

March 4, 2022

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN ST LUCIE ENCOURAGES COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO ATTEND THE BLACK HEALTH PANEL



Contact: Jennifer Harris | Public Information Officer
Jennifer.Harris@FLHealth.gov | 772-785-5838

St. Lucie County, FL – In recognition of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD), the Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County is partnering with local health providers to host a Black Health Panel event where community members can ask questions about health disparities with Black providers and take advantage of free health screenings, vaccinations, and confidential testing for HIV, Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and Syphilis.

NBHAAD is a national community engagement initiative designed to encourage HIV testing and treatment efforts among Blacks across the United States to *get educated, get tested, get treated, and get involved* with HIV. Forty percent of the 3,504 Floridians who received an HIV diagnosis in 2020 were Black. Ending HIV transmission in our state requires addressing risk factors and encouraging important conversations about HIV.

“Increasing awareness about health disparities in our community is a major goal for our 2021-2026 Community Health Improvement Plan. The Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie understands the importance of knowing your status and remains committed to providing and linking residents to testing and treatment services,” said Clint Sperber, County Health Officer for the Florida Department of health in St. Lucie County.

Join us for a Black Health Panel
Saturday, March 5, 2022
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Incubate Neighborhood Center – Means Court
532 N. 13th Street | Fort Pierce

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of their routine health care. Individuals at [higher risk](#) should get tested more often.

If you are at-risk or at an increased risk of becoming infected with HIV, there is a pill called (PrEP) Pre-exposure Prophylaxis that reduces the risk of HIV infection by up to 96%. As part of our strategic efforts to eliminate HIV in Florida, the Department has made Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) medication available at no cost at all 67 CHDs. There may be some associated cost for labs. Find a PrEP provider near you with the department's [PrEP Providers List](#).

People who are HIV positive can reduce the chance of sexually transmitting HIV to others to effectively zero by taking daily HIV treatment, as prescribed, and maintaining an undetectable viral load (meaning their HIV medicines are working so well that there is an extremely low amount of virus in their blood). With early diagnosis, individuals can begin appropriate treatment and care resulting in better health outcomes.

You can locate HIV counseling, testing and referral sites by visiting www.KnowYourHIVStatus.com or texting 'FLHIV' to 898211.

For more information, call the Florida HIV/AIDS Hotline at 1-800-FLA-AIDS or 1-800-352-2437; En Español, 1-800-545-SIDA; In Creole, 1-800-AIDS-101.

About the Florida Department of Health

The Department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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