

**IT
STARTS
WITH
ME**

HIV PREVENTION ENGLAND

Combination Prevention: We have the tools to stop HIV

The **It Starts With Me** Summer Campaign on Combination Prevention starts on Monday 18 June 2018.

Due to a combination of prevention methods, the UK is starting to witness a substantial decline in HIV diagnoses. People are testing more, staying protected by using condoms and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), getting diagnosed and starting HIV treatment earlier.

In 2016, there was an 18 per cent decline in new diagnoses from 6,286 in 2015 to 5,164 in 2016¹.

The HIV Prevention England summer campaign seeks to build on this achievement by raising awareness and promoting actions to take on the various ways to prevent HIV.

WHO THIS BRIEFING IS FOR

- Commissioners of sexual health services
- Public health and health promotion professionals working in sexual health
- Sexual health and primary care clinicians
- Sexual health community outreach workers
- Community, cultural and faith leaders from key communities
- Pharmacists and allied health professionals who provide services to people from key communities.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BRIEFING

This briefing provides information about:

- everything you need to know about the summer campaign
- how you can get involved
- what support you can get from HIV Prevention England to amplify the campaign
- what combination prevention is and why it is important.



THE IT STARTS WITH ME SUMMER CAMPAIGN

The campaign aims to promote awareness and adoption of:

- condom use
- treatment as prevention
- pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)
- HIV testing.

The look and feel will be bright, fun and summery. It will feature individuals who are playing their part in stopping HIV by using at least one of these prevention methods.

The campaign has been developed using extensive user-testing and an evidence-based process to ensure that it is appropriate and acceptable for the intended target audiences:

- men who have sex with men (MSM)
- black Africans (BA).

These are two of the communities most affected by HIV in the UK.

Campaign launch and activities

The campaign will launch on Monday 18 June 2018. Resources for promoting the campaign can be ordered from Monday 4 June 2018 at www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/order-resources.

The community models featured will appear on digital adverts, posters and videos. These will be promoted via targeted print media, social media and digital advertising on websites, dating apps and social media platforms.

We will produce a series of blogs to provide more in-depth information and address the questions and concerns of key communities related to combination prevention. These blogs will seek to:

- enable deeper and more meaningful discussions
- empower individuals
- encourage individuals to find the right options for themselves.

Local activity

This summer, we will support the delivery of 10,000 face-to-face interventions and 1,000 community tests by our Local Activation Partners on behalf of the programme. These activities are targeted at helping people reduce their risk-taking and increasing access to community-based HIV testing, and is only meant to act as a 'top-up' to complement existing local services.

HOW WE CAN AMPLIFY AND SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL HIV PREVENTION WORK

Resources and merchandise

Free printed and digital HIV prevention leaflets, fliers, posters and other promotional materials are available to all organisations engaged in HIV prevention. These include clinics, GP surgeries, statutory services, colleges, universities and third sector/community organisations.

You can order resources from Monday 4 June 2018 at www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/order-resources.

Promote your work nationally via our website

The HIV Prevention England website is also a free and popular platform visited by health and related professionals who wish to find out more about HIV prevention work in England.

It is a useful platform to promote good practices to the rest of the sector. Please get in touch with information about your projects and any achievements your work has been recognized for which you would like us to promote.

Other support

We also provide free seminars, webinars and other professional development events for professionals throughout the year.

COMBINATION PREVENTION: WHY IT IS IMPORTANT AND WHAT YOU CAN DO

Combination prevention strategies offer the best approach to stopping HIV in England. They include:

- early diagnosis and treatment of HIV to stop onward transmission
- correct and consistent condom use
- awareness of and access to PrEP for those who need it
- addressing the wider sexual health determinants of people affected, including their mental health and alcohol and drug issues.

TESTING

As outlined by Public Health England (PHE), HIV testing offers an opportunity to reduce the number of people undiagnosed as well as the number of people diagnosed late, allowing for prompt access to HIV treatment. People who are diagnosed late tend to spend an average of three to five years unaware they have the virus, posing a great risk to their health as well as increasing the risk of onward transmission¹.

The recently observed drop in HIV diagnoses in 2016 is especially significant among MSM, with the largest decline in diagnosis rates in parts of London which have the highest testing rates and prompt access to treatment¹.

