

National HIV Testing Week, 22-29 November 2013

**HIV
PREVENTION
ENGLAND**

NATIONAL HIV TESTING WEEK 22-29 NOVEMBER 2013

Following the success of England's first **National HIV Testing Week** in 2012, the event is now established as a permanent part of the HIV prevention calendar. It has inspired a similar event across Europe this year, **European HIV Testing Week**¹. In addition to

increased testing activity locally, people and organisations can pledge support for testing and for this dedicated week through social media and an interactive campaign website.

This briefing

This campaign briefing is for any individual or organisation whose work involves HIV prevention or testing with African people and/or gay and bisexual men. It will tell you the rationale behind National HIV Testing Week (NHTW), what is being produced to support the event and how you can get involved and make the impact of this event even bigger where you are.

Background

Undiagnosed HIV infection remains unacceptably high among gay and bisexual men and African people, the two most at-risk populations across England. One in five gay and bisexual men with HIV do not know they have it and up to eight in 10 new infections in this population are estimated to come from them². One in four Africans with HIV are unaware of their infection, with even higher rates among African men³.

NHTW was developed and is managed nationally across England by Terrence Higgins Trust on behalf of HIV Prevention England (HPE)*, as part of the drive to reduce undiagnosed infection among these two audiences.

The more people who test, the more who will be diagnosed, individuals who otherwise would have remained at risk of ill-health and a potential unintentional source of new infections. During last year's event an additional 800 hours of HIV testing were provided, with events staged by over 55 organisations.

Aims of NHTW 2013

The aim of the week is:

- To increase testing among the most at-risk populations across England.
- To increase awareness and acceptability of HIV testing among these groups.
- To increase access to HIV testing in both community and statutory settings in order to improve early diagnosis and treatment of HIV (and thus reduce ongoing transmission) among those most at risk.

The mass media campaign and related material which promote NHTW seek to increase awareness of:

- The volume and variety of ways and places where an HIV test can be taken.
- The benefits of regular HIV testing – and of taking treatment when necessary – for the individual and for the community.
- The extent of undiagnosed infection and late diagnosis and its impact on individual health and HIV transmission risk.
- The benefits of HIV treatment including its role in reducing onward HIV transmission.
- Ways to access HIV testing via online tools and the provision of postal sampling and community-based rapid testing.



The supporters wall at the gay version of the campaign website

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The African poster: testing showed that adding a white face boosted acceptability among African people

If these aims are achieved it is expected to result in an increase in the numbers of at-risk people testing at least once a year, an important step in detecting undiagnosed HIV and cutting new infections.

The 'social proof' approach of the NHTW campaign is based on research showing the positive influence on behaviour when someone finds out that others like them are also engaging in that behaviour. 'Social proof' is especially effective with issues where an individual has doubts over what the right course of action is, as is often the case with decisions related to HIV testing.

Target audiences and how we will reach them

The target groups are untested and previously tested HIV negative men who have sex with men (MSM) and black Africans in England. Mass and social media is targeted at Africans aged 25-45 and MSM under 40, reflecting the age groups where undiagnosed infection is most prevalent.

However, testing by individuals outside of these age groups is also encouraged when appropriate.

The campaign will be delivered through highly targeted channels, including local delivery partners who will promote HIV testing face-to-face with at-risk populations.

The NHTW 2013 campaign includes:

- New web content on HPE's It Starts With Me website (see below).
- Adverts in lifestyle and faith-based UK African titles and national/regional gay press (including cover stories and editorial).
- Targeted adverts on Facebook.
- Banner adverts on popular gay and UK African websites.
- Direct messages via mobile phone apps and dating sites popular with gay men.
- Outdoor advertising – including on public transport.
- Double-sided A4 posters (African and gay versions).
- Editable PDF versions of posters to carry local services information (to be printed off locally).
- Short clips featuring campaign models endorsing testing (eg, for use on the website, Facebook pages and as a commercial on UK-based African TV channels).
- Scratch cards promoting regular testing, the campaign website and local testing services in partners' areas.
- Twitter and Facebook activity around NHTW.
- Specialist briefings.

