; 75%) of the notified patients were Danes. The widespread use of the new combined antiviral treatments is continuing to have a notable effect on both the morbidity and mortality of AIDS. The number of AIDS deaths fell in 1999 to 38, nearly 200 fewer than in 1995. The number of patients living with AIDS is still rising, and at the end of 1999 a total of 453 patients were alive, the highest figure ever, Fig. 1.

Fig. 1. No. of AIDS patients alive at the end of each year, 1989-99



Just over 1/3 of the AIDS patients notified in 1999 had been known to be HIV-infected for more than 5

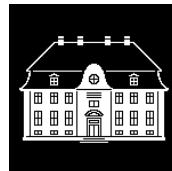
years before the AIDS diagnosis was made. Nearly half (49%) had been tested HIV-positive less than 4 months before the AIDS diagnosis. Almost all these patients had been sexually infected, half homo- and half heterosexually. None were i.v. drug users.

Comments

There are still many Danes who each year opt for HIV-testing. Results from the Danish HIV surveillance are difficult to interpret, as they do not directly reflect either the incidence or prevalence of HIV. The HIV notification system is anonymous, so the information obtained can neither be validated nor followed up. This situation is especially serious today, when AIDS data are no longer reflecting HIV prevalence or incidence, EPI-NEWS 40/99. This problem is not unique to Denmark, however. For example, it has recently led the US CDC to advice that a confidential name-based approach is used for HIV surveillance. Such a system also permits the detection of duplicate notifications, which is difficult under the current Danish system. Similar measures are under discussion in France and Germany, while the UK has for several years been using personal codes derived from the name and date of birth. How Danish HIV surveillance can be improved is still being debated. It remains essential to maintain a well-targeted preventive effort and effective monitoring, particularly as the overall infective pressure is presumed to be rising. (E. Smith, J. Duus, Dept. of Epidem.)

EPI-NORTH

EPI-NORTH is a new bulletin on the surveillance and prevention of infectious diseases. It is published in English and Russian and is based on a collaboration between the 5 Scandinavian and 3 Baltic countries together with 4 Russian neighbouring regions. EPI-NORTH is currently being funded by Sweden and the Nordic Council of Ministers. The bulletin is expected to be issued 2-4 times a year. Applications to receive EPI-NORTH (sent free of charge for the time being) can be made to the Department of Epidemiology. (T. Rønne, Dept. of Epidemiology)



Streptococci isolated from blood and CSF from infected patients

1st quarter of 2000 compared with the same period of the two previous years

		2000				1999	1998
		< 2 yrs	2-59 yrs	60 yrs +	Total		
January	S. pneumoniae	4	33	77	114	125	160
	Gr. A strep.	-	11	9	20	12	15
	Gr. C strep	-	-	1	1	1	-
	Gr. G strep.	-	1	8	9	5	7
February	S. pneumoniae	6	33	53	92	142	132
	Gr. A strep.	-	5	13	18	8	29
	Gr. C strep	-	-	2	2	1	-
	Gr. G strep.	-	-	4	4	4	5
March	S. pneumoniae	6	32	83	121	157	99
	Gr. A strep.	-	10	7	17	8	22
	Gr. C strep	-	1	2	3	-	-
	Gr. G strep.	-	3	5	8	7	7
1st quarter	S. pneumoniae	16	98	213	327	424	391
	Gr. A strep.	-	26	29	55	28	66
	Gr. C strep	-	1	5	6	2	-
	Gr. G strep.	-	4	17	21	16	19

(Streptococcus Unit)