It is important to raise awareness of the necessity, simplicity and ease of HIV testing, and to provide increased opportunities to test – be it in clinical settings, in primary care, through community-based rapid testing or via self-sampling or self-testing at home.

What can you do?

- promote existing testing services in your area
- enforce the current NICE testing guidelines: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs157
- provide additional tests in different settings.

TREATMENT

Being on treatment earlier leads to quicker achievement of an undetectable viral load¹, which means that HIV cannot be passed on to



others and reduces the period of infectivity after diagnosis^{2,3}. Treatment is free in the UK and allows individuals to:

- get the maximum health benefits from the medication
- avoid passing on HIV.

What can you do?

- promote treatment adherence
- encourage early initiation of treatment
- join our **I can't pass on HIV: Treatment as Prevention** webinar, from 12.30pm-2pm on Monday 21 May 2018: <https://bit.ly/2l00rcp>

CONDOMS

Condoms are a cornerstone of HIV and STI prevention in the UK; however, uptake among key communities is insufficient. National surveys showed that more than a third of MSM and BA did not use condoms at all during sex in the last year. Of BA who did, 26 per cent experienced condom failure due to breakage or slippage^{4,5}.

According to the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare, ill-fitting and

inappropriate condoms can be linked with breakage, incomplete use, reduced pleasure and erectile issues⁶. Key contributors to low use are believed to be lack of information and access to different condom options.

What can you do?

- promote free and low-cost condom schemes among key communities
- encourage the consistent use of appropriate condoms
- review and apply national guidelines: www.bashguidelines.org.media/1080/4452.pdf

HIV PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PREP)

PrEP is highly effective in preventing the sexual transmission of HIV. While PrEP is not freely available to everyone on the NHS, it is an important complement to other prevention methods which people are already accessing in a number of ways in the UK.

The PrEP Impact Trial was launched last year.

- It will last three years and enrol 10,000 participants at high risk of acquiring HIV.
- To date, more than 5,000 people have already been enrolled.
- PrEP is being offered to individuals attending participating genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics, who meet the trial criteria and consent to participate.
- The trial will assess the impact of PrEP on new HIV diagnoses and sexually transmitted infections.

- The results will inform service commissioners on how to support clinical and cost-effective PrEP access in the future.

It is important that:

- people who are already accessing PrEP have the right information to support them
- those who could benefit from PrEP are educated about the options available to them.

What can you do?

- inform your service users who may benefit from PrEP about how they can access it
- review training materials on PrEP from PrEPster: prepster.info/resources/
- share information about PrEP with auxiliary networks outside the sexual health and HIV sector.

You can also promote your current and recent projects through our website: write a blog or share good practice publications you have been involved in producing by emailing hpe@tht.org.uk.

GET INVOLVED WITH HIV PREVENTION ENGLAND AND STAY IN TOUCH

There will be many opportunities throughout the year to contribute to the HIV Prevention England programme and benefit from all we have to offer.

- Keep up to date by subscribing to our e-bulletin at www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk
- For more information about the summer campaign or the programme more generally, email hpe@tht.org.uk.

¹ Public Health England (2017). Towards elimination of HIV transmission, AIDS and HIV-related deaths in the UK. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/675809/Towards_elimination_of_HIV_transmission_AIDS_and_HIV_related_deaths_in_the_UK.pdf

² British HIV Association (2016). BHIVA guidelines for the treatment of HIV-1-positive adults with antiretroviral therapy 2015 (2016 interim update), p30. <http://www.bhiva.org/documents/Guidelines/Treatment/2016/treatment-guidelines-2016-interim-update.pdf>

³ 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. *Jama*, 316(2), 171-181. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2533066>

⁴ Hickson et al (2016) State of Play: findings from the England Gay Men's Sex Survey 2014; Bourne et al (2014). African Health and Sex Survey 2013-2014: Headline findings. <https://www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk/evidence-and-guidance/national-guidelines/>

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

⁶ Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare, 2012. Clinical Guidance: Barrier Methods for Contraception and STI Prevention. <https://www.fsrh.org/documents/cec-ceu-guidance-barriers-aug-2012/cec-ceu-guidance-barriers-aug-2012.pdf>



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