



RESULTS OF ROUTINE 'OPT OUT' HIV SCREENING IN THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT AT THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

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Introduction: Currently the U.S. Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention is recommending routine 'opt out' HIV testing in emergency departments. The Texas Department of Health and Human Services, in April 2010, funded an HIV Opt-Out screening program in El Paso, Texas which was implemented by Dr. Woolard and his team with the collaboration of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and the University Medical Center of El Paso (UMCEP.)

Methods: University Medical Center is funded publicly and serves as an academic hospital for Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. It is the only Level 1 trauma center within 280 miles of El Paso, Texas. UMCEP ED sees an average of 4500 patients per month including 14% Mexican residents most from Juarez. Since April 2010, all patients between the ages of 18-64 who presented to UMCEP ED are eligible for routine opt-out HIV Screening. Consent for HIV testing is included in the general consent for ED care. Screening tests are performed on blood samples using a chemo-luminescent batch analyzer at low cost (reagent est. \$3.50/test. lab charge \$9.50.) Only patients having blood drawn as part of their workup (45% ED cases) are screened. On-call counselors are STAT paged by UMCEP lab 24/7 for positive patients. Patients with positive results are counseled after screening and referred to one of two HIV treatment clinics after receiving a confirmatory Western Blot. Positives are called at 1,2, and 3 months to assure linkage to care.

Results: Apr 1 2010 – Oct 31 2012 there were 35,206 HIV screening tests; averaging > 1,100 per month. 59 were new positives and 181 were previous positives. 85% of positives are confirmed as linked to care. From Jan 1- Oct 31 2012, there were 16,082 screening tests, 83 previous positives and 25 new positives. 9 false positive cases were screen positive and Western blot negative or indeterminate (2.) Of the 25 new positives 84% were male and 96% were Hispanic. The average age was 38 (21-52). Average CD4 count was 238 cells/mm³ with 58% CD4 (<200), 16% CD4 (200-350) and 26% (>350). Thus **42% of cases were probably detected early.**



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ER Patients Screened for HIV April 1, 2010 to October 31, 2012	35,206
Previous HIV Positives	181
New HIV Positives	59

Conclusion: The implementation of the HIV opt-out screening program at University Medical Center/Texas Tech appears to be successful in detecting new, HIV cases with a case finding rate of 1.7/1,000. Of those new cases found in 2012, 42% were early in their disease course. Further efforts are ongoing to increase compliance with screening and reach a goal of screening >85% of patients 13-64 who have blood drawn. This is a low cost program with a total PROGRAM cost per patient screened of \$13 and cost of finding a new case \$5,250. To establish the program as sustainable (self-funded through billing and collections), UMCEP/TTUHSC plans transitioning payment to insurance and private payment in the years ahead.