

News Releases

DHEC News Release: National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day events scheduled

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 24, 2012

National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day events scheduled

COLUMBIA, S.C. - Events will be held in South Carolina around Feb. 7 to highlight the impact of HIV/AIDS on African-American communities, the state Department of Health and Environmental Control announced today.

"South Carolina continues to have a disproportionate number of HIV/AIDS cases among African-Americans," said Janet Tapp, director of DHEC's STD/HIV Division.

"To mark the 12th annual National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day on Feb. 7, we'll partner with community-based organizations to sponsor activities such as free HIV testing and HIV educational forums at housing communities and other outreach settings," she said.

Tapp said various tests will be offered throughout the state, including the traditional blood draw method and the rapid test, which provides preliminary results in less than an hour.

"Testing is at the core of this initiative," Tapp said, "We hope African-Americans will mark Feb. 7 as their annual or bi-annual day to get tested for HIV."

According to DHEC statistics:

African-Americans represent 30 percent of the state's population, yet account for 73 percent of the recently diagnosed HIV/AIDS cases in South Carolina.

African-Americans have a case rate about eight times greater than whites in South Carolina.

For more information about National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day events, including local HIV testing sites, call DHEC's S.C. AIDS/STD Hotline at 1-800-322-AIDS (1-800-322-2437), or visit DHEC's website at:

<http://www.scdhec.gov/stdhiv> <<http://www.scdhec.gov/stdhiv>>.

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