



CAPITAL AREA VACCINE EFFORT

www.aidsvaccine.org

March 13th, 2007

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Dr. Pane

The Capital Area Vaccine Effort (CAVE) is a volunteer led community advisory board for HIV vaccine research in the District of Columbia. As such we are keenly aware of the issues HIV vaccine research trial participants face in the District of Columbia. Particularly, current and former trial participants have unique issues with regards to HIV testing and counseling.

We applaud the CDC's new HIV testing guidelines, as well as the districts "Come Together DC: Get Tested for HIV" campaign. We also know, however, that with a renewed focus on HIV testing, there is a need to educate those who conduct testing & counseling in the District on the issues hundreds of current and former trial participants in the District of Columbia face. We believe the following guidelines should be incorporated into all HIV testing and counseling programs in DC:

1. HIV Testing Counselors should be made aware that participation in an HIV vaccine trial can potentially alter the outcome of an ELISA and/or Western Blot HIV test.
2. Current HIV vaccine trial participants should not be tested for HIV at local clinics, but should always be referred to their trial site for HIV testing.
3. Former trial participants should continue to get tested at their research site until advised by researchers to do otherwise.

A recent incident at the University of Illinois at Chicago HIV Vaccine Research Site has underscored the importance of educating HIV testing and counseling staff on these issues. We've included an overview of this unfortunate incident for your reference.

We've also included an updated version of a document CAVE members wrote several years back entitled "HIV/AIDS Service Organizations & HIV Prevention Vaccine Research."

Members of CAVE are available to assist you in any way in implementing these guidelines.

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