National Caribbean-American HIV/AIDS Awareness Day 2019

The June 8 awareness day falls during National Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

June 7, 2019 By Caroline Tien

Saturday, June 8, marks the annual National Caribbean-American HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NCAHAAD). Launched in 2006 by the Caribbean People International Collective (CPIC) and a working group of U.S. organizations, the day of observation aims to ensure that Caribbean-Americans have the support, resources and educational materials they need to treat or prevent HIV.

"NCAHAAD is a national mobilization effort designed to encourage Caribbean-American and Caribbean-born individuals across the United States and its territories to get educated, get tested, get treated and get involved," the National Minority AIDS Council's Sable K. Nelson wrote in a 2017 post. "It is also a time to reflect, memorialize and show compassion for those infected [with] or affected by HIV/AIDS."

The Caribbean has the second-highest HIV prevalence in the world, after sub-Saharan Africa. It's a problem exacerbated by homophobia, which keeps people from seeking medical attention, as well as by ignorance of the modes of HIV transmission.

Thanks to high rates of immigration, the HIV epidemic ravaging the Caribbean is affecting the United States, too.

"NCAHAAD is an opportunity to look across the diverse communities where Caribbean-Americans live and work to see how these communities can unite to better respond to the epidemic," said Ryan Stewart-Fredrick, then-president of CPIC, in a 2009 interview with the HIV awareness website HIV.gov.

NCAHAAD events include free HIV testing clinics, education seminars and outreach projects in Miami and elsewhere.

For a list of all the 2019 HIV/AIDS awareness days, including a downloadable PDF, click here.

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