

45 Survey Investigation Examining Attitudes toward and Knowledge about HIV Testing among Medical Students, Residents, Staff and Patients in the ED

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Background: The CDC currently recommends routine HIV testing of all patients presenting to the ED. We hypothesize that most medical students, EM residents and faculty are not aware of this standard of care and have knowledge gaps about HIV testing and counseling.

Methods: Survey investigation examining attitudes toward and knowledge about HIV testing in the ED of an urban teaching hospital. A random convenience sample of 150 people; 25 in each of 6 cohorts (attendings, residents, nurses, ancillary staff, medical students, patients) took an anonymous 15 item survey. Data was analyzed using simple percentages and chi square test. Critical value was set at 11.070, 5 degrees of freedom and $\alpha=0.05$. Odds ratios were calculated with a 95% confidence interval.

Results: Physicians were more likely to answer knowledge based questions correctly. Overall, residents averaged the highest percent correct. Percentages of nurses and ancillary staff answering these questions correctly were as low as 36.0% and 24.0%, respectively. Nurses sometimes scored lower than patients on knowledge based items. Profession was found to have a significant ($p<0.05$) association on 50% of the knowledge based questions, as well as all questions regarding HIV testing habits. Eighty-eight to 92% of all cohorts have ever been tested for HIV, with the exception of medical students (52%). Patients and ancillary staff have been tested more recently than physicians and students.

Conclusions: In this urban ED, residents were best informed about HIV, but least likely to follow CDC testing recommendations. Nurses showed a generally low level of knowledge, corresponding to low likelihood of compliance with testing recommendations. Patients and ancillary staff had intermediate knowledge, but were most likely to comply with testing recommendations. By identifying gaps in particular segments of the surveyed population, future education programs can be created and tailored for each group.