



September 1, 2024

Dear Colleague:

The South Carolina Department of Public Health (DPH) is pleased to announce the 5th annual PrEP Awareness Week. This annual statewide initiative aims to increase awareness among providers and the community regarding pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a pill or injectable that can help significantly decrease HIV transmission if a person is exposed to the virus. Although PrEP uptake, overall, is low in South Carolina, there has been a steady increase in prescriptions since the approval of PrEP in 2012.

Over the last five years, this annual event has grown significantly. DPH has increased partnerships with community partners and colleges and universities across the state to promote PrEP awareness and eliminate HIV stigma. Through these partnerships, DPH is able to deliver provider training to increase knowledge, develop culturally relevant messaging, and improve access to HIV testing. We invite medical providers, pharmacists, nurses, social workers, and health educators to join the daily webinars, or in-person symposium hosted in collaboration with the South Carolina HIV/AIDS Clinical Training Center, a partner of the Southeast AIDS Training and Education Center (SE AETC) to learn more about PrEP. Participants can earn up to seven FREE continuing medical, nursing, social work, or pharmacy education credits during PrEP week.

Additionally, these collaborations offer an opportunity to provide sexual health and PrEP resources to college students. Based on 2022 HIV surveillance data, individuals between the ages of 13-24 accounted for 56% of new HIV infections in the United States. Increasing HIV testing and PrEP awareness on college campuses will significantly help our collective goal of ending the HIV epidemic.

Visit the following webpages for more PrEP resources, and please share them widely:

- [PrEP Awareness Week](#)
- [PrEP Awareness Week Brochure](#)
- [PrEP Counseling Center](#)
- [PrEP Provider Toolkit](#)

For question contact PrEPMeSC@dph.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda J. Bell, M.D.".

Linda J. Bell, M.D.
Director, Health Programs Branch
State Epidemiologist
S.C. Department of Public Health