Significant Occupational Exposure Surveillance – what do the data show?

In each Sig.Occ. Update, we aim to explain how one core output from the surveillance system is derived. The graph below is taken from our Eye of the Needle Report (2012) and shows ‘Occupational exposure by type of exposure and occupation’.

**What does this graph show?**
- Among nurses, healthcare assistants, doctors, ancillary staff and staff in professions allied to medicine, needlestick injuries (hollowbore needles) are most common.
- Among midwives, mucocutaneous exposures are most common.
- Among dentists and dental nurses, ‘other sharp’ account for the largest percentage of injuries.
- 72 reports were received from non-clinical ancillary staff; Most of these injuries involved hollowbore needles.

**WHAT ARE THE POLICY IMPLICATIONS?**
- This information can be used to inform guidance for clinical and non-clinical staff of the potential risks of exposure to BBVs.
- Appropriate safety measures can be taken to prevent injuries; for example, procuring safety devices for the areas where most injuries occur.

**How can these outputs be improved?**
- You can continue to provide information in a timely manner. When reports are submitted soon after the initial exposure, this allows for prompt follow-up. Follow-up is crucial to derive the information needed for the core outputs.
- You can share your ideas for making reporting easier at the POINTERS conference in Cardiff, December 2014.
- You can contact us if you would like to be more involved in developing the Sig.Occ. surveillance system.

**Time period**
- When did the exposure take place?

**Total number of exposures**
- How many healthcare workers were exposed?

**Other useful information**
**Guidance for Clinical Health Care Workers: Protection Against Infection with BBVs**
**Standard principles for preventing hospital-acquired infections**
**HIV Infected Health Care Workers: Guidance on Management and Patient Notification**

**Figure 3: Occupational exposure by type of exposure and occupation, 2002-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation/Profession</th>
<th>Mucocutaneous</th>
<th>Hollowbore</th>
<th>Other sharps</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurse &amp; healthcare assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dentist/dental nurse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational therapist/midwife</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ancillary staff</td>
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</table>

**Notes**
- The data is based on reports submitted to the Eye of the Needle Report from 1st January 2002 to 31st December 2011.
- The number of reports is determined by the type of exposure and the occupation of the worker exposed.
- The data does not include information on health care workers who were not exposed to BBVs.
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