

# SOURCES OF DATA FOR IMPROVED SURVEILLANCE OF HIV/AIDS IN CHINA

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**Abstract.** The objective of this paper is to describe the evolution of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome surveillance in mainland China, with a focus on reviewing the sources of data being used for improved surveillance of HIV/AIDS. We review the development of HIV/AIDS surveillance and its multiple data sources to monitor the dynamics of HIV/AIDS in China. The surveillance system for HIV/AIDS in China was initiated in 1986. It has evolved in three stages: (1) passive surveillance, (2) HIV sentinel surveillance with co-existing active surveillance and passive surveillance, and (3) comprehensive surveillance. In parallel with the evolution of the surveillance system itself, the HIV epidemic in China has gone through increasing stages of complexity, through an Introduction Phase, a Spreading Phase, and a Rapidly Spreading Phase. More reliable data from improved surveillance suggest that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is expanding in China. HIV infections among 2005 estimates remain concentrated among injection drug users (IDUs), those buying and selling sex, and men who have sex with men. Better HIV/AIDS surveillance synthesizes multiple data sources to provide a more accurate picture of the dynamics of specific HIV/AIDS circumstances in different areas of China. Improved surveillance is meaningful insofar as data are used to implement more effective HIV prevention programs in China. Support for surveillance and strategic analyses can enable policy decision makers to make more effective program choices and mobilize adequate resources to contain HIV.

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