



## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attention: Community Editors, Business, Health Care  
Writers and Editors

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## UNITY HEALTH CARE PROVIDES HIV TESTING, COUNSELING, AND EDUCATION SERVICES DURING THE 6<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

**Washington, DC** – On February 6, 2007 Unity Health Care (Unity), the DC Mayor's Taskforce on Reentry, Court Services & Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP), kicked-off National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day by hosting a DC Reentry Health Summit. The summit themed "*Staying Healthy – Staying Free*" included three panel discussions addressing health and related recovery challenges with an emphasis on self-advocacy, personal accountability, and outreach to those returning from prisons to area halfway houses. Unity Health Care convened the Reentry and HIV panel to examine the current state of HIV, the barriers and challenges faced by those returning from incarceration and living with HIV. Joined by Dr. Gregg Pane, Director of DC Department of Health and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton along with other community members, the Summit was held at The ARC Theatre located 1901 Mississippi Ave., SE Washington, DC.

Observed around the world and in Washington, DC, today marks the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Unity Health Care is the first organization in the District of Columbia to join the HIV Testing Campaign combining its efforts with the District's initiative to encourage every District resident between the ages of 14 and 84 to be screened for HIV. Unity will reinforce its commitment in the fight against HIV/AIDS by encouraging their patients to get HIV testing, counseling, and educational services.

"National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day is an opportunity to get involved and make a difference," said Vincent A. Keane, President & CEO of Unity Health Care. Some of the biggest challenges we face today are the misperceptions of and lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS, particularly among African Americans. Unity will sound the alarm that "the HIV/AIDS epidemic is far from over and there is still much work to be done in battling this disease," said Keane.

Unity Health Care, Washington DC's largest nonprofit health and social service organization serves individuals and families in all eight Wards of the District of Columbia through its network of eleven Community Health Centers, four specialized Health Centers, nine sites serving homeless people and two mobile medical units. More than 69,000 people including the working poor, uninsured, homeless, and the formerly incarcerated benefited from services in 2006. About 8% were treated for HIV/AIDS related conditions. Further information about National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness and Information Day is available at <http://www.blackaidsday.org>.

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