

Scotiabank to host HIV Regional Testing Day this week across Guyana

Georgetown, June 16, 2014 – Scotiabank, through its Bright Future Programme, will host the annual HIV Regional Testing Day at the Bank's branches across Guyana this week. This is the sixth year that Scotiabank in Guyana is participating in this regional initiative under the aegis of the Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV/AIDS (CBMP) in collaboration with the Pan Caribbean Partnership on HIV/AIDS (PANCAP).

Residents can visit any one of the testing sites during the day where trained personnel from the National Aids Programme Secretariat (NAPS) will conduct confidential screenings and provide counselling on taking precaution to stop the spread of HIV.

Clinics will be held at the following Scotiabank branches across Guyana:

- Robb Street branch Friday June 20
- Carmichael Street branch Friday June 20
- Bartica branch Friday June 20
- New Amsterdam branch Friday June 20
- Parika branch Sunday June 22

Regional Testing Day was launched in Antigua on May 28, 2014. This year's campaign has the added innovation of a dedicated website and an original jingle. The jingle will be used for a live filming of the TV promo and a radio version. It will be released in tandem with the launch of the month-long intensive media campaign.

According to CBMP Executive Director Dr. Allyson Leacock, "Five hundred (500) people from different demographic backgrounds will take part in the promotion for Regional Testing Day 2014 to show that HIV does not discriminate but affects us all no matter our age, race or religion or who we love."

A dedicated website www.thecbmp.org has been set up exclusively for Regional Testing Day that will allow people to participate in the filming of the TV promo if they wish to register.

Scotiabank branches across the Caribbean will again lead the charge in providing private and confidential locations to facilitate voluntary HIV counseling and testing. Heather Goldson, Regional Director, Products and Marketing for Scotiabank's English Caribbean Region spoke of Scotiabank's longstanding support of HIV/AIDS Testing as part of its philanthropic focus as a leading corporate entity in the Caribbean and globally.

"We are pleased to see the addition of a jingle and website to the campaign this year. Our support for Regional Testing Day began from the inception of this initiative by CBMP in 2008. Scotiabank, through its philanthropic program, Bright Future is proud to contribute to the communities we serve in the Caribbean and we feel it is important to keep HIV top of the development agenda for our region because the stigma continues and new infections are still of concern in our most productive populations". Ms. Goldson commented.

The launch on May 28th leads off a one-month regional radio and TV campaign as well as social media through the LIVE UP Campaign Facebook Page. During this month, interviews are scheduled with a diverse group of people to have the widest appeal and share information on HIV testing. The CBMP, in its media led coalition, sees this as an extremely important step in de-stigmatizing the process of getting tested and knowing your status. Broadcast media executives in the CBMP have enabled life-saving messages through the CBMP's LIVE UP campaign and have made HIV/AIDS a business priority. The media is a critical vehicle in helping Caribbean people accept HIV testing as a necessary and healthy process, like any other medical check-up.

As has happened since the launch of Regional Testing Day in 2007, The Radio and TV Campaign will be bolstered by vibrant promotion in Social Media. This year three (3) Youth panel discussions will be hosted and linked simultaneously with Regional Testing Day through the LIVE UP Facebook Page. Arrangements are being made to have LIVE UP Champions and DJs with our member stations join these panels to interact with younger audiences online.

Statistics from the 2013 Global Summary of the AIDS epidemic published by UNAIDS show that an estimated 250,000 adults and children were living with HIV in the Caribbean. An estimated 12,000 people in the region were newly infected with HIV and there were approximately 11,000 adult and child deaths due to AIDS.

HIV Counseling and Testing is an important entry point into comprehensive HIV prevention and treatment programs and services. Counseling and Testing programs provide an opportunity for more persons to know their HIV status; for the negative client to receive risk reduction counseling and support to stay negative; and for HIV infected client to be referred early into treatment and care programs and further counseled and supported.

About Scotiabank

Scotiabank is a leading financial services provider in over 55 countries and Canada's most international bank. Through Bright Future, our global philanthropic program, Scotiabank and its employees support causes at a grassroots level across six pillars: health, education, social services, arts and culture, environment and sports. Recognized as a leader for our charitable donations and philanthropic activities, Scotiabank has contributed on average some \$50 million annually over the last five years to community causes around the world. Visit us at www.scotiabank.com.

About the CBMP

The Caribbean Broadcast Media Partnership on HIV/AIDS (CBMP), founded in 2006, unites 112 top broadcasters from 24 countries in the region's first coordinated media response to the pandemic. The Partnership creates a structured framework for sharing information and resources among broadcasters that significantly expands HIV/AIDS-related programming and public education activities across the Caribbean. Member broadcasters deliver HIV/AIDS information across a variety of platforms and formats, including targeted public service announcements (PSAs), entertainment programming, news and public affairs programming, and online resources.

In March 2007, the CBMP launched the umbrella campaign LIVE UP: Love. Protect. Respect, – an innovative crosscutting brand to support all of the Partnership's programming components. LIVE UP

is the first media-led campaign on HIV/AIDS to reach across the entire Caribbean. Its core programming components – radio and television public service ads (PSAs), a monthly news magazine television programme and the www.iliveup.com website, Facebook Page and YouTube Channel – inspire audiences of approximately 40 million, especially young people, to consider what is within their power to do to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS. Additional content, developed and produced by individual member companies, supplements the core content. LIVE UP creates a regional movement by linking audiences together across the Caribbean with one message of hope and possibility in an age of HIV and AIDS.

For more information, visit <http://www.cbmphiv.org> and www.iliveup.com

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