

Oceania

Overview

- In Oceania there were an estimated 78,000 people living with HIV at the end of 2005.
- Regional adult HIV prevalence stood at 0.3% in 2005. An estimated 3,400 people died of AIDS-related illnesses in Oceania in 2005 and 7,200 people became newly infected.
- Treatment has been widespread in the countries with mature epidemics which has helped to keep the number of AIDS-related deaths relatively low.

Country developments

- **Papua New Guinea's** epidemic accounts for more than 90% all HIV infections reported to date in Oceania and the epidemic is growing at an alarming rate. HIV diagnoses have been increasing by around 30% annually since 1997. An estimated 60,000 **Papua New Guineans** were living with HIV in 2005 and HIV prevalence stood at 1.8%.
- Sociocultural norms in Papua New Guinea discriminate heavily against women and high levels of sexual violence against women have been reported. Both paid and casual sex liaisons feature prominently, and condom use is generally erratic. Among people seeking treatment for sexually transmitted infections in the capital, Port Moresby, 20% tested HIV positive in 2004.
- In **Australia** an estimated 16,000 adults and children were living with HIV in 2005. After declining in the late 1990s, annual new HIV diagnoses are approaching earlier levels again, and numbered some 820 in 2004. Newly acquired HIV infections (largely attributable to unprotected sex, mostly between men) are increasing, which plausibly reflects a revival of sexual risk behaviour.
- Although national HIV infection trends appear to be generally similar among indigenous and non-indigenous people, a recent study revealed marked discrepancies in Western **Australia**. While HIV notifications among non-indigenous Australians decreased in 1985–2002, those among indigenous men and women increased.
- Annual, new diagnoses in **New Zealand** have more than doubled since 1999 – from fewer than 80 to 183 in 2005 – but national adult HIV prevalence remains very low at under 0.2%. Much of the recent trend is attributable to an increase in HIV diagnoses among men who have sex with men.
- HIV-infection levels are low in the rest of Oceania, but this could change. On **Vanuatu**, more than 40% of pregnant women have been found to have at least one sexually transmitted infection, as did 43% of pregnant women in **Samoa's** capital, Apia. In Dili, **Timor-Leste**, 60% of sex workers tested positive for at least one sexually transmitted infection, as did almost 30% of taxi drivers and men who have sex with men.

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