



Unit 43
The Eurolink Centre
49 Effra Road
LONDON SW2 1BZ
www.gmfa.org.uk

PRESS RELEASE

GMFA's Worlds AIDS Day message: 'Take Responsibility for Safer Sex'

London, 18 November 2009 – All gay men, regardless of their HIV status, are responsible for safer sex. This World AIDS Day, GMFA, the gay men's health charity, will be promoting this message across the London gay scene with a new postcard campaign and host of fundraising events.

Matthew Hodson, Head of Programmes at GMFA, says: "This is a simple yet important health message that we want to get across. Many HIV-negative men believe it's up to positive men not to infect others, while many HIV-positive men believe HIV-negative men should take responsibility to protect themselves. The truth is we are all responsible for our own health as well as that of our partners."

Unsafe sex between gay men, HIV positive and HIV negative, is behind the spread of HIV in the gay community. Both positive and negative gay men in the UK engage in high-risk sexual activity - specifically, fucking without condoms - with men whose status they do not know, or whose status they know to be different to their own.

Matthew adds: "This means that whatever your own HIV status, you can't rely on your partner to take responsibility for preventing the spread of HIV."

Whether you want to protect your partners or protect yourself, it's up to you to take responsibility."

Postcards featuring the message "Take responsibility for safer sex" will be available in gay bars and clubs across London to coincide with a range of fundraising events in support of GMFA. Staff at participating venues will also be wearing T-shirts with the campaign slogan to further promote the message.

In the run up to World AIDS Day, The Eagle and Horse Meat Disco are holding a Tastiest Tranny competition on Saturday 28th November with all door money coming to GMFA, while Kazbar, The Green, Kudos, The Edge and The Rose & Crown in Greenwich are holding fundraisers across the weekend of 28th and 29th November.

On 1st December, Comptons is holding a fundraiser for GMFA with help from the King's Cross Steelers, The Two Brewers has a karaoke fundraising night planned, while Bar Wotever at The Royal Vauxhall Tavern will also be supporting GMFA.

In addition, Recon.com is running its 2009 World AIDS Day Campaign with the aim of raising a minimum of £25,000 for five HIV charities worldwide, including GMFA, by selling virtual red ribbons to its members for them to display on their profiles.

There will also be collections in the King's Arms, King William IV and Prowler Soho, while Steamworks Sauna, DV8 Soho and Clone Zone Soho will be selling red ribbons throughout the period.

Matthew adds: "We would like to say a huge thank you for all who have agreed to support us this year. The money we raise through community

events such as these is vital, and goes directly towards campaigns that receive no statutory funding.”

- ENDS -

About GMFA

Founded in 1992, GMFA is the UK's leading charity dedicated to gay men's health. Its mission is to improve gay men's health by increasing the control they have over their own lives. The organisation is based on the belief that the best health promotion for gay men comes from gay men themselves. For this reason, it uses the knowledge and ideas of its 170 volunteers, most of them gay men, to design and plan its thought-provoking sexual health interventions. These include a range of advertising campaigns, leaflets, postcards and booklets; FS, its health magazine, distributed nationally in gay venues and GU clinics; and national and London-based courses covering sex education, life skills and smoking cessation. In addition, GMFA creates targeted sexual health interventions for black gay men and HIV positive gay men. Independent surveys have concluded that GMFA's campaigns reach up to 60% of the London gay population and that the organisation is the most reliable agency at reaching gay men. The charity runs a range of information websites:

- Sex & Sexual Health, www.gmfa.org.uk/sex - visited by a third of London's gay men in 2006;
- London Services, www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices - detailed listing of sexual health services for gay men in London;
- Positive Gay Guide, www.gmfa.org.uk/positive - information for HIV positive gay men;
- The Guide, www.gmfa.org.uk/theguide - a guide to gay sports and social groups in London;
- Quit smoking, www.gmfa.org.uk/quitsmoking - information and advice on quitting smoking for gay men;
- About GMFA, www.gmfa.org.uk/aboutgmfa - for more information on GMFA.

For more information, please contact:

Matthew Hodson

Tel: 020 7738 6872

Email: matthew.hodson@gmfa.org.uk