Here’s a Prevention Idea: Condoms and Hand Sanitizer!

Providing both is how Capital City AIDS Fund tackles the twin pandemics.

October 6, 2020 By Joyce Mitchell

As much as we want to achieve a world free of COVID-19, we also want to see a world free of HIV/AIDS. The twin pandemics are haunting. Yet, we must all do our part during these difficult times.

That’s why Capital City AIDS Fund (CCAF) in Sacramento, California, is tackling the challenge. CCAF is committed to protecting health and well-being. Dedicated to prevention and education, CCAF is launching a new campaign addressing both pandemics.

While social distancing and the mask wearing are encouraged to prevent COVID-19, CCAF also encourages standardized hand washing and the use of sanitizers. Recently, CCAF Education and Prevention Chair Ted Ross developed a new dispenser that distributes both condoms and hand sanitizers. The dual chamber dispensers provide added security for people.

New CCAF dispensers provide free condoms and hand sanitizer.Capital City AIDS Fund

“People love our sanitizers,” Ross said. “They are 70% alcohol wipes and individually packaged, so great for the hands and wiping down tables, chairs and bartops.”

The dispensers are up at establishments where people now have the opportunity for outdoor dining and limited indoor use. At FACES and Badlands, two popular gathering spots in the Midtown District, people are given the option and opportunity to take free condoms, hand sanitizers—or both.

Dispensers, condoms and sanitizers are donated by CCAF. For people who may be interested, the dual chamber dispenser is available at condomdispenser.org.

Sadly, we hear very little about HIV/AIDS these days because of new pandemic is tragically killing hundreds of thousands of people. Politics and protests also diminish the opportunity for discussions about safer sex. But during these times of staying at home more—undoubtedly—people continue to have sex. Or at least we hope so.

Therefore, we want to remind them that two pandemics still exist. HIV infections have been reduced since the height of the pandemic in the mid-1980s. However, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicate that progress has stalled in recent years. New

infections continue—at about 40,000 each year. That’s people who were diagnosed between 2014 and 2018.

In the most recent reporting, infections were highest for people ages 25 to 34 (31.5%), followed by people ages 35 to 44 (16.9%). And unfortunately, people of color are disproportionately over-represented. The largest number of infections were attributed to male-to-male sexual contact, 82%. Nearly 16,000 people died from complications related to AIDS.

CCAF encourages HIV testing, treatment and prevention. Don’t put off testing because of COVID, especially if you think you may have been exposed. HIV can be treated with a once daily pill, which can get the virus to undetectable levels. When undetectable, there is zero chance of passing on HIV. Please, use every precaution to avoid contracting either the new coronavirus or HIV. We have a twin pandemic complicating our very existence. Remain vigilante.

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