

## DH's HIV Testing Service promotion vehicle launches today (with photos)

In support of World AIDS Day, the Department of Health (DH) has arranged a Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Testing Service promotion vehicle to visit various locations in Hong Kong from today (December 1) to raise public awareness of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), promote HIV testing services and appeal to the public to care about people living with AIDS.

The World Health Organization has designated December 1 every year as the World AIDS Day to remind people around the world to stay united in fighting against the disease and to care about infected people and their family members.

The promotion vehicle themed "For your health, Get tested" will visit various locations in Hong Kong in December. It enlightens the public about the mode of transmission and preventive measures of HIV, and promotes the importance of HIV testing in an interesting way, featuring cartoons and games. Personal tablet computers are available on the promotion vehicle to showcase and introduce the two main functions of the DH's new HIV Testing Service website: the online booking for AIDS Counselling and Testing Service, and the online ordering of HIV self-test kits. The activities held on the promotion vehicle are free of charge and a reservation is not required. Members of the public are welcome to join. Souvenirs will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. For details about the promotion vehicle activities, please visit: [www.aids.gov.hk/english/new2023/nm05.html](http://www.aids.gov.hk/english/new2023/nm05.html).

A DH spokesman said, "HIV is the cause of AIDS. Without treatment, about half of HIV infected people will progress to AIDS within 10 years. The cumulative total of HIV infections reported locally since 1984 is 11 830. Despite the number of reports of HIV infection have decreased from the peak of 725 cases in 2015 to 409 cases in 2022, the number of AIDS cases have fluctuated between 62 and 139 cases per year, and over 80 per cent of AIDS patients progressed to AIDS after being diagnosed with HIV infection within three months during the same period. HIV testing facilitates early detection of HIV in infected people, and early treatment with antiretroviral drugs effectively prevents progression to AIDS and other complications."

The spokesman said that sexual transmission remained the major mode of HIV transmission. Members of the public with a history of unsafe sex should take an HIV antibody test early. Key populations with a higher risk of infection should undergo regular HIV screenings, while people who had sex but do not belong to these key populations should consider getting tested at least once.

Members of the public can visit the HIV Testing Service website ([www.hivtest.gov.hk](http://www.hivtest.gov.hk)) to make reservations for the AIDS Counselling and Testing Service or order an HIV self-test kit. HIV-positive people should seek specialist care and HIV treatment as soon as possible.

â€‹The public may visit the DH's Virtual AIDS Office ([www.aids.gov.hk](http://www.aids.gov.hk)), the Red Ribbon Centre page ([www.rrc.gov.hk](http://www.rrc.gov.hk)) and the Gay Men HIV Information website ([www.21171069.gov.hk](http://www.21171069.gov.hk)) for more information on HIV/AIDS.

