

# DHL's Approach to HIV/AIDS

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The international brand of the Deutsche Post World Net group, DHL, has operations in more than 220 countries and territories around the world. With a workforce of around 160,000 dedicated men and women, and 4.2 million customers, we are a part of the communities that are most impacted by this complex disease.

We have been learning about workplace programs from others who are far more experienced than us in this area. For example, DHL is a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Health Initiative, and we are working with the Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS. Whilst we have been learning, we have used our vast transportation network to move much-needed documents, brochures and samples to help those making great efforts to find a cure.

There are many excellent best practice examples available for any company that is facing the challenge of developing a solution to workplace HIV. At DHL, however, we have discovered that these great examples require a fair amount of work to integrate them and make them fit the company's specific situation. Amongst these are:

- Developing a policy that is complementary to the policies that are already in place, and that deals with issues of stigma and discrimination;
- Finding solutions that fit the cultures of the varied locations of the organization's operations;
- Working within the profit margins of your particular industry sector, as treatments and other services which must come with a workplace strategy have specific costs;
- Understanding the dilemmas of treating only your staff versus your staff and their families (and defining who counts as 'family');
- Providing implementation guidelines to empower the Human Resources Managers in our country operations.

Once you have sorted these out, there's more to do, if you decide to provide drugs for your staff. For example, the drugs have a high value on the black market, so you need to make sure that they are secure when transported. And, to be effective, treatments also need to be distributed in the correct way and taken at the right time by the individual, which means that you need the appropriate medical infrastructure in place.

The challenges are great, but the results will be worth the effort. The number of people with HIV continues to grow – according to UNAIDS, in 2003 there were 38 million people living with HIV and 21 million people have died from AIDS since the first cases were reported in 1981. However, the positive impacts of introducing treatments and other services are well documented. We believe that companies as well as governments have a responsibility to address these issues for their staff – particularly those with operations in Africa and Asia – the 'hotspots' of this disease.

More on DHL's approach to corporate citizenship can be found at [www.dhl.com/corporatecitizenship](http://www.dhl.com/corporatecitizenship).

