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SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS
COMMUNICATIONS

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sedgwick County Health Department Offers Free HIV Testing in Observance of National HIV Testing Day

(Sedgwick County, Kansas) – In observance of National HIV Testing Day, the Sedgwick County Health Department will offer free OraSure testing, the no-needles method of HIV testing that is simple and painless, on Friday, June 25. Providing this free testing is part of a community effort to increase awareness about National HIV Testing Day, June 27, 2004.

The theme of this year's campaign, "**It's Better to Know,**" spotlights that people who test positive can receive care and treatment to preserve their health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that as many as 280,000 people in the United States are HIV-positive and are unaware of their status.

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It is better to know, because:

- Too many Americans with HIV are diagnosed late in the course of their infections.
- HIV testing can reduce new infections when HIV-positive persons become aware of their status and take the necessary precautions to stop spreading the disease.
- HIV testing is easier, more accessible, and less invasive than ever.

Kansans are waiting longer to be tested and treated for HIV according to the *Kansas 2002—HIV/AIDS Reportable Disease Summary*. Efforts to identify HIV before it converts to AIDS will improve outcomes of the disease.

"The Sedgwick County Health Department wants to make sure people are getting the care they need," said Sedgwick County Commission Chairman Tom Winters. "We hope that people at risk will take advantage of the free testing."

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