



Connie Beck, Director
Social Services | Public Health | Mental Health

news release

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World AIDS Day recognized Dec. 1

World AIDS Day connects people around the world to show solidarity in the fight against HIV and AIDS. This year it will be celebrated on Thursday, Dec. 1. Started in 1988, the observance is an opportunity to share new tools to fight the epidemic, like Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) treatment as prevention.

Individuals who are more vulnerable to HIV now have the option of taking the daily PrEP pill, which greatly reduces the risk of infection. People living with HIV who take care of themselves and take prescribed medication are 96 percent less likely to pass the virus to an uninfected partner, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This practice is known as "treatment as prevention."

The Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Public Health encourages everyone to get tested and know their status. "Options for prevention and treatment are better than ever," said Shaun Peterson, community health outreach worker. "These new tools, combined with testing and treatment, have the potential to dramatically reduce the number of new infections."

DHHS offers many ways to help people learn more about HIV and stay healthy. These include free anonymous HIV testing, HIV prevention education, condoms, access to PrEP and syringe exchange and disposal.

To learn more or schedule an appointment to get tested, call 707-268-2132 or go to <http://www.humboldt.gov/620/North-Coast-AIDS-Project-NorCAP>. For information in Southern Humboldt, call 707-923-2779, Ext 303.

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