

FOCUS ON PREVENTION

PURPOSE.

This briefing introduces the next phase of the national HIV prevention campaign, **It Starts With Me**. This phase will bring into focus the new realities of HIV prevention from the use of Treatment as Prevention (TasP) to improving condom use. The aim is to reduce the transmission of HIV as well as improve the sexual health of those who do not have HIV and those who do. Everyone has an important role to play.



WHY DO WE NEED TO FOCUS ON PREVENTION?

According to the latest Public Health England (PHE) data, an estimated 101,200 people are living with HIV in England. One in eight people living with HIV are unaware that they have the virus, while 39% of people newly diagnosed in 2015 were diagnosed late¹.

The two groups that continue to be disproportionately affected by HIV in England are men who have sex with men (MSM) and black African people. Evidence shows that a significant proportion of people from these key populations do not know that effective treatment reduces infectivity. There is also a lack of awareness of the importance of well fitting condoms^{2,3}.

In national surveys, a significant proportion of individuals from these communities had reported inconsistent condom use, experienced condom failure recently or have not had access to condoms^{2,3}.

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



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While this demonstrates the need to invest in HIV prevention strategies, a report from the National AIDS Trust found that spending from Local Authorities on HIV prevention is significantly lower than the amount spent on treatment and care each year⁴. The lifetime treatment costs of the 3,780 people newly diagnosed with HIV in high prevalence areas in 2013 was approximately £1.2 billion, compared with HIV prevention expenditure in these areas of £10 million.

COMBINATION PREVENTION

Combination prevention strategies offer the best approach to stopping HIV in England. This includes early diagnosis and treatment of HIV to stop onward transmission, correct and consistent condom use, awareness and access to Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for those who need it, and addressing the wider sexual health determinants of people affected - including mental health and alcohol and drug issues.



WE HAVE THE TOOLS WE NEED TO STOP HIV CONDOMS

Condoms are a highly effective way to prevent HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancies. However, they need to be used correctly and consistently to be effective. The right choice of condom can increase users' satisfaction and decrease the likelihood of condom failure, while deterrents to condom use include cost, access and lack of knowledge regarding the different options available.

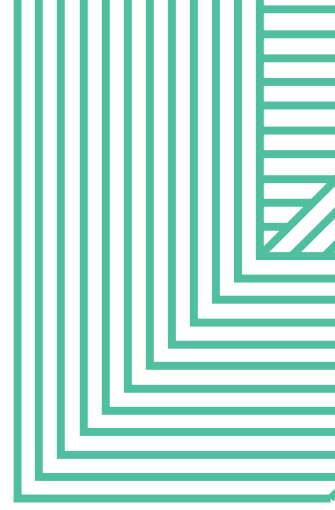
Communities can therefore benefit from increased awareness of:

- the range of condom sizes, shapes, thickness and materials
- the variety and importance of lubricant
- the benefits of buying online, in terms of cost and choice
- the fact that condoms prevent both HIV and STIs
- free condom schemes available (if any).

TREATMENT AS PREVENTION (TASP)

Early detection and treatment is highly effective in reducing the risk of HIV transmission. Results from the multi-national PARTNER study, which included 1,166 heterosexual and MSM serodiscordant couples, showed zero transmissions where the HIV positive partner was on treatment and had an undetectable viral load⁵.

Following the results of the START trial, BHIVA strongly recommend that individuals living with HIV should start antiretrovirals immediately after diagnosis as they greatly improve health outcomes⁶.



PHE data from 2015 shows that in England, 96% of those diagnosed with HIV were on treatment and 94% of those had an undetectable viral load¹. However, if those who are undiagnosed are taken into account, approximately one in five people with HIV are not on treatment and virally suppressed, and are therefore at a higher risk of transmitting HIV.

Communities can benefit from increased awareness of:

- the preventive benefits of HIV antiretroviral treatment
- the fact that someone newly diagnosed with HIV should start treatment straight away
- the fact that treatment for HIV is free in the UK.

PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PREP)

Certain individuals who are likely to be exposed to HIV could benefit from taking PrEP to avoid acquiring HIV. Studies show PrEP to be highly effective in preventing the sexual transmission of HIV.

NHS England has announced that it will fund a major extension to the national HIV prevention programme, led by PHE, with the aim of supporting those most at risk and reducing the incidence of HIV infection.

