

HIGHLIGHTS

Report on the Survey of HIV/AIDS in the Workplace

Purpose

- Identify attitudes and behaviours in the Québec workplace towards persons living with HIV or with another chronic and episodic illness.

Telephone survey

- A telephone survey on attitudes and behaviours in the workplace related to persons living with HIV (PLWHIV) or with another chronic and episodic illness (PLWCEI) was conducted between March 30 and June 2, 2009. There were 1,054 respondents among the francophone population of Québec, with a margin of error of 3.02%, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error was higher one time out of 20.
- Findings:
 - ❖ The attitude of employees towards a colleague living with HIV/AIDS was very negative compared to that towards a colleague living with another chronic illness such as diabetes, arthritis, etc. (see Figure 1 in the press kit).
 - ❖ The fact of being informed of the serostatus of a colleague had a certain importance for 43.6% of respondents.
 - ❖ 42.4% of respondents stated that they would be worried to learn that a colleague they frequently spent time with at work with was living with HIV; 16% stated that they would inform other colleagues.
 - ❖ 76% of respondents said they knew the difference between HIV and AIDS.
 - ❖ However, 50% of respondents failed the question asking to identify the statement that best defined HIV and AIDS.
 - ❖ There was a variation observed between the perception of respondents as to their ability to define what HIV and AIDS are and their actual ability to do so.
 - ❖ More than 50% of respondents said they knew someone with a chronic illness, while 6.9% said they knew someone living with HIV/AIDS.

Quantitative survey

- A quantitative online survey was conducted with managers and executives in Québec companies on behaviours and attitudes in the context of hiring and managing personnel; 111 questionnaires were filled out between September 21 and November 9, 2009, with a maximum margin of error of 9.3%, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error was higher, one time out of 20.
- Findings:
 - ❖ 58% of respondents indicated that learning that a candidate for a job had a chronic illness would influence their decision to hire or not.
 - ❖ 64% of respondents reported feeling uncomfortable towards people with HIV/AIDS.
 - ❖ More than a third of respondents believed that they would have a negative reaction if they learned that an employee living with HIV/AIDS had not revealed his HIV status in response to a question on a job questionnaire.
 - ❖ More than a third of respondents (38%) indicated that if they could, they would avoid hiring someone with HIV/AIDS. The most common reason given was the fear that the employee would become less productive or his/her performance would be affected or he/she would have to be frequently absent from work.
 - ❖ The vast majority of respondents (93%) said that in spite of the disease, a person with HIV/AIDS would be in a very good position to have a “normal” career and could aspire to a management position.
 - ❖ 32% of respondents answered that they were not in a position to describe the difference between HIV and AIDS.
- Findings related to group insurance:
 - ❖ The cost of premiums is a source of worry for respondents in companies in which the employees have a group insurance plan.
 - ❖ 73% stated that they were on the lookout for increases in group insurance premiums that could happen to their company.
 - ❖ One third of respondents said they had experienced a situation in which the health status of an employee considerably increased their group insurance premiums.
 - ❖ 60% said they would like their insurer to inform them of the justification for an increase in their group insurance premiums.
 - ❖ 77% said that they would try and find out the reasons for an increase in group insurance premiums following the hiring of a new employee.