U.S. Helps Vietnam Prevent HIV in Injection Drug Users

December 31, 2008

The Vietnam government is increasing public education and help for people at high risk for HIV through a new prevention program supported by U.S. government funding, *The Wall Street Journal* reports.

According to the article, one of the initiatives includes expanding outpatient methadone treatment for drug addicts. The government already opened six methadone clinics, each capable of treating about 250 people a year, and plans to open six more.

Before the new initiative, drug addicts first underwent community-based rehabilitation, which often consisted of family members trying to detoxify drug users themselves. Patients who didn't succeed were placed into residential rehabilitation centers.

Vietnamese law presents a challenge to changing the way drug addicts are treated. Under the law, injection drug users are subject to prosecution and government employees must report them to the authorities. The threat of jail time keeps addicts from getting treated.

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