

NY1 News Manhattan



Advocates Put HIV Testing Van To Work On City Streets

February 14, 2006

Advocates took to the streets Tuesday to raise awareness of the fight against AIDS.

Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) put its new HIV testing van to work. The van will go to high risk neighborhoods to counsel people on the importance of safe sex and being tested for HIV.

GMHC says 1 in 4 people who are infected with HIV don't know it.

"Testing is free, it is accessible. We are making it available in local neighborhoods. We are partnering with health organizations, with community organizations, with housing industries, in terms of housing developments – anywhere people are," says Dr. Marjorie Hill, Interim Executive Director of GMHC.

"What we are doing is empowering people to make the decision to get tested on their own," says Drew De Los Reyes, assistant director of the Geffen Center. "We are creating a safe space for them, a confidential space for them, and talking about what it means to lower their risk, what it means to take an HIV test and possibly what it means to test positive."

New York has the largest HIV-positive population of any city in the country with an estimated 100,000 people carrying the virus.