



PRESS RELEASE WORLD AIDS DAY 2022

Communities make a difference World AIDS Day 2022

On December 1st, 2022 communities make a difference can help to put an end to the AIDS epidemic by 2030

Cayman Islands World AIDS Day 2022 is an opportunity to harness the power of social change to put people first and close the gap. Ending the AIDS Epidemic by 2030 is possible, by working together as a community and allowing people access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services and people who are being left behind.

Working together as a community means empowering and enabling all people, everywhere, to access the services they need.

1st, December 2022 marks the 31st anniversary of World AIDS Day – a day created to raise awareness about HIV and the resulting AIDS epidemics. Since the beginning of the epidemic, more than 70 million people have acquired the infection. And about 35 million people have died. Today, around 37 million worldwide live with HIV, of whom over 22 million are on treatment.

When World AIDS Day was first established in 1988, the world looked very different to how it is today. Now, we have easily accessible testing, treatment, a range of prevention options, including Pre-exposure prophylaxis of (PrEP), and services that can reach vulnerable communities with increasing

awareness that AIDS was emerging as a global public health threat, the first international AIDS conference was held in Atlanta in 1985.

In those early days, with no treatment on the horizon, extraordinary prevention, care and awareness-raising efforts were mobilized by communities around the world – research programmes were accelerated, condom access was expanded, harm reduction programmes were established and support services reached out to those who were sick.

In 1991 the HIV movement was branded with the iconic red ribbon. At the time New York based artist from the Visual AIDS Artists Caucus created the symbol, choosing the color for its connection to blood and the idea of passion – not only anger, but love... This was the very first disease-awareness ribbon, a concept that would later be adopted by many other health causes.

As our numbers are steadily rising and our numbers at 163 here in the Cayman Islands still indicates we need more educational programs to help educate our communities which will reduce the amount of stigma and discrimination that causes person not to come forward to be tested and seek the treatment needed to live a healthy lifestyle. Let's use this year's theme "communities make a difference" to treat persons living with HIV and AIDS as equals.