

OREGON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

AIDS OIT-30-040

It is the policy of Oregon Institute of Technology to address the issue of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, which causes Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS), through behavioral, psychological, and disability matters and through currently published standards of conduct.

The campus community is committed to doing everything possible to prevent people from being infected, to limit the consequences of established infection, and to provide compassionate care for all concerned individuals.

Fundamental to this commitment will be an effective educational program to increase awareness and to provide resources for information and assistance. The OIT community will be encouraged to refer to the informational publication on the AIDs policy including guidelines for students and employees.

These established guidelines based on information obtained from the most credible sources of scientific and legal knowledge will be available to staff and students and will be updated as necessary.

It is the desire of Oregon Institute of Technology to respect the rights and concerns of all, and through education, understanding and compassion, to deal effectively and responsibly with these issues.

Recommended by:

Associated Student Body Officers – 3/92
Faculty Senate – 4/92
President's Council – 1/93

Approved: _____

Date: January, 1993

Preface to Guidelines

These recommendations and guidelines are based on the best currently available medical information, and on recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control, the Public Health Service and the American College Health Association.

These guidelines are developed with the understanding that:

1. Persons with AIDS* do not normally pose a health risk to others in an academic, residential or work setting. The risks of spreading HIV are those of intimate sexual contact, exposure to contaminated blood and perinatal transmission.
2. The college population is behaviorally at risk and needs to be educated for its own protection. People can choose to do or not do the things that expose them to HIV/AIDS.
3. Many individuals are asymptomatic and can transmit HIV/AIDS, but if they are not aware that they are infected, they may not be receiving appropriate care and support.
4. Each individual HIV/AIDS infection among students and staff will be analyzed and addressed on a case-by-case basis, using compassion and reasonable response, within a framework of these guidelines.
5. Public information about HIV/AIDS-related issues will be handled through the Director of Public Affairs, using the resources developed by the AIDS Task Force and in consultation with legal counsel.

*The term “persons with AIDS” means any person with any form of HIV disease, including all persons who have been found to carry the HIV antibody, whether or not they are symptomatic.

Student Guidelines

Admission and Attendance: Students with HIV/AIDS will be allowed unrestricted classroom attendance, employment opportunities and participation in curricular and extra-curricular activities as long as they are physically and mentally able and meet admission requirements.

Housing: Decisions about housing for students affected by HIV/AIDS will be made on a case-by-case basis. Current medical information does not indicate any risk to those sharing residence with infected individuals. In some cases, there may be concern for students with immune deficiencies (of any origin) when those students may be exposed to certain contagious diseases (e.g. chicken pox or measles) in a close living arrangement. A workable solution will be to offer a single room, if available, to an infected student. There is no requirement that the roommate of an HIV-positive person be told. To prevent transmission, open discussion and general education should be provided to make all residents aware of the risks of sharing personal articles that may be contaminated with blood and practicing behaviors known to transmit the virus.

Access to Facilities: Persons with HIV/AIDS will not be restricted from access to the college union, eating areas, gymnasium, swimming pool, recreational and entertainment facilities, or other common areas.

Testing: Mandatory testing of students will not be implemented. Testing will be recommended only in very unusual circumstances affecting the safety of others and then only with voluntary, informed consent. Students requesting testing will be referred to appropriate resources for anonymous testing at an agency that provides pre- and post-test counseling or they can request confidential testing through the Student Health Service.

Confidentiality: No specific or detailed information concerning individual students will be provided to any person, agency, insurer, employer, or institution without the prior specific written consent of the student, except as required by law. Oregon Revised Statutes prohibit any person from disclosing the fact that another person has AIDS, except in very limited circumstances. (ORS 433.045(3)).

Medical Care: Students will not routinely be asked about the existence of HIV/AIDS infection. Students who are infected are encouraged to inform a campus health care provider in the Student Health Service of their condition. This will allow health care providers to promote appropriate medical and educational needs, to inform students of outbreaks of contagious diseases that pose a danger to them, and to arrange competent resources for care, information and support.

Safety: Safety guidelines, as proposed by the United States Public Health Service, will be followed. These guidelines specify “universal precautions” for the handling of blood and body fluids, the handling of sharp objects and the use of disposable equipment.

Education: OIT recognizes the importance of providing information and education regarding HIV/AIDS. This will be accomplished by educating the OIT community about the following topics: (1) a medical overview of HIV/AIDS, including risk reduction and testing, (2) policy guidelines and rights and responsibilities, (3) campus and lab safety, and (4) resources for information and assistance. The format and content will address and recognize the rich diversity of people on the campus, and will provide opportunities for effective learning by people of any age, ability, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

Athletics: Whether or not an athlete is infected with and carries HIV/AIDS should have no bearing on his or her participation in athletic competition. The decision as to whether a student should compete or train will be based solely on a medical assessment of the athlete’s overall health and fitness.

