

# HIV PREVENTION ENGLAND

Campaign briefing for faith leaders  
and faith communities

Dear Colleague,  
It is nearly that time of year again:

## NATIONAL HIV TESTING WEEK.

Now in its fifth year, **National HIV Testing Week** (NHTW) is an important national event which increases the opportunities for people to get tested for HIV and learn more about the virus. It is mainly directed at the two groups that continue to be disproportionately affected by HIV in England: men who have sex with men (MSM) and black African people. In previous years the event has also had positive effects on the broader community.

The week is co-ordinated by HIV Prevention England (HPE) with support and participation from organisations in the public, statutory and private sectors.

**We would like to invite you to, once again, get involved and support this great event.**

## Why is HIV testing important?

There are approximately 18,100 people in the UK living with HIV who do not know that they have it<sup>1</sup>. Since these people are unaware that they are living with HIV, they are not accessing life-saving treatment and care - they also remain the primary source for onward transmission<sup>2</sup>.

Individuals who are most at risk are recommended to test at least once each year<sup>3</sup>. However, the most recent evidence from large national surveys<sup>4,5</sup> showed that nearly a quarter of adult MSM (23.6%) and over one third of adult Africans (35%) had never tested.

# NATIONAL HIV TESTING WEEK

STARTS 19 NOVEMBER 2016

## How it works

This year, **NHTW** starts on 19 November. In the lead-up to, and throughout, **NHTW** we will deliver a targeted, high-profile, national campaign to reach people who do not normally test. We will encourage them to test - whether it's in clinical settings, in primary care, through community-based rapid testing or postal testing.

An extensive outdoor advertising campaign will launch at the beginning of November 2016 in the following areas:

London  
Luton  
Manchester  
Leeds  
Birmingham  
Newcastle

Brighton & Hove  
Tyneside  
Sheffield  
Bristol  
Worthing  
Milton Keynes

**NHTW** provides the perfect opportunity to get those who have never tested to test, and to test annually.

Those who have **never tested**<sup>4,5</sup>: **MSM - 23.6%; African - 35%**  
Those who **do not test annually**<sup>4,5</sup>: **MSM - 27.1%; African - 39.3%**

Social media imagery and video content will also be used extensively on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other digital platforms to promote testing.

Different organisations typically get involved by:

- raising HIV awareness, online or face-to-face
- promoting testing services
- organising activities and events in local communities.

As a faith leader or faith community member, you are central to the campaign's success and have an incredibly important role to play in promoting local testing events and ensuring that access to testing is available to all during NHTW.

## Highlights from NHTW 2015

Last year the campaign met with resounding success: there were more than 300 organisations involved in raising awareness, organising activities in their local communities and promoting testing services. More than 45,000 people engaged with us on social media and we received more than 12,000 orders for HIV postal testing kits.

### Key Statistics<sup>6</sup>

750,000

Number of free resources ordered and distributed across England.

12,161

Number of postal testing kits ordered.

49,921

Number of people engaging on Facebook and Twitter.

304,929

Number of NHTW video views.



### YouTube support:

A total of 31 famous creators provided support, including uploading 15 videos which garnered over 106,928 views.

### Celebrity support:

Last year 47 celebrities supported the event by posting photographs or messages on social media including **Stephen Fry**, **Graham Norton** and **Dr Christian Jessen**.

## Great, I'm on board. How can I support the campaign?

We encourage you to do whatever is best for your local area and communities. It can be as simple as using the NHTW logo, displaying our free posters or using the other free resources in your area. It could involve supporting and signposting members of your faith community to local testing events in clinic and community settings. See the To-Do List and Case Study below for examples on how you could get involved.

### Register your event

NHTW welcomes the participation of any groups or organisations working in HIV prevention with MSM or Africans. You can register your testing event at [www.aidsmap.com/nhtw](http://www.aidsmap.com/nhtw) and it will appear on the 'Test Finder' on the It Starts With Me website: [www.startswithme.org.uk](http://www.startswithme.org.uk)

### Order free resources

Free National HIV Testing Week 2016 resources will be available to order from mid-October from the HPE resources portal. For more information, email: [hperesources@tht.org.uk](mailto:hperesources@tht.org.uk)

### Branding

There is space on leaflets and some posters for local branding and information. HPE may also provide artwork with additional organisational branding for regional placement. For more information email: [hperesources@tht.org.uk](mailto:hperesources@tht.org.uk)

### Cost and quantities

All items are free, but the quantities of some items may be limited. Requests for reasonable quantities will be met. Materials are funded only for distribution within England and content is aimed at Africans and MSM.

