

Media statement

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World Aids Day – Communities Make the Difference

On 1 December, people around the globe come together to recognise World AIDS Day, the theme this year is 'Communities Make the Difference'

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service's (SCHHS) Clinical Director of Sexual Health and HIV Services, Dr Kuong Taing said: "Compassion, knowledge and action are the strongest weapons we have in the fight against HIV."

Dr Taing encourages people to talk about HIV and to remind the community that the HIV epidemic was a major health issue in Queensland.

"It's important to break down barriers and educate the community on HIV and AIDS. If we work together, we can eliminate HIV, through reducing stigma and making HIV medication cheap and accessible to people living with HIV," Dr Taing said.

"This year's theme comes with two major objectives, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO): highlighting the difference these communities are making to end HIV while drawing global attention to the need for broader engagement with them to strengthen primary health care," Dr Taing said.

Sexual Health and HIV Services is marking World Aids Day with a display in Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH) foyer throughout the week to promote community awareness and provide information on HIV and sexual health.

"People are invited to come along and learn about HIV and what services we offer at the Sunshine Coast Sexual Health and HIV Service," Dr Taing said.

"We offer rapid HIV testing at our clinic, which is a simple finger prick test that will give your result in only 20 minutes. If reactive, a confirmatory test will then be sent to the laboratory. You no longer have to wait up to a week for a HIV result," he said.

Health experts say about 10-15 per cent of those infected with HIV in developed countries today, including Australia, are unaware of their status. Thanks to recent advances in HIV treatments and testing technologies, there are increased opportunities to virtually eliminate HIV transmission in Australia.

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