30 November 2015

**E.N.D. H.I.V. this World AIDS Day**

Compassion, knowledge and action are the strongest weapons we have in the fight against HIV.

That’s the message Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service’s (SCHHS) Director of Sexual Health and HIV Services (Clinic 87), Dr Kuong Taing, is sending to promote this year’s World AIDS Day (1 December).

SCHHS is joining with Queensland Injectors Health Network (QuIHN) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sexual health team to encourage people to talk about HIV at a community barbecue at 59 Sixth Avenue, Cotton Tree on Tuesday, 1 December 2015.

Dr Taing said the aim was to encourage people to talk about HIV, to remind the community that the HIV epidemic was still a major health issue in Queensland, and to break down barriers and educate the community.

“The theme for World AIDS Day 2015 in Queensland is E.N.D. H.I.V. and we encourage you to show your support and wear a red ribbon, talk to your friends and work colleagues about HIV or make a donation to a HIV charity,” Dr Taing said.

“People are invited to come along on Tuesday, chat with us about HIV and what services we offer at the Sunshine Coast Sexual Health and HIV Service (Clinic 87).

“We offer rapid HIV testing at Clinic 87, 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.

HIV infection rates are on the rise in Queensland, with the number of people infected doubling compared with a decade ago.

Health experts say about 25 per cent of those infected today 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 Queensland by the end of the decade.

Clinic 87 is also celebrating World Aids Day with a stand in the Nambour General Hospital foyer to promote community awareness and provide information on HIV and sexual health.

ENDS

Media contact: Kirsty Olsen | 5470 6616 | 0408 713 747

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