- Show your organisation's support by 'Liking' the NHTW Facebook page ([facebook.com/NationalHIVTestingWeek](https://www.facebook.com/NationalHIVTestingWeek)) and tweeting about testing using **#hivtestweek**
- Tell us about your local plans – we would love to hear from you: email: [chamut.kifetew@ttht.org.uk](mailto:chamut.kifetew@ttht.org.uk)

## TO-DO LIST

- ✓ Encourage and support other faith leaders to raise awareness and explain the benefits of testing during service.
- ✓ Have discussions at service and activities planning meetings to raise awareness for congregations.
- ✓ Support and signpost members of your congregation to local testing events in clinic and community settings. Download the **NHTW** logo and order free resources (see above).
- ✓ Co-ordinate activities in partnership with local community-based organisations or providers of health services in a variety of settings (eg, place **NHTW** posters in surgeries and other appropriate prominent venues).
- ✓ Influence your local MP, mayor or other public figures to pledge their support for testing.
- ✓ Promote the 'When to Test' and 'Test Finder' tool ([www.startswithme.org.uk](http://www.startswithme.org.uk)).
- ✓ Organise an event to promote understanding of the importance of HIV testing with members of after-service groups (eg, young people, men and women).

## CASE STUDY

In preparation for **NHTW 2013**, Positive East, a London-based HIV charity that works with African people, delivered HIV information and advice sessions. They planned the sessions in partnership with congregations from Walthamstow's Living Flames Baptist Church, Hackney's Mission of Faith Christ Gospel Ministries, T M Ministry and Barking Christ Embassy Docklands.

The sessions focused on basic HIV facts, stigma and discrimination, testing, information about Treatment as Prevention (TasP) and included two HIV positive speakers. Scripture readings supported the prevention messages and a call to the congregations to take individual ownership to ensure that together they protect themselves, their communities and future generations from HIV.

Subsequently, during NHTW, HIV testing sessions were delivered at Living Flames Baptist Church in Walthamstow and the service received national coverage in the media: [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-25077217](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-25077217)

Support came from other faith leaders who encouraged more discussions by congregations about HIV not being a taboo but a medical condition. They also explored the fact that individuals who need it should receive prompt medical attention, community support and care.

<sup>1</sup> National Infection Service, Public Health England (2015). HIV in the United Kingdom. Available from: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/514404/HARS\\_slides\\_2015\\_webversion\\_v2.pptx](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/514404/HARS_slides_2015_webversion_v2.pptx)

<sup>2</sup> HIV Prevention England (2016). Undiagnosed HIV infection. Available from: [www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/HPE\\_briefing\\_undiagnosed\\_hiv\\_infection.pdf](http://www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/HPE_briefing_undiagnosed_hiv_infection.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Public Health England (2015). HIV in the UK: Situation report 2015, Incidence, prevalence and prevention. Available from: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/477702/HIV\\_in\\_the\\_UK\\_2015\\_report.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/477702/HIV_in_the_UK_2015_report.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Hickson, F., Reid, D., Hammond, G., & Weatherburn, P. (2016). State of Play: Findings from the England Gay men's Sex Survey 2014. Available from: <http://sigmaresearch.org.uk/files/GMSS-2014-State-of-Play.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Bourne, A., Reid, D. and Weatherburn, P. (2014). African Health and Sex Survey 2013-2014: headline findings. Available from: <http://sigmaresearch.org.uk/files/report2014c.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> HPE campaign monitoring data

## The HIV and sexual health charity for life

Website: [www.ttht.org.uk](http://www.ttht.org.uk) | THT Direct: 0808 802 1221

Registered office: 314-320 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP

Tel: 020 7812 1600 | Email: [info@ttht.org.uk](mailto:info@ttht.org.uk)

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HIV Prevention England is the Government-funded national HIV prevention programme for England.

To find out more about our work visit: [hivpreventionengland.org.uk](http://hivpreventionengland.org.uk)



Public Health  
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