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DEPARTMENT OBSERVES NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY



Contact:

Communications Office

NewsMedia@flhealth.gov

850-245-4111

Tallahassee, Fla.— The Florida Department of Health joins many community partners across the state in recognizing National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD) on Sunday, February 7, 2016. This annual observance provides an opportunity to reflect on progress made in reducing racial and ethnic disparities in HIV/AIDS and strengthening our commitment to closing the gap.

“In Florida, we are dedicated to eliminating HIV/AIDS in all communities,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day is a time for us to remember those affected by this disease while focusing on the work we do every day to prevent HIV in the first place while identifying and treating HIV/AIDS patients as quickly as possible.”

Sunday marks the 16th year for NBHAAD which was founded to bring attention to the growing HIV and AIDS epidemic in African American communities. The theme this year is “I am my Brother/Sister’s Keeper: Fight HIV/AIDS,” a challenge to the mindset in homes, communities, workplace, churches, mosques and temples across the nation.

While blacks are still disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS, progress has been made. The proportion of newly diagnosed adult HIV infection cases that were black decreased from 49 percent in 2005 to 41 percent in 2014.

Florida has developed one of the nation's most comprehensive programs for HIV/AIDS surveillance, education, prevention, counseling, testing, care and treatment. Department staff and community partners also monitor the disease, prevent HIV transmission, and provide diagnostic, patient care, and linkage services for HIV-infected persons.

Florida leads the nation in the number of HIV tests conducted at over 1,500 publicly funded and registered sites. During 2014, the Counseling, Testing and Linkage data team recorded over 413,000 HIV screening tests with about 70 percent of these tests conducted at sites using rapid test technologies.

Testing for HIV is a powerful tool in the prevention of the virus. Thanks to numerous test sites, skilled prevention counselors, and a progressive laboratory the department will continue to make progress in the fight against this epidemic.

To learn more about NBHAAD or to find a local NBHAAD event in your area, visit [here](#).

For Department of Health resources and services regarding HIV/AIDS, visit [here](#).

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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