The first phase of implementation will be the launch of a large-scale clinical trial due to start in mid-2017. It is anticipated that the clinical trial phase will include at least 10,000 participants over the next three years. The trial will help to answer some of the outstanding implementation questions around the use of PrEP in a sustained way on a substantial scale in England. NHS England will work in partnership with Local Authorities, the Local Government Association and PHE to deliver the trial and to implement the findings as part of a wider national rollout.

Some people in the UK are already legally acquiring PrEP online and are taking it while being supported by sexual health clinics to use it safely.

For more information on the current state of PrEP visit www.aidsmap.com/PrEP/cat/1623/

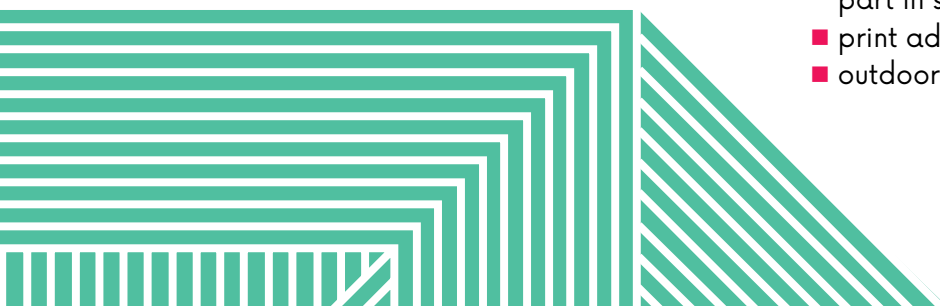
THE CAMPAIGN

In this new phase of **It Starts With Me**, we continue to champion the campaign concept that 'everybody' has a part to play in prevention, and that there are different tools to meet everyone's needs.

This phase of the campaign will include:

- promotion via Facebook and Twitter
- new video content telling the personal stories of inspirational individuals each playing their part in stopping HIV
- print advertising in target publications
- outdoor advertising in key sites.

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The **It Starts With Me** website contains a useful and interactive digital tool to support community members' decisions relating to condom use. The 'Condom Quiz' asks individuals a series of questions to determine the best condom to suit their needs. For a limited time a free condom sample pack, which contains condoms and lubricant, will be offered to individuals who complete the quiz. The packs are based on their responses and aim to provide condoms which are the right fit and choice, and which will support future condom use decision-making.

Promotion will start on **18 March 2017** and run until the end of April.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT YOUR WORK IN

There will be a range of free resources which will be available to support prevention efforts and address the community needs discussed in this document.

Free printed and digital HIV and STI prevention leaflets, posters and other promotional materials are also available to all organisations engaged in HIV prevention including clinics, GP surgeries, statutory services, colleges, universities and community organisations. Topics covered include:

- condom fit and choice
- Treatment as Prevention (TasP)
- syphilis
- gonorrhoea
- hepatitis.

You can order resources, including information, leaflets and posters, from **7 March 2017** from:
www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/order-resources.

GET INVOLVED

- Primary care professionals and community-based health workers can provide support, information, resources and health services to prevent HIV and STIs.
- GPs can order the free resources for people to access in their waiting areas or to use during consultations.
- Sexual health commissioners are also in a position to ensure that sexual health services are in place to meet local needs, including managing local partnerships between services.
- Local Authority policy makers are encouraged to provide funding for condom schemes, testing, and prevention campaigns and programmes.

There will also be many opportunities throughout the year to contribute to the HPE programme and benefit from learning and development events, including a national conference on **18 May 2017**.

To keep up-to-date with what is happening subscribe to the HPE newsletter at www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/about.

1 Public Health England, 2016. **HIV in the UK 2016 report**.

2 Hickson et al 2016. **State of Play: findings from the England Gay Men's Sex Survey 2014**.

3 Bourne et al 2014. **African Health & Sex Survey 2013-2014: Headline findings**.

4 National AIDS Trust **HIV prevention in England's high prevalence local authorities: 2013/14 and 2014/15**.

5 Rodger et al, 2016. **Sexual Activity Without Condoms and Risk of HIV Transmission in Serodifferent Couples When the HIV-Positive Partner Is Using Suppressive Antiretroviral Therapy**.

6 BHIVA 2015. **ART guidelines for HIV**.

The HIV and sexual health charity for life

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