Harrassment: As a result of the fear, anxiety, and anger that many people feel in reaction to HIV/AIDS, some people who are either known to be or suspected of being infected may be subjected to emotional or physical abuse. OIT condemns all such occurrences as intolerable and will respond to them quickly and effectively.

Resources: Appropriate campus or community educational, medical, laboratory, psychological and social service resources and information for students who are concerned about or affected by HIV/AIDS will be provided through the Student Health Service and/or Counseling Office.

Employee Guidelines

The following guidelines are intended to help all employees, both those with HIV/AIDS or those who may be working with someone who has HIV/AIDS, to maximize their productive employment capacities while assuring a safe and secure work environment. All OIT employees will abide by the state of Oregon personnel policy regarding HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

Hiring and Promoting: OIT will not refuse to hire or promote, nor will it bar or discharge from employment, any persons with AIDS, so long as that individual can, with reasonable accommodation, perform the duties of the job and does not pose a risk to others.

Workplace Safety: There is no significant risk of exposure to HIV/AIDS from routine conduct of work on campus. OIT wants to provide a safe work environment for all employees based on standards set by competent authority. Employees should be aware of and follow safety guidelines, as proposed by the United States Public Health Service and the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), regarding handling blood and body fluids, sharp objects and infectious waste.

Education: OIT recognizes the importance of providing information and education regarding HIV/AIDS. This will be accomplished by educating the OIT community about the following topics: (1) a medical overview of HIV/AIDS, including risk reduction and testing, (2) policy guidelines and rights and responsibilities, (3) workplace safety, and (4) resources for information and assistance. The format and content will address and recognize the rich diversity of people on our campus, and will provide opportunities for effective learning by people of any age, ability, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

Confidentiality: OIT employees are protected from public disclosure of their medical records. Self-disclosure is voluntary and should not result in harassment. Self-disclosure is encouraged if reasonable accommodations need to be made, or if education, support and resources need to be provided. Oregon Revised Statutes prohibit any person from disclosing the fact that another person has AIDS except in very limited circumstances. (ORS 433.045 (3))

Testing: Mandatory testing of employees will not be implemented. Testing may be recommended only in very unusual circumstances affecting the safety of others and then only with voluntary, informed consent. Employees requesting testing will be referred to appropriate resources for anonymous testing at an agency that provides pre- and post-test counseling.

Employee Benefits: OIT administers benefits for persons with AIDS in the same way as for employees with other life-threatening illnesses.

Employee Refusal to Work: Refusal to work with a person who has AIDS is not a valid reason for failure to fulfill assigned tasks, since there is no risk of transmitting the virus through ordinary work activities. The employee refusing to work will be counseled as to current medical information. A continued unreasonable neglect of duty could subject an employee to normal disciplinary action.

Resources: Appropriate campus or community educational, medical, laboratory, psychological and social service resources and information for employees who are concerned about or affected by HIV/AIDS will be provided through the Office of Human Resources.

Recommendations

1. Education regarding HIV/AIDS needs to be a priority. All students, faculty and staff should receive a copy of the OIT "AIDS policy" and appropriate guidelines at orientation. Handouts on AIDS issues can be included in mailings, paychecks, etc.
2. Academic credit for health classes should be increased from two (2) to three (3) credit hours. The additional class time would allow appropriate AIDS education. It would also allow students to transfer these credits to other colleges, since most other colleges require three (3) health credits. Since OIT requires all students to take health, HIV/AIDS education would be part of the curriculum for every student.
3. As a component of our education program, students and employees should be informed about condoms and spermicides and their proper utilization. This would reduce the chance of transmission of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Condoms should be readily available to all students from vending machines, which allows individuals to obtain them anonymously and outside regular business hours. Health education could be enhanced by providing appropriate signs regarding sexual abstinence on the vending machines. In addition, they should be made available for purchase through the Paper Owl Bookstore.
4. The Director of Public Affairs should be appointed the single institutional officer to handle public information about AIDS-related issues. He will state the institution's policy forthrightly and clearly, but will not provide any specific information about individual students or employees.
5. The Student Health Service educator should be designated the campus official who would be the resource person for information and referrals regarding HIV/AIDS and work with the Director of Public Affairs regarding HIV/AIDS issues.
6. A standing committee should be developed to deal with health and societal issues on campus such as HIV/AIDS, sexual assault, substance abuse and other pertinent issues, especially since many of these issues are interrelated.
7. A peer education program should be implemented. This program would involve students helping students with health concerns such as HIV/AIDS, drugs, date rape, contraception, and safer sex. The major goal would be to increase a student's ability to better manage his or her own physical and emotional health and to promote wellness that is largely determined by one's behavior and lifestyle. This type of health education has been highly successful at other colleges. It could be developed through the Student Health Service/Health Educator.

