



Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dickinson-Iron District Health Department Offers FREE HIV Screenings

Kingsford and Iron River, Michigan, June 2018 – Thirty-seven years ago, on June 5, 1981, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) published the first mention of what later became known as HIV. We view this anniversary with sadness, for the nearly 30 million people worldwide who have lost their lives to the epidemic. Another 34 million currently live with HIV.

Each year, on June 27, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), AIDS.gov, and other national and local entities across the country organize National HIV Testing Day. This unique initiative sends the message, "**Test Your Way. Do it Today,**" to those at risk from HIV. National HIV Testing Day was launched in 1995 by the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) in response to the growing number of HIV infections in communities of color and other heavily impacted communities.

Nearly 1.1 million people are living with HIV in the U.S., and one in seven doesn't know they are infected. Young people, are the most likely to be unaware of their HIV infection. CDC recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care. Some people are more at risk of getting HIV than others and should be tested at least once a year. Sexually active gay and bisexual men may benefit from more frequent testing (for example, every 3 to 6 months). HIV testing is a critical first step in taking control and responsibility over one's health.

According to CDC data released in 2016, an estimated 39,782 Americans were diagnosed with HIV infection in the U.S., down from 49,000. In that same year, an estimated 18,160 people were diagnosed with AIDS. Since the epidemic began in the early 1980's, 1,232,246 people in the U.S. have been diagnosed with AIDS, and an estimated 12,333 people with an AIDS diagnosis died in 2014.

NAPWA realizes that lack of access to treatment and care along with social stigma can make living with HIV difficult. With early diagnosis, individuals will know their HIV-status, in turn, allowing them to seek appropriate treatment and care.

Locally, the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department offers HIV testing and counseling services. In observance of National HIV Testing Day, **the Health Department will offer free HIV testing in each of its offices on Wednesday, June 27th from 1pm to 5pm. This will be on a walk in basis; NO appointment is necessary.** Testing is anonymous and confidential. HIV testing can be completed with a simple finger poke and results will be available within 20 minutes.

If you have any questions you may call the Health Department at 779-7237.

For additional information on HIV testing please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/HIVtesting>.

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