

June 6, 2008

Media Contact: Dianne Shipley 941-861-2852; Dianne_Shipley@doh.state.fl.us or
Crystal Bruce 941-861-2876; Crystal_Bruce@doh.state.fl.us

MEDIA NOTE: A listing of all HIV/AIDS Network of Sarasota County sponsored HIV testing opportunities is provided at the end of this release.

June 27 is National HIV Testing Day – take control, take the test

Member agencies of the HIV/AIDS Network of Sarasota County (HANS) will offer free HIV testing to the public at numerous locations from June 25 to 27 as part of the 14th annual National HIV Testing Day observance. First Lady Laura Bush, spokesperson for the National HIV Testing Day observance, said “more than one million Americans have HIV and many don’t even know it. With improved treatment and care people are now living with HIV/AIDS. But this life saving treatment never reaches people who don’t know they are infected. Knowing your HIV status is the best way to help win the fight against AIDS.”

The two greatest risk factors for HIV infection are having unprotected sex and sharing needles or syringes. If you have never been tested, or have had unprotected sex or shared a needle since your last test, now is the time to get an HIV test. Knowing your HIV status can help you get into medical treatment earlier, take steps to stay healthy, and keep from spreading the virus to others.

HIV testing is fast and easy. People have a choice of getting the OraSure® HIV test or a traditional blood test. OraSure® testing consists of placing a treated cotton pad resembling a toothbrush between a person’s cheek and gums for two minutes. It is easier than brushing your teeth. Those who go to Community AIDS Network (CAN) sponsored HIV testing sites will receive the Rapid Ora Quick HIV Test, a finger stick, which provides preliminary test results in only 20 minutes. Test results are always kept private and are not shared with anyone, including family members, significant others, employers or landlords.

Sarasota County Health Department officials offer additional recommendations to reduce risk for HIV infection:

- **Be Safe:** The best way to prevent HIV is to abstain from having sex. If you do have sex, use a new condom every time. Do not share needles or syringes.
- **Talk About It:** Talk about sex and HIV with your partners. Find out when they were last tested for HIV and what their status was.
- **Talk to Your Doctor:** If you are sexually active, you should get tested for HIV at least once. Do not assume your doctor will ask you to be tested for HIV.
- **Spread the Word:** Talk to others about getting tested.

The Florida Department of Health Bureau of HIV/AIDS recently released a report discussing the disproportionate impact that HIV/AIDS has had on black women. For 15 consecutive years, HIV/AIDS has been the leading cause of death among black women ages 25-44 in Florida. The report is accessible on the Bureau’s website, http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/aids.

For more information on local HIV testing opportunities, call the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 or visit the HANS website www.hivсарasota.org

“more”

**Sarasota County National HIV Testing Day Activities
June 25 – 27, 2008**

Free Rapid Ora Quick HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Wednesday, June 25; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Location: Community AIDS Network
1231 N. Tuttle Ave., Sarasota 34237

Contact: John Perez 941-366-0461; Johndavid@cccsrq.org

Sponsor: Community AIDS Network

Free HIV Testing and Condom Distribution

Wednesday, June 25; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Location: Genesis Health Services
2223 N. Washington Blvd., Sarasota 34234

Contact: Bill Carter 941-957-1970

Sponsor: Genesis Health Services

Free Rapid Ora Quick HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Wednesday, June 25; 3 to 7 p.m.

Location: Selby Goodwill GoodNeighbor Center
1781 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Sarasota 34234

Contact: John Perez 941-366-0461; Johndavid@cccsrq.org

Sponsor: Community AIDS Network

Free Rapid Ora Quick HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Thursday, June 26; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Location: Health In Motion Mobile Medical Unit in Salvation Army Parking Lot
1400 Tenth St., Sarasota 34236

Contact: John Perez 941-366-0461; Johndavid@cccsrq.org

Sponsor: Community AIDS Network

Free HIV Testing and Community Outreach

Thursday, June 26; 2 to 6 p.m.

Location: Fredd Atkins Park

2700 N. Washington Blvd. (Corner of U.S. Highway 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way)
Sarasota 34234

Contact: Bill Carter 941-957-1970

Sponsor: Genesis Health Services

Free HIV Testing and Counseling on a walk-in/no appointment basis

Thursday, June 26; 2 to 6 p.m.

Location: Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida, Inc.
1958 Prospect St., Sarasota

Contact: Marilyn Anderson 941-955-1860

Sponsor: Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida, Inc.

Free Rapid Ora Quick HIV Testing (preliminary test results available in 20 minutes)

Thursday, June 26; 10 p.m. to midnight

Location: Club Escapes
3218 Clark Road, Sarasota 34231

Contact: John Perez 941-366-0461

Sponsor: Community AIDS Network; Johndavid@cccsrq.org

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Free HIV Testing – Walk-in/No appointment

Friday, June 27; 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Location: South County Family Health Center (entrance is just north of Manatee Community College)

7820 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice 34293

Contact: Missy Wilson 941-861-3300

Sponsor: Sarasota County Health Department

Free HIV Testing – Walk-in/No appointment

OraSure® oral HIV Testing is available. “Easier than brushing your teeth”

Test results available in about two weeks

Friday, June 27; 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Location: Sarasota County Health Department

2200 Ringling Blvd., Sarasota 34237

Contact: Gary Ervin 941-861-2919

Sponsor: Sarasota County Health Department

Free HIV Testing – Walk-in/No appointment

Friday, June 27; 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Location: Vicinity of Second Chance Last Opportunity

1933 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Sarasota 34234

Contact: April Glasco

Sponsor: Second Chance Last Opportunity

Free HIV Testing and Education

Friday, June 27; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Location: Genesis Health Services

2223 N. Washington Blvd., Sarasota 34234

Contact: Carroll Hunter 941-496-8224

Sponsor: Genesis Health Services and the Gatekeepers

Free HIV Testing, Education/Discussion and Refreshments

Friday, June 27; 2 to 6 p.m.

Location: ALSO Out Youth

1470 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota 34231

Contact: Stephen Warne 941-951-2576

Sponsor: ALSO Out Youth

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