

Authorization Bill: Question of the Day

If the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy is revoked, what would the medical implications be? Dr. Robert Labutta (U.S. Army, Colonel, Ret.) addresses those concerns in today's video clip.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZOon2rHKqE>

Q: "What are the health implications if the law is changed to allow open homosexuality in the military?"

Homosexuals are identified by the U.S. government as a cohort at high risk for sexually transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS. At the National HIV Prevention Conference in August 2009, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that AIDS is 50 times more common in men who have sex with men (homosexuals and bisexuals) than in other populations. HIV is already a threat to military readiness--although HIV-positive recruits are excluded from the military, those who become HIV-positive while serving cannot be discharged, but they also cannot be deployed overseas. However, this is far from the only health risk to homosexuals. One of the nation's leading AIDS researchers, Ronald Stall, has declared, "It may be a fallacy to say that HIV is the dominant, most dangerous and most damaging epidemic among gay men in the United States today. There are at least four other epidemics occurring among gay men that are intertwining and making each other worse. This is called a syndemic." The "four other epidemics" are "substance abuse, partner violence, depression and childhood sexual abuse."