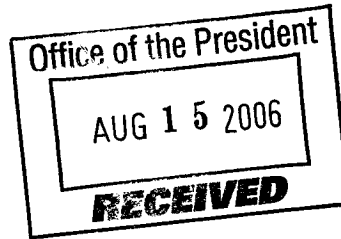




Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30333



AUG 8 2006

Mr. Michael S. Greco
President
American Bar Association
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60610-4714

Dear Mr. Greco:

Thank you for your letter regarding Dr. Ed Thompson's presentation at the American Bar Association's (ABA) conference in May. Please excuse the delay of this response. I understand that you and your colleagues had concerns about Dr. Thompson's presentation, in particular his use of an example of quarantine as a traditional public health practice.

While Dr. Thompson is an employee of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the views expressed in his presentation to the ABA conference reflected his own personal experience as referenced in the disclaimer on the second slide of his presentation. I deeply regret that his comments caused concern for you and your colleagues, especially if the comments led you to believe that CDC is not supportive of the work of the legal community in ensuring that HIV/AIDS patients receive the counseling and services they need.

We believe it is vital for people with HIV/AIDS to be aware of their infection. Without such knowledge, infected people cannot receive the care they need to protect their health or that of their partners. Yet, an estimated 250,000 - 300,000 Americans are unaware of their HIV infection. We are engaging on several fronts to increase the number of people who are aware of their status. Perhaps the most important of these is our effort to encourage the adoption of routine HIV testing in healthcare facilities so that more Americans will be aware of their HIV status.

Dr. Thompson's quarantine example was not intended to reflect CDC's position on the treatment of people with HIV/AIDS. We recognize that protection of the legal rights of people with HIV/AIDS is a necessary prerequisite for HIV prevention efforts. We look forward to continuing to work with the ABA to ensure that the public health and legal communities remain focused on the critical needs of those with HIV/AIDS.

As our Memorandum of Understanding with the American Bar Association indicates, CDC enjoys a strong partnership with the ABA, primarily regarding legal preparedness for public health emergencies. In the near future, we hope to expand our relationship to include legal issues related to chronic disease, environmental health risks, injuries, and other public health threats. I appreciate your bringing your concerns to my attention and regret any misunderstanding that may have occurred.

Sincerely,


Julie Louise Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H.
Director