

County of Santa Clara

Office of the Board of Supervisors

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James T. Beall, Jr.
Supervisor Fourth District

MEMORANDUM

To: Pete Kutas
County Executive

From: James T. Beall, Jr.
Supervisor, District 4

Blanca Alvarado
Supervisor, District 2

Date: May 5, 2006

Subject: Referral to Administration for a report back from the Public Health Department regarding the incidence of HIV disease in Santa Clara County.

Referral to Administration to direct the Department of Public Health to report back on the documented incidence and projected incidence of HIV disease in Santa Clara County, by year for the past five years, and to provide an off-agenda report by Wednesday, May 17, 2006 to Board offices.

This referral requires a timely response in order to provide Supervisors Alvarado and Beall with pertinent information for a budget augmentation request related to HIV testing, education, outreach and prevention.

Further, the report back to the Board of Supervisors should include the impact of budget cuts on the County's HIV/AIDS Program in the last five years, the rates of incidence of HIV in comparable populations outside the County where testing has been readily available, the County's current method of outreach to the most vulnerable populations and evidence of HIV disease by age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and region of the County.



REASON FOR REFERRAL

There are reports of an increasing incidence of HIV transmission in Santa Clara County among young people, ethnic communities and throughout the general population. In some reports, the incidence of HIV "positive" test results are greater than two to three times the percentage testing positive at the County's one and only fixed-site test facility, the Crane Center on Lenzen Avenue.

Epidemiologists, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the State Office of AIDS have been concerned for years about the alarming increase in the incidence of HIV in the general population. In Santa Clara County, if fresh anecdotal evidence is correct, tens of thousands of people in targeted community populations will test HIV-positive approximately five percent of the time.

New and modern rapid-test technology has been approved and is now available. Tens of thousands of HIV rapid-test kits can be delivered to Santa Clara County at no cost from the federal government. Based on the limited amount of HIV case data in Santa Clara County, and the anecdotal evidence mentioned above, between 20 and 50 County residents will test HIV-positive of every thousand rapid tests performed in target populations.

Based on statewide data of the reported number of people living with the HIV disease compared to the number of reported deaths due to full-blown AIDS, Santa Clara County is projected to have thousands of people living with HIV who are unaware of their infection. HIV-positive individuals are the vectors of transmission of HIV and are more likely to be spreading the disease when they are unaware of their HIV status.

The report back from the Department of Public Health should address the above concerns and assumptions about the incidence of HIV disease in Santa Clara County with recommendations on how to curtail the spread of HIV in the County population.