



Centers for Disease Control  
and Prevention (CDC)  
Atlanta GA 30333

JUN 15 2007

Richard Darling, D.D.S.  
The FAIR Foundation  
78629 Bougainvillea Drive  
Palm Desert, California 92211

Dear Dr. Darling:

Thank you and the Board of Directors of the Fair Allocations in Research Foundation for contacting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding your questions about data on the incidence of AIDS and mortality among persons diagnosed with AIDS. CDC provides funding to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and dependent areas to collect HIV/AIDS surveillance data, including mortality information among persons diagnosed with AIDS. CDC regularly updates and evaluates these surveillance data and the methods for obtaining mortality data.

In your letter, you describe significant reductions in mortality among persons diagnosed with AIDS. Significant reductions in mortality have indeed been realized due to improved medical treatment options; however, people continue to die of AIDS. The reductions in mortality, unfortunately, are not as great as you suggest. It appears that your conclusions are based on an interpretation of the data in Table 5 of the California AIDS Surveillance Report. Table 5 shows that among 6,218 California residents diagnosed with AIDS from January to June 1992, 4,984 (80%) have died, representing mortality over approximately 15-year follow-up period. Among 1,516 California residents diagnosed with AIDS from January to June 2006, ninety-nine (7%) have died, representing mortality over approximately a one-year follow-up period. The mortality among a cohort of persons diagnosed with AIDS 15 years ago cannot be compared with the mortality of a cohort of persons diagnosed with AIDS one year ago.

You also raised questions about the mortality statistics presented in Table 7 of the CDC HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report. These data are reported to CDC by state health departments. In Table 7, CDC presents estimated national data through 2005, based on statistical adjustments to account for delays in reporting and ongoing updates made to the data by state health departments. These data represent the most recent information available; however, there is always greater uncertainty in the data estimations for more recent years and the estimates are routinely refined as more complete information is received over time.

I appreciate your letter and the opportunity to clarify these points. Providing accurate data on the HIV/AIDS epidemic is a top CDC priority. We are currently reviewing our national estimates and will share those data with you.

Sincerely,



Julie Louise Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director