

Current Health Event

World AIDS Day 2015

December 1, This year's World AIDS Day slogan "Treat all people living with HIV", is a call for action so that every individual living with HIV can enjoy the highest attainable level of health through lifelong access to good quality HIV care and treatment..

Editorial note:

In 2015 (till November) 113 new cases of HIV/AIDS have been reported to the National AIDS Programme (NAP) in Lebanon. A significant number of these cases (92.7%) have been linked to local spread whereas 7.3% are linked to travel to endemic areas.

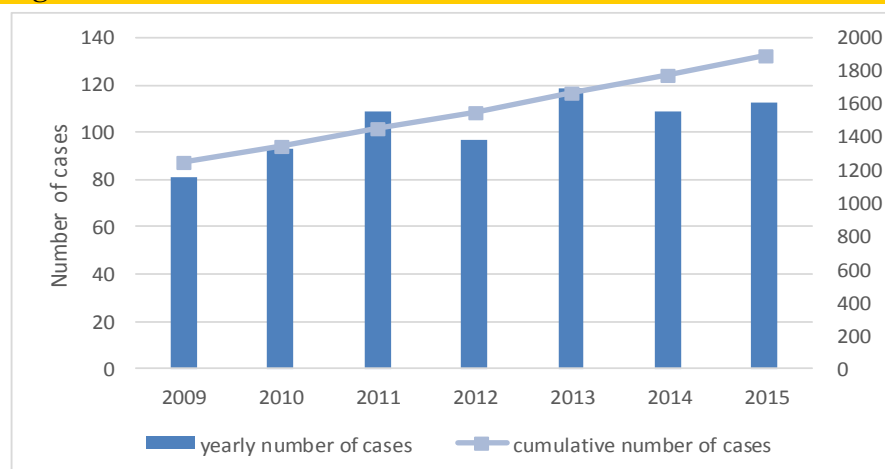
By the end of November 2015, the cumulative total of HIV/AIDS cases reached 1893.

Distribution of cases by age shows that the higher number of reported cases is in the age group 30-49 years old (38.1%), which shows a shift in prevalence to older generations compared to last year.

Gender distribution shows that 85.8% of the newly reported cases are among males compared to 14.2% for females. However global gender distribution of AIDS cases in the world is around 50%. Low AIDS cases rates among women could help limit the spread of the disease in Lebanon.

The major mode of HIV transmission is by sexual relations (81.4%). Of the total infections by sexual transmission the highest rate is among men who have sex with men 34.5% and 50.4% non-specified which raises the question of under reporting due to fears of stigma and discrimination.

Figure: Number of HIV/AIDS cases in Lebanon 2009-2015.



Source: Lebanese Ministry of Public Health, National Aids Programme, December 2015

The vertical transmission (mother to child) is nil.

Data on high risk groups (intravenous drug users, sex workers, prisoners), is incomplete. Data on HIV/AIDS death is unavailable.

Blood safety is well controlled in the country. No new cases of HIV infections through blood transfused in Lebanon have been reported since 1993.

Antiretroviral treatment (ARV) is provided by the Ministry of Public Health free of charge.

In Lebanon, there are 110 Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) centres, where confidential, free, voluntary and anonymous information about HIV/AIDS, HIV testing, and referrals to health care and social services are available.

Patients who are deemed eligible for treatment as per WHO guidelines can obtain a medication card and thus receive periodically their ARV treatment from the National AIDS program ARV dispensing center.

Cumulative Notifiable Diseases in Lebanon*

Disease	2014	2015**	Oct.	Nov.
Vaccine Preventable Diseases				
Polio	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
AFP	53(16)	75(9)	0(0)	0(0)
Measles	235(107)	37(11)	1(1)	6(1)
Mumps	736(117)	1400(337)	15(6)	4(1)
Pertussis	87(25)	37(6)	0(0)	0(0)
Rabies	1(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Rubella	18(12)	9(1)	0(0)	0(0)
Tetanus	0(0)	3(0)	1(0)	0(0)
Viral Hep. B	218(33)	140(22)	0(0)	0(0)
Water/Food Borne Diseases				
Brucellosis	252(36)	333(57)	11(3)	1(0)
Cholera	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Hydatid cyst	16(2)	14(1)	0(0)	0(0)
Typhoid fever	546(33)	473(50)	67(9)	2(0)
Viral Hep. A	2582(911)	877(159)	52(4)	4(0)
Other Diseases				
Leishmaniasis	663(638)	32(23)	0(0)	0(0)
Meningitis	232(35)	309(53)	16(0)	10(2)
Viral Hep C	100(6)	65(3)	0(0)	0(0)

*Numbers in brackets refer to Syrian **as of 20 Nov 2015