



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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COPD EVENT HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR AWARENESS & TREATMENT

November is COPD Awareness Month

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) and the Hawai'i COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) Coalition will celebrate COPD Awareness Month with a free educational event entitled "COPD Education Day 2007" on November 2, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Queen's Conference Center, 510 Punchbowl Street (corner of Punchbowl and South Beretania). The free event is open to the public and will feature exhibits, speakers, a panel discussion, refreshment and demonstrations.

COPD is a serious lung disease that makes breathing difficult. It is most often characterized by shortness of breath and a persistent cough. It is the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S., and is expected to be the third leading cause of death in 2020.

"In Hawai'i it is estimated that there are almost 59,000 patients diagnosed with COPD and an untold number undiagnosed," said Valerie Chang, executive director of Hawai'i COPD Coalition. "Prompt diagnosis and effective treatment makes a huge difference in the quality of the lives of patients and their loved ones."

Patients, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and the public are encouraged to attend the event to increase COPD awareness and encourage living well with COPD. Featured keynote speakers include James Kiley, PhD, director, Division of Lung Diseases, at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and Hawai'i Pulmonologist Thomas Pollard, MD. A patient panel will address living actively with COPD.

(more)

COPD Education Day 2007 is hosted by the Hawai'i COPD Coalition in collaboration with the DOH Tobacco Prevention & Education Program, Hawai'i Asthma Initiative, Queen's Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente, the American Lung Association of Hawai'i, UH School of Nursing, and other professional and community organizations.

Space is limited, so pre-registration is advised by calling the American Lung Association of Hawai'i at 537-5966. Brochures are available at <http://www.ala-hawaii.org/lungdisease.asp> and at many O'ahu pharmacies and doctor's offices.

Facts about COPD:

- COPD is the 4th leading cause of death in the U.S. and causes serious, long-term disability
- COPD kills more than 120,000 Americans each year. That's one death every 4 minutes
- More than 12 million people are diagnosed with COPD
- An additional 12 million likely have COPD and don't even know it

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For media questions about this news release, contact:

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