

## News Release

Contact: Cherie Filler-Maitta  
(702) 942-9278  
Jennifer Sizemore  
(702) 383-1225

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Clark County Health District offers oral HIV testing**

(September 6, 2002) – The Clark County Health District will begin offering oral HIV testing to the public every Tuesday from 1 p.m. until 4:30 p.m., beginning September 10, 2002, at its Henderson Public Health Center, located 129 West Lake Mead Drive.

Oral HIV tests do not require blood or needles and provides a testing option that is 99 percent accurate and results within 10 days. The test checks for the presence of HIV antibodies in the tissue fluid of the cheeks and gums. Approximately 20,000 people a year are tested at health district sites in the greater Las Vegas area.

“Offering an alternative to a blood test provides an incentive for people to access our services,” said Dr. Donald Kwalick, chief health officer for the health district.

Once they have taken advantage of the testing services clients will also receive information regarding safe sex practices and the dangers of high risk activities such as the sharing of needles. Information will also be made available regarding educational, counseling and treatment services.

“There is still a stigma attached to being infected with HIV and people often avoid getting tested. When a person makes the choice to get tested they are taking responsibility for their health and the health of anyone their HIV status might affect,” said Rich Reich, AIDS services coordinator.

Currently in Clark County there are more than 2,500 people living with HIV and more than 3,800 people have been diagnosed with AIDS since tracking began in the 1980s.

For more information regarding testing services at the Henderson Public Health Center call (702) 564-3232 or the health district HIV/AIDS office at (702) 942-9318.

####