

# COLUMBIA SPECTATOR ARCHIVE

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[ARTICLE]

## Barnard administrators halt health service AIDS testing

By Jonathan Earle

Barnard administrators have halted its health services AIDS testing to evaluate the current testing program.

The health services will continue, however, to help students fill out test forms and offer pre-test counseling for students seeking to be tested, according to Harriette Mogul, the director of Barnard's Health Services.

"We're simply reevaluating the blood drawing part of it; this doesn't necessarily mean a permanent change," she explained.

The decision to stop the testing was made last week.

Health Services drew blood samples for the HIV antibody test, which requires a blood sample, up until last week, when Barnard administrators decided to "take a look at the process," Mogul said.

The blood sample would then be delivered by Barnard to a New York City test laboratory to determine whether the sample is positive or negative.

Barnard has been administering free AIDS tests since February, in addition to offering AIDS education programs conducted by students, peers and staff members.

Both Mogul and Barnard Vice President for Student Affairs Barbara Schmitter said that a decision whether to resume blood tests would be made soon.

"It should be decided any minute," Mogul said.

Mogul refused to comment on whether the administration is pressuring Health Services officials to halt the AIDS testing program on campus.

She did say, however, that last week's decision to stop the tests was not necessarily a permanent one.

"No decision has been made either way about this," Mogul said.

Barnard wants to look into the legal insurance question before resuming on-campus blood tests, according to Mogul.

In addition, she said the health services is not adequately staffed to cover both the AIDS program and the other functions of the Health Services.

"It's [the AIDS counseling and testing program] such a time intense process and I'm the only one doing it right now."

Mogul said the college is seeking out alternatives to an on-campus testing program. Currently, several other schools,

including Smith College and Princeton, refer students to off-campus test sites, she explained.

According to the director of Columbia's health services, Richard Carlson, the University Health Services will continue its testing program.

Students who take the University Health Services blood test, unlike Barnard's, would be responsible for personally delivering their sample to a city test lab.

Carlson said that the Health Services fills out a New York City testing form for the student with a code number—names of students taking the AIDS test remain anonymous.

“Our stress is on counseling the student about the test, guaranteeing absolute confidentiality and preparing the student to accept either a positive or negative result,” Carlson said.