



UNAIDS Global Reference Group on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights

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Supporting Document

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Current Debates on HIV Testing and Counseling: Outline of Elements of HIV Testing

I The Purpose of the HIV Test

- Individuals voluntarily want to know their HIV-infection status
- As a precondition to access HIV/AIDS-related care and support, and/or treatment
- As part of routine health screening
- To reduce mother-to-child transmission
- Because of societal attitudes, prejudices, and assumptions of high risks towards certain individuals and population groups
- To determine eligibility of individuals for activities, services, and goods such as employment, travel, migration, insurance, or as a premarital requirement
- To collect and analyze information needed for epidemiological surveillance
- To donate blood or organs
- For research purposes

II The Practice of the HIV test

- Site/location where the testing is occurring
- The population accessing testing and/or being tested
- The components of the testing process itself, which include:
 - client decision to access services that offer HIV testing and counseling;
 - pre-test counseling (information and/or counseling provided to client regarding HIV testing and the implications and likely outcomes based on the result of the test);
 - voluntary decision of client to be tested or not tested;
 - testing;
 - return of client to receive results (not necessary for rapid testing);
 - provision of results to client; and
 - post-test counseling and support (provision of post-test information, counseling, and/or referral).

III The Implications of a Positive HIV Test

- Access to preventive, care and support services
- Contact tracing
- Partner notification and other forms of disclosure
- Named reporting
- Restrictions on rights such as education, housing, or employment.

This document was prepared by the Reference Group Secretariat to facilitate discussions at the Reference Group's August 2003 meeting.

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