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SHEA News

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HIV/AIDS Training for Healthcare Facility Employees Mandated by the State of Washington

The AIDS Omnibus Bill was passed by the Washington State Legislature and signed into law on March 23, 1988. The law mandates HIV/AIDS education for all employees working in a licensed or certified healthcare facility. The law stipulated that healthcare workers in all healthcare facilities must be trained by June 30, 1990. The new bill also required that all new employees working in licensed and certified healthcare facilities be trained within 90 days after starting the job. Employees who had already received HIV/AIDS training for their professional licensure were not

required to participate in the training. The facilities were further required to keep records of training and to place such records in the individual employee's personnel file. The records had to contain the date and content of the training. Healthcare facilities were provided a training package by the Department of Social and Health Services entitled "KNOW-HIV/AIDS Prevention Education Curriculum for Health Care Facility Employees."

Washington is the fifth state of which we are aware that has passed legislation requiring infection control education for

physicians and other healthcare workers. It is likely that other states will follow suit, and we encourage SHEA members to take an active part in shaping such legislation in their states. Dale Gerding, MD, of the SHEA Board, is contacting SHEA members in all states in an effort to enroll SHEA members as local SHEA liaisons. It is hoped that local liaisons can help provide input as consultants to local and state governments on such issues as laws requiring infection control education for healthcare workers.

Conference to Be Held on Prevention of Transmission of Bloodborne Pathogens in Surgery and Obstetrics

This conference will be sponsored by The American College of Surgeons and The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The conference will take place at the Hilton Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia, on February 13-15, 1994.

The purpose of this conference is to provide information regarding the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens-including HIV hepatitis B and C viruses-during surgical and obstetrical procedures

and describe methods to reduce that risk. The conference will bring together surgeons, obstetricians, anesthesiologists, surgical and obstetrical nurses and technicians, hospital epidemiologists, and infection control practitioners. The program will include state-of-the-art lectures by experts in the field as well as presentations of abstracts of original research. Major topics will include:

- current data relating to the risk of transmission of bloodborne

pathogens to healthcare workers and patients in surgical and obstetrical suites,

- information on new devices, techniques, and personal protective equipment that may decrease occupational exposure in surgical and obstetrical suites,

- additional preventive measures, such as immunization and postexposure management, and

- methods to conduct and evaluate studies of risk factors and prevention measures.