

# Assessing the health status of HIV patients using surrogates derived from a voluntary reporting system

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## Background

Data from HIV/AIDS surveillance system is readily available for conducting health status assessment.

## Methods

A voluntary HIV/AIDS reporting system has been in place in Hong Kong since 1985 (Figure 1). Four indicators were derived from the system to assess the trend of the health status of HIV infected individuals in the territory. These are: number of HIV and AIDS reports, CD4 level at HIV reporting (since 1995), patterns of AIDS defining illnesses (ADIs) and causes of deaths. Local data from 1991 to 2002 were analyzed by comparing two distinct periods regarding availability of highly active anti-retroviral therapy (HAART) (period 1:91-96 & period 2:97-02)

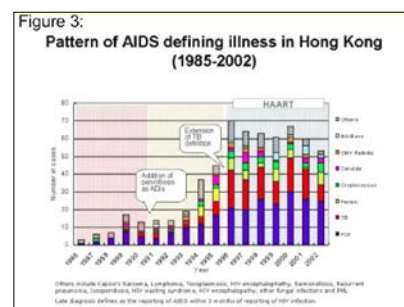
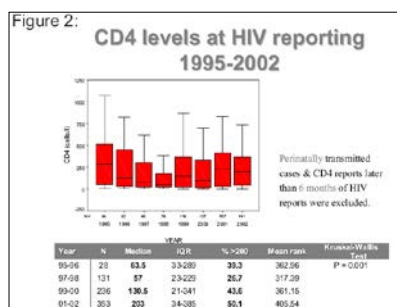
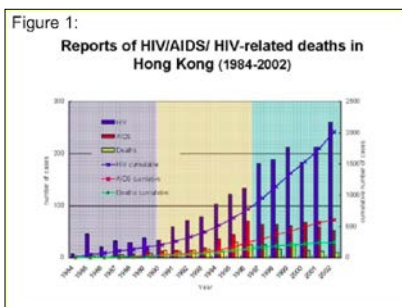
## Results

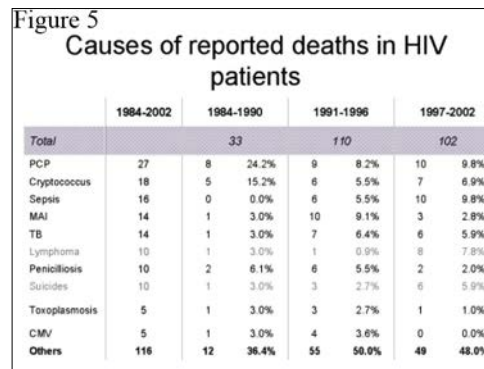
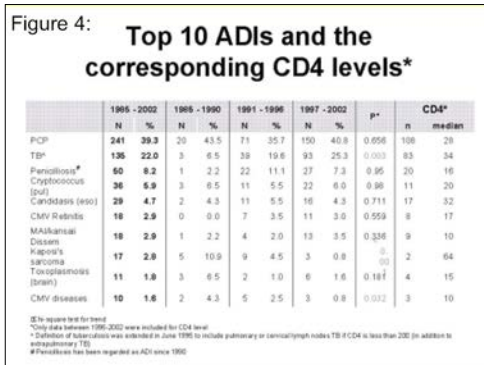
The ratio of AIDS to HIV reports decreased from 1:2.9 to 1:3.4 across the two periods. The same trend was observed across different ethnic groups and sexes, but not within individual risk group (heterosexual contact, 1:3.0 to 1:2.7

while homosexual/ bisexual contact, 1:2.6 to, 1:4.6). The proportion of late presenters (i.e. reported to have AIDS within 3 months of HIV reports) among AIDS reports increased from 62.4% to 82.4%. The median CD4 level at HIV diagnosis increased from 64 cells/  $\mu$ l in 1995-6 to 203 cells/ $\mu$ l in 2001-2 (Figure 2). There was no major change in the pattern of ADIs among late presenters across the periods, but the proportion of PCP increased in non-late presenters during period 2 (21% in period 1 and 36% in period 2,  $p < 0.05$ ) (Figure 3 and 4). Other ADIs, which tend to occur at a lower level of immune status, were less commonly reported in those who already knew their serostatus. There was an increase in deaths due to lymphoma, (from 1, 0.9% to 8, 7.8%,  $p < 0.05$ ) and suicide (from 3, 2.7% to 6, 5.9%,  $p = 0.2$ ) and a decrease due to mycobacterium avian intracellul are infection (from 10, 9.1% to 3, 2.8%,  $p < 0.1$ ) across the periods (Figure 5).

## Conclusions

Data from HIV/AIDS surveillance system are useful for health status assessment. An improving trend of health status among HIV infected individuals in Hong Kong has been observed in the last 12 years.





To know more about the surveillance system or obtain the surveillance reports, please visit our website [www.aids.gov.hk](http://www.aids.gov.hk) or email to [aids@dh.gov.hk](mailto:aids@dh.gov.hk)



Virtual AIDS Office of Hong Kong - <http://www.aids.gov.hk>