

Headline	Health authorities advise youth to get tested for HIV	
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Health authorities advise youth to get tested for HIV

By Mike Crismundo

BUTUAN CITY — Officials of the Department of Health (DOH) on Monday urged people engaged in risky sexual behavior to have themselves tested for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) as infection cases in the region and other parts of the country especially among the younger age bracket remains a concern.



(MANILA BULLETIN FILE PHOTO)

HIV testing is free at BMC, an HIV Treatment Hub in Northeastern Mindanao or Caragan region.

Those who will come for testing will be assured of full confidentiality, top DOH 13 officials said.

DOH 13 joined other health offices in the world in the observance of the International AIDS Candlelight Memorial Day on Sunday (May 19).

This annual global observance aims to remember loved ones who have lost their lives to HIV; show solidarity with people living with HIV, and raise awareness about HIV with this year's theme, "Intensifying the fight for Health and Rights."

Health officials of DOH 13 said the awareness program of the agency in Caraga region is now "effective" as more individuals already come to health-designated offices for HIV testing and treatment.

DOH 13 Regional Director Dr. Jose R. Llacuna Jr., urged community members, especially those who are at high risk for acquiring the virus, to submit themselves to counseling and testing in which services are free and confidential."

"The thought of having yourselves tested may sound scary for many but to know your status may be both liberating and educating," the region's top DOH 13 official added.

Since 1995 to October 2018, there were 599 HIV cases recorded in various parts of Caraga region.