



NEWS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS
COURT HOUSE, NORRISTOWN, PA., BOX 311, 19404-0311

Frank X. Custer, Communications Director

Jessica Willingham, Communications Assistant

PHONE (610) 278-3061 FAX (610) 278-5943

COMMISSIONERS: JOSH SHAPIRO, *Chair*

VALERIE A. ARKOOSH, MD, MPH, *Vice Chair*

BRUCE L. CASTOR, JR., *Commissioner*



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In Lead Up To National HIV Testing Day Montgomery County Health Department, Walgreens, and Greater Than AIDS Team to Offer Free HIV Testing June 25-27, 2015 in Norristown



Norristown, PA (June 18, 2015) – In the lead up to National HIV Testing Day on June 27, 2015 Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) is teaming up with Walgreens and Greater Than AIDS, a leading national public information response to the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic, to encourage community members to know their HIV status and take advantage of free HIV testing at the Walgreens located at 1100 W. Main Street in Norristown, PA during a three-day period:

- Thursday, June 25, 2015 from 3:00pm to 7:00pm
- Friday, June 26, 2015 from 3:00pm to 7:00pm
- Saturday, June 27, 2015 from 10:00am to 2:00pm

Montgomery County Health Department will provide trained counselors to conduct the testing and will provide results on-site within minutes.

While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises that all Americans be screened for HIV as a routine part of medical care¹, many Americans have never been tested or are not being tested as often as recommended, according to national surveys by the Kaiser Family Foundation. Of the more

¹ Branson BM, Handsfield HH, Lampe MA, et al. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Revised recommendations for HIV testing of adults, adolescents, and pregnant women in health-care settings. MMWR. 2006; 55(RR14):1-17.

than 1.2 million people living with HIV in the U.S., an estimated one in seven do not know that they are infected and only three in 10 are in ongoing care and treatment.²

Pennsylvania Department of Health estimates that there were 35,000 people diagnosed and living with HIV/AIDS in Pennsylvania in 2011. 63.7% of people diagnosed and living with HIV/AIDS in Pennsylvania are living in Philadelphia and its four surrounding counties, including the County of Montgomery. Specifically in Montgomery County, there are an estimated 1,100 people living with HIV/AIDS. Seventy five percent of the HIV-positive residents of the County are over the age of 40. In Montgomery County, the epidemic continues to be predominant among racial and ethnic minorities. The risk factors affecting the highest proportion of people diagnosed and living with HIV/AIDS are men who have sex with men (35%) and persons who have heterosexual contact (34%). Overall, HIV-positive persons in Montgomery County are reported to be males, African American or Hispanic, and over the age of 40.

“Knowing your HIV status and getting tested is extremely important,” said Dr. Val Arkoosh, Vice Chair of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners. “We are excited to provide free HIV testing in an environment that is well-recognized by the residents of our local community. Working with the Norristown Walgreens and Greater than AIDS is a significant partnership that allows us to provide this important service.”

“Walgreens is committed to being a part of the solution to end AIDS, and National HIV Testing Day provides a great opportunity to help share critical health information and encourage HIV testing,” said Glen Pietrandoni, senior director of virology, specialty products and services at Walgreens. “Working in collaboration with Greater Than AIDS and various community partners during the past four years, we have helped nearly 20,000 people across the country access free testing. We are pleased to be able to continue to help make it easier for those in the communities that we serve to know their status.”

“We have come so far in our understanding of HIV,” said Tina Hoff, senior vice president and director of health communication and media partnerships at the Kaiser Family Foundation. “Today, there are very effective treatments that not only help people with HIV to enjoy long, healthy lives but also significantly reduce the chances of passing the virus to others.³ Knowing one’s status is a crucial first step.”

² CDC. HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report, Vol. 19, No. 3; November 2014. Data are estimates and do not include U.S. dependent areas.

³ Cohen MS, Chen YQ, McCauley M, et al. Prevention of HIV-1 infection with early antiretroviral therapy. *N Engl J Med.* 2011; 365(6):493-505.

I Got Tested: What's Next?, a new 8-page informational guide from Greater Than AIDS and Walgreens, will be distributed at the testing events in June. For a complete list of participating Walgreen locations and supporting partners, as well as more information about HIV testing, please visit:

www.greaterthan.org/walgreens.

Contact:

Markeisha Marshall, Walgreens
markeisha.marshall@walgreens.com
847-315-2923

Jon Reinish, SKD Knickerbocker for Kaiser Family Foundation
jreinish@skdknick.com
646-723-7096 or 202-999-0461

About Montgomery County Health Department

Montgomery County Health Department's mission is to provide public health services and foster collaborative actions that empower our community to improve its health and safety. Our vision is to optimize the health and wellness of individuals and families through innovative practices. There are four core values that guide Montgomery County Health Department: Proactive – We are committed to anticipating the needs of those served by being prepared and acting on the plans we establish to meet those needs; Collaborative – We work together as an organization, with community partners and with our customers; Compassionate – We are committed to serving our community and each other with respect, kindness, fairness, and equity; and Excellence – We are committed to continuous improvement, the use of best practices, and changing our approach when necessary to improve outcomes. This is reflected in the services provided by MCHD's five operation divisions: Clinical Services and Public Health Nursing, Communicable Disease Control and Prevention, Health Promotion, Environmental Field Services, and Water Quality Management. For more information, please visit www.health.montcopa.org.

About Walgreens

Walgreens (www.walgreens.com), the nation's largest drugstore chain, constitutes the Retail Pharmacy USA Division of Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc. (Nasdaq: WBA), the first global pharmacy-led, health and wellbeing enterprise. More than eight million customers interact with Walgreens each day in communities across America, using the most convenient, multichannel access to consumer goods and services and trusted, cost-effective pharmacy, health and wellness services and advice. Walgreens operates 8,232 drugstores with a presence in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Walgreens digital business includes Walgreens.com, drugstore.com, Beauty.com, SkinStore.com and VisionDirect.com. Walgreens also manages more than 400 Healthcare Clinic and provider practice locations around the country.

About Greater Than AIDS

Greater Than AIDS is a leading national public information response focused on the U.S. domestic epidemic. Launched in 2009 by the Kaiser Family Foundation together with the Black AIDS Institute, it is supported today by a broad coalition of public and private sector partners, including: major media and other business leaders; Federal, state, and local health agencies and departments; national leadership groups; AIDS service and other community organizations; and foundations, among others. Through targeted media messages and community outreach, Greater Than AIDS works to increase knowledge, reduce stigma and promote actions to stem the spread of the disease. While national in scope, Greater Than AIDS focuses on communities most affected.