

PRESS COMMENT

AIDS/CONFIDENTIALITY

The Central Ethical Committee recognises that the rapid spread of AIDS has raised problems of confidentiality in the minds of some doctors. We have always accepted, in accordance with legislation, that for the purpose only of preventing the spread of infection (and for no other reason) a doctor may in exceptional circumstances disclose relevant information without the consent of the patient. This is entirely in accordance with advice given by the CMO. Furthermore, our own discussions with experts treating AIDS cases, have shown that it is extremely rare for disclosures to be made without the consent of the patient. Accordingly, those who think they may need help should have no hesitation over consulting a doctor in confidence.

Pamela Taylor
Public Affairs Department
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