## Area health officials confused about HIV testing

How secret are HIV tests on new trow secret are HIV tests on new born infants? So secret parents — and many bealth care professionals — aren't even aware they're con-ducted.

ducted.

At least that's the word according to state. Rep. John Jamian, R. Bloomfield Township, who has introduced a bill that would notify parents of HIV testing on their newborn children.

The bill receives its first public hearing; today before the state. House Public Health committee.

Some area health officials cheer the hill is a wolcome, long overdue step.

step.
"My feeling is this is a go thing," said Alan Breakle, preside thing," said Alan Breakle, president of Garden City Osteopathic Hospi-

But the bill appears to have left hing."
But the bill appears to have left health professionals more confused than congratulatory:
"We don't test without the parents' approval," said Norma Thompson, director of maternal/hothester. "If we're doing onything else, I'm not water of it."

St. Mary Hospital, Livonia, tests to protect its workers.
"The only way we'd test is if one

in pracet is workers.
"The only way we'd test is if one of our workers becomes exposed to the blood and then it's to pratect the worker," said infectious control practitioner Barbara Johnston.

Officials at Botsford Hospital, Farmington, also said infants aren't tested without parental approval

budget hearings to the same department.
Adding to the confusion, hospital efficials say the state health code mandates new mothers be tested for syphilis, and hepatitis B but not HIV infection.

"To my knowledge, not all chil-dren are tested for HIV," sald Ger-ald Blackburn, head of Botsford' infectious disease department.

Jamian said he isn't surprised by the hospitals' reaction.
"it could be that they're conduct-

Hut Jamian said tests aren't con-ducted on the state's behalf.

Office Pavillion

ducted on the state's behalf.

"It's a federally mandated test,"
he said, "Statistics are kept for the
Centers for Disease Control."

Atlanta-based CDC maintains
health statistics for the federal government."

taken, Jamian said.
"Samples are placed on a card and by the time they conduct the HIV test, the parents' names are tipped off the card, 'he said. CDC spokesman Kent Taylor confirmed testing is conducted, but couldn't confirm whether Michigian hospitals were included. Jamian, however, said it was his information all Michigan hospitals participated except those in the Saginaw Valley.

It hink it was an error — a sta-"it could be that they're conducting the tests without even knowing
it." he said.

He added he only became aware
of the testing accidently, during
budget hearings for the state health
denormal.

"I think it was an error tistical blip," he said.

Complicating matters, HIV tests on newborn's aren't universally ac-

"With the tests currently available, there's a spill over effect." Blackburn said. "They could indicate the child is HIV positive when, in fact, it's just the mother."

462-1755

AIDS, the masters mediate.

Jamian kept wording of the bill purposefully loose — potentially to add amendments. But an early previse encourages the federal govern-

The HIV virus is unsidered the tent to continue to finance CDC cause of AIDS, a fatal shutdown of studies.

the body's intinune system. While the bill shut in the studies to stop, we just want parents to be viduals will eventually develop AIDS, the link lant inccessarily in mideaware, he said.

Amaian kept wording of the bill purposefully loose—potentially to add amendments. But an early provise encourages the federal governwhere and where HIV tests are vise encourages the federal govern-outsted.

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