Also available are materials produced for an earlier testing-focused phase of the It Starts With Me campaign:

- The *Why I Test* leaflet.
- An infographic film clip explaining the role of testing in stopping HIV.
- The *New Era, New Hope* leaflet explaining the role of testing and treatment in prevention.

You can view an illustrated order form in the 'Get Involved!' box on the next page.

What's on the web for NHTW 2013?

For people in the HIV sector:

www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/nhtw

Here you can find information, an order form, downloadable logos and specialist briefings.

www.facebook.com/NationalHivTestingWeek

At this NHTW Facebook page organisations can promote their testing activity during the week.

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Scratch card which advises on when next to test

On Twitter discussion of NHTW will be taking place under the hashtag **#hivtestweek**.

To be listed on the supporters wall on the campaign website contact: **mark.kenwright@ttht.org.uk**

For Africans and gay/bisexual men

From 5 November separate interactive African and gay web content can be found at **www.startswithme.org.uk**

Content includes:

- A rolling tally of supporters (measured in Facebook 'likes' and on-site pledging).
- A supporters wall where they can pledge support for NHTW, upload their image, video clip and messages endorsing testing, with the option of a public or private pledge to test.
- Service finder: find local testing centres, including services running especially for NHTW.
- The MyTest tool, advising when someone's next HIV test is due (with the offer of an email testing reminder service).
- Short film clips of campaign models endorsing testing.
- The It Starts With Me infographic film clip explaining the role of testing in stopping HIV.

Measuring impact

Evaluation of the campaign is co-ordinated by Sigma Research at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Short-term measurable outcomes are website visits and pledges, use of the online MyTest tool, as well as engagement with the campaign's social media elements (eg, Facebook 'likes' and Twitter activity). Targets have been set for the testing activity of local delivery partners and recognition of the campaign. Year on year comparisons will be made of numbers of tests carried out in NHS clinics, with plans to measure immediate impact in a small cohort of clinics.

This campaign is produced by Terrence Higgins Trust for **HIV PREVENTION ENGLAND**

Terrence Higgins Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales (reg no. 288527) and in Scotland (SC039986). Ref: 7047500.

Get involved!

Any organisation (whether they are an HPE partner or not) can join in with NHTW. This is provided that they offer free HIV testing or free access to activities related to testing awareness, and that their activities are targeted at gay and bisexual men and/or black African people in England. HPE partners should order resources using their existing online ordering system. Non-HPE partners can order free materials for use locally with the target audiences from:

www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/resources

Any enquiries about orders can be directed to: **andie.dyer@ttht.org.uk**

Around 40 HPE local delivery partners across England will also be supporting the campaign through one-to-one and group-based outreach, resource distribution and community events. Prior to launch, briefings about NHTW were sent to commissioners, HIV specialist clinicians, Directors of Public Health and Chairs of Wellbeing Boards and Muslim and Christian African faith leaders. Sexual health clinics across England will receive a briefing sheet and posters.

*HIV Prevention England is the Department of Health-funded contract to deliver prevention campaigns to Africans and gay and bisexual men in England during the period 2012–2015. It is managed by Terrence Higgins Trust and supported by the following sub-contractors: Black Health Agency for Equality, Sigma Research at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, MBARC, NAM Publications and Yorkshire MESMAC.

Notes

¹ European HIV Testing Week also runs from 22–29 November and is organised by HIV in Europe, more details at: www.hivtestingweek.eu

² Phillips A N, et al. *Increased HIV incidence in MSM despite high levels of ART-induced viral suppression: analysis of an extensively documented epidemic*. Plos One February 2013, Volume 8, Issue 2, e55312.

³ Health Protection Agency. *HIV in the United Kingdom: 2012 Report*. London: Health Protection Services, Colindale. November 2012.

