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News Release

June 11, 2010

FREE HIV TESTING

**FOR
IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

Southwest District Health is offering free, confidential testing for HIV on Friday, June 25, 2010, at two locations— in Nampa at 824 S. Diamond and in Caldwell at 920 Main Street. Clients will be served by appointment or on a first-come, first-served basis from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at both locations. Call (208) 455-5325 for more information.

“Since 1995, The National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) has designated June 27th as National HIV Testing Day (NHTD). We are providing a day of free HIV testing in recognition of this national campaign, but just offering it a few days earlier,” said Sandy Philippi, Manager of Preventative Health Services for Southwest District Health.

The latest estimate from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that more than one million people are living with HIV in the U. S. and one in five of those people are unaware they are HIV-positive. The CDC recommends that people, aged 13-64 include an HIV test as part of their annual physical exam.

How do you know if you are at risk for HIV? If you’ve had unprotected sex; if you are an IV drug user; if you are having sexual relations with an IV drug user; if you are a man having sex with a man; or if you shared a needle since your last test, now is the time to get tested.

Tremendous advances have been made in diagnosing and treating HIV and related infections, yet these advances mean little to those people who do not know they are infected or learn they have HIV when the disease is in advanced stages. Social stigma remains a barrier for people getting an HIV test, however, with access to effective care, treatment, and support, early diagnosis can mean longer, healthier lives, as well as reducing the risk of unknowingly spreading the disease.

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Philippi stated that knowing your HIV status is a responsible step to taking control of your health and the health of others with whom you may be intimately involved.

“Remember. . . Take the Test. Take Control,” she said.

According to The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, as of March 31, 2010, HIV cumulative diagnoses among Idaho residents are 464 and cumulative diagnoses of AIDS are 675.

For more information on HIV/AIDS and National HIV Testing Day, visit www.swdh.org; www.hivtest.org; AIDS.gov; and www.cdc.gov/hiv/.

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