National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day 2018

"Love & Solidarity: Together PrEP, Testing and Treatment Can End HIV"

May 18, 2018 By Trent Straube

Saturday, May 19, marks National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NAPIHAAD) 2018. The initiative was created in 2005 by The Banyan Tree Project, an HIV-related social marketing program that is part of API Wellness.

This year's theme is "Love & Solidarity: Together PrEP, Testing and Treatment Can End HIV"

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPI) make up 0.2 percent of the U.S. population and account for a very small percentage of new HIV diagnoses in the United States—less than 1 percent in 2016.... Asians, who make up 6 percent of the U.S. population, accounted for 2 percent (970) of the 40,324 new HIV diagnoses in this country and six dependent areas in 2016. Of Asians who received an HIV diagnosis in 2016, 84 percent (825) were men and 15 percent (145) were women; gay and bisexual men accounted for 90 percent (740) of HIV diagnoses among all Asian men. In 2015, an estimated 15,800 Asians were living with HIV in the United States."

A poster for the 2018 NAPIHAADCourtesy of Banyan Tree Project

“Although [Asian and Pacific Islanders’] HIV/AIDS infection rates appear low, those statistics are deceptive as a significant amount of underreporting occurs due to stigma,” said Lance Toma, CEO at API Wellness in a press release. “Stigma prevents people from discussing HIV/AIDS with their communities and providers which is one reason why APIs are the least likely race to get tested for HIV.”

One of the main goals of NAPIHAAD is to combat the stigma and silence surrounding HIV and to encourage testing. Nearly 67 percent of Asian Americans and 43 percent of Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders have never been tested for HIV, according to the CDC.

You can download fact sheets and posters—in English, Chinese and Vietnamese—and also watch related videos on BanyanTreeProject.org. For more on social media, also look for the hashtag #APIMay19.

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