



World  
AIDS DAY  
1 DECEMBER 2019

## Uniting to make a difference

***World AIDS Day is an opportunity for every community to unite in the fight against HIV and AIDS, show support for people living with HIV and remember those who have died because of it.***

World AIDS Day is important to all South Africans because we are all affected by HIV/AIDS. In 2018, there were 71 000 AIDS-related deaths in South Africa alone and 7.7 million people living with HIV and AIDS. Anyone can contract HIV. The virus doesn't care about your race, religion, income, work experience, marital status, gender, age or sexual orientation. As a result, it is very important that we all stand together as a community to create awareness, shake the stigmas and lend a helping hand where we can.

### **MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

It's completely understandable that you or those around you may be scared to do an HIV test. However your health is your most important asset and you need to know your status so that you can start treatment if necessary. You can help change the perceptions and behaviours of those around you, which could ultimately reduce new infection rates in South Africa.

## HOW CAN I MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT?

- Stay informed about changes in HIV prevention, treatment and resources
- Know your HIV status, and encourage those around you to know theirs
- Take your antiretrovirals (ARVs) consistently if you are HIV positive
- Reach out to local HIV organisations, and volunteer your time and talents
- Engage with others by sharing your knowledge
- Get involved in HIV awareness days and events

Social media can be used as a powerful platform to influence someone to find out their status by sharing information about where people can test, the latest developments in treatment and success stories about HIV positive people.

Bankmed is here for your good health, and this World AIDS Day, we encourage you to make regular testing a priority for yourself and those in your community.

## TESTING IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR HOME

Many people in South Africa have HIV and are able to live healthy, fulfilled lives by taking care of themselves with the right treatment and care.

It is Bankmed's commitment to partner with you and improve your life. We cover an **HIV self-test** that you can do wherever and whenever it suits you. The self-testing kit can be conveniently delivered to your door, in unmarked packaging to protect your privacy. The test is covered under your Wellness and Preventative Care Benefits, so there is no additional cost for you to think about.

If the self-testing kit indicates a positive result, please visit a Healthcare Professional to perform a further test to confirm the diagnosis. Self-testing kits are not intended to confirm diagnoses.

## PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR OUR HIV POSITIVE MEMBERS

If you are living with HIV, we provide comprehensive disease management so that you can receive the treatment and care that you need. When you register with our **HIV Programme** you are covered for all-inclusive care and are guaranteed that your information remains confidential. This includes benefits for your medication (antiretrovirals or ARVs), consultations with your network GP as well as blood tests that monitor the progression of your condition.

ARVs do not cure HIV and AIDS, but if taken correctly and regularly as prescribed, they help to manage the condition. We urge members living with the disease to enrol in the HIV Programme as early as possible or as soon as you have been diagnosed with HIV. This is crucial for your physical and emotional well-being, as well as to reduce the risk of spreading the disease. It is important to visit your Healthcare Professional for regular blood tests to make sure that the prescribed medication is working effectively for you.

To register with the Programme or to find out more visit:

**[www.bankmed.co.za](http://www.bankmed.co.za)** or e-mail us at [hiv@bankmed.co.za](mailto:hiv@bankmed.co.za).