



Launch: "First Things First" National Campaign - TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY, 2012

The national launch of an innovative HIV Counselling and Testing campaign for universities, "First Things First", takes place at the University of the Western Cape on Tuesday 21 February.

Among the speakers at the launch will be the Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi; the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Professor Hlengiwe Mkhize; and Professor Brian O'Connell, Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Western Cape and Chairperson of the HESA-HEAIDS Strategy Group.

"First Things First" is a public-private partnership initiative led by the Higher Education HIV/ AIDS Programme (HEAIDS) in partnership with Innovative Medicines South Africa (IMSA) and its member companies; the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); the Department of Higher Education and Training; the Department of Health; and the South African National Aids Council (SANAC).

Now in its second year, this innovative, award-winning campaign is aimed for roll out to all 23 public higher education institutions around South Africa with the aim of testing at least 35 000 students and other members of the university communities.

The campaign provides for the testing of large numbers using HIV rapid finger prick tests. It is supported by an appropriate pre-test and post-test counselling and education programme.

The campaign contributes to the strengthening and sustainability of ongoing HCT programmes at Higher Education Institutions. It helps mobilise students and the broader Higher Education community to know their HIV status, stop HIV stigma and fight the HIV pandemic.

Date: Tuesday 21 February, 2012

Time: 09h30 for 10h00 to 13h00

Venue: University of the Western Cape

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