
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Michigan Black AIDS Awareness Campaign Begins

HIV rates in Michigan are nine times higher for African Americans compared to whites, and the rate of new diagnoses is climbing among the 13-24 year old African American population. The Kent County Health Department is planning several events for the Ninth Annual **Michigan Black AIDS Awareness Campaign** for the month of February. Numerous testing opportunities will underscore the need to "Know Your Status."

- February 6th: 6 p.m.- 8 p.m. - Heartside Ministry, 54 S. Division, Grand Rapids
- February 7th: 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. - Walk-in clinic for free, confidential or anonymous HIV testing, in honor of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD) - Kent County Health Department, 700 Fuller NE, Grand Rapids
- February 13th: 9 a.m.-noon - Job Corps, 110 Hall Street SE, Grand Rapids
- February 14th: 12 noon- 4 p.m. - Grand Rapids Community College
- February 14th 1 p.m.-4 p.m. - The Network, 345 Atlas Avenue SE, Grand Rapids

Here in Kent County, HIV and AIDS diagnoses impact a disproportionate number of African American individuals. According to October 2011 statistics, 34% of HIV positive individuals and 35% of people living with AIDS in Kent County are black, yet African Americans make up only 9% of the county's population. Unfortunately, many of those who are infected with HIV are unaware of their status, and may unknowingly transmit the virus to others.

According to the Michigan Department of Community Health, between 2005 and 2009, 77% of new diagnoses among 13-24 year olds and 85% of new diagnoses among 13-19 year olds were African American. More black men die of HIV/AIDS than any other racial/gender group in our state.

The Kent County Health Department offers free HIV counseling and testing year-round, Monday through Friday, by appointment, for individuals 13 years of age or older. The test can be done through a rapid finger-poke test, which produces results in just 30 minutes. Partner counseling and referrals also are available.

For more information or to set up an appointment, call (616) 632-7171.

KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and four satellite clinics located in Wyoming, Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.