Australia to evaluate implementation of rapid oral HIV tests in dental practices

Daniel Zimmermann
DT Asia Pacific

SYDNEY, Australia: HIV infections in Australia jumped by 10 per cent last year, according to recently published figures from the University of New South Wales in Sydney. A group of researchers are investigating whether dental practices and pharmacies could help stop the further spread of the virus by diagnosing more people who are infected and not aware of it through rapid oral HIV testing.

The trial, conducted in collaboration with the University of Sydney’s Faculty of Dentistry, Western Sydney Sexual Health, and Sydney School of Public Health, is currently being conducted in the states of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. It seeks to examine knowledge of HIV, attitudes towards people living with HIV and the willingness of Australian dentists to conduct rapid HIV testing, lead researchers Dr. Anthony Santella told Dental Tribune Asia Pacific.

He said that studies on the willingness of dental patients to accept such testing were begun recently. Depending on the test results, the team will also investigate how to implement them in practices that operate in neighbouring high HIV prevalence rates in cities like Sydney. This step is anticipated for next year.

“Evaluations would also need to be done to explore whether it is cost-effective to implement rapid HIV testing in the dental setting versus other settings,” Santella added. “As it is cost-effective, we would then explore reimbursement mechanisms so dentists and possibly other dental professionals could bulk bill the government for the test.”

Rapid HIV tests have been available to medical practitioners in Australia since late 2012, but the country has been slow to implement them. The OraQuick ADVANCE Rapid HIV 1/2 Antibody Test developed by US company OraSure Technologies and used in the trial has not yet received approval from the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration. It has been available to dental practitioners in the USA since early last year, when it was approved by the Food and Drug Administration. The latest studies suggest that rapid HIV testing in dental practices could increase testing frequency among regular testers, as well as testing rates.

According to the Kirby Institute at the University of New South Wales, about 25 per cent of HIV cases in Australia are undiagnosed. In total, more than 51,000 infections were reported in 2011, with almost every second one occurring in the state of New South Wales.
Motherhood clouded by dental problems

Motivations of dental students differ widely

N-Cement Collection
Luting materials from Ivoclar Vivadent

A strong bond provides confidence and support

Variolink® N | Multilink® N | Multilink® Speed
• Powerful luting materials
• Tried-and-tested product combinations
• A wide collection for different demands:
  ESTHETICS | UNIVERSALITY | SIMPLICITY

www.ivoclarvivadent.com

Ivoclar Vivadent AG
Benderstrasse 2, CH-9494 Schaan, Liechtenstein, Tel.: +423/235 35 35, Fax: +423/235 33 60

Ivoclar Vivadent Marketing Ireland Ltd., 12-18 Lower Drumcondra Road, Dublin 9, Ireland, Tel.: +353 (1) 307 0182, Fax: +353 (1) 870 160, E-Mail: ivoclar.indieurope@ivoclarvivadent.com

Ivoclar Vivadent Pte. Ltd., 177 Chin Swee Road, #02-01 Sun Centre, Singapore 168877, Tel.: +65 6335 6775, Fax: +65 6335 6861

DTAP1113_03_News 18.11.13 17:34 Seite 1