News from the Wyoming Department of Health

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Tuesday is National HIV Testing Day

With Tuesday (June 27) designated as National HIV Testing Day, Wyoming Department of Health officials are encouraging Wyoming residents to get tested for HIV.

"It is estimated that approximately 250,000 Americans are living with HIV but are unaware of their infection," said Rob Johnston, HIV prevention coordinator for the state's HIV/AIDS/Hepatitis Program.

"We have no idea how many Wyoming residents may be HIV-positive, but don't know their status," Johnston said. "What we do know is there were at least three cases this past year with people who died or showed up at a doctor's office with AIDS and never knew they were HIV positive."

There is no cost for testing in Wyoming, which is available on an anonymous or confidential basis at all public-funded sites. Wyoming residents who test positive for HIV can be immediately referred for medical treatment and other essential services.

"The bottom line is HIV can affect people from all walks of life, and it is important to be aware of your status," Johnston said. "Once you have the facts, you can get help and you can take precautions to avoid spreading the disease."

Johnston said that's the idea behind his program's campaign to encourage testing, which uses the slogan "Know for Yourself. Know for Others. Know for Sure."

According to the Department of Health, more than 194 persons have been diagnosed and are living with HIV in Wyoming. In the past year, more than 10 new HIV/AIDS cases have been identified. Each new case was related to injection drug use and/or sexual behaviors that put someone at risk.

There are more than 55 HIV test sites in Wyoming. Call the Wyoming Department of Health's HIV/AIDS/Hepatitis Program at 1-800-438-1282 to locate the HIV counseling and testing site nearest you.

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