# Injection Drug Use Spreads HIV in Afghanistan

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Afghan health officials are concerned about growing HIV infection trends among the country's injection drug users, according to *The National* and Abu Dhabi Media. Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health estimates about 3,000 people are living with the virus in the country, though only 700 are documented. But it is Afghanistan's 120,000 heroin users that cause concern—a 2009 Ministry of Health study, conducted by Johns Hopkins University in the United States, showed that 7 percent of the nation's injection drug users are HIV positive. Heroin is relatively inexpensive in Afghanistan, a country that produces about 70 percent of the world's opium. About 30 residential out-patient clinics across the country treat a combined 7,000 people per year, but, experts say, more needle exchange, HIV testing and clinics with methadone treatment are needed.

To read the *National* article, click here.

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