

NATIONAL HIV TESTING WEEK

17-23 NOVEMBER 2018

HIV PREVENTION ENGLAND

Campaign briefing for HIV, Sexual Health and other community-based organisations

NATIONAL HIV TESTING WEEK 2018

National HIV Testing Week is a campaign to promote regular testing among the most-affected population groups. It seeks to reduce the rates of undiagnosed people and those diagnosed late.

Every year, organisations run campaign events, provide extra testing opportunities, and promote HIV testing and prevention services with our support. This year, **National HIV Testing Week** starts on **Saturday 17 November 2018**.

Why you should get involved

- Many people from key communities prefer to test in the community rather than in a sexual health clinical setting. By offering flexible hours and providing testing in community venues, you help more people access testing.
- Your experience, knowledge, and resources mean you can engage people in impactful ways, and have conversation that go beyond testing.
- In 2017, community organisations performed more than 20,000 HIV tests across England with reactivity rates comparable with test positivity rates seen in sexual health clinics.
- You play a vital role in supporting people who receive an HIV diagnosis, and are well-placed to signpost them to clinical, peer support or advocacy services.



A finger-prick test is all it takes.

KEY MESSAGES

This year's campaign slogan is '**Give HIV the finger: a finger-prick test is all it takes**', a continuation of last year's successful creative. While the slogan is focused on the ease of testing, the campaign is an opportunity for partners to promote three key messages:

- Testing is necessary to diagnose HIV and prevent onward transmission.
- Testing is easy and accessible in the UK.
- People can rest assured that, if diagnosed with HIV, they can access free treatment and support

**From 17 October 2018
order information resources:
<http://hperesource.nflex.co.uk>**

RATIONALE FOR NATIONAL HIV TESTING WEEK

Testing, along with other prevention tools, is working. But there are still challenges which remain. We need to build upon this exciting progress in order to succeed in stopping HIV in the UK.

✓ HIV testing is crucial.

- It identifies those who are undiagnosed, avoids late diagnoses, and enables people to start effective treatment immediately, preventing potential illness, and protecting their sexual partners from HIV infection^{2,3}.



In total, 1 in 8 people do not know that they have HIV.

Early diagnosis = normal life expectancy.

Late diagnosis leads to a tenfold increase of death within one year.

Those who are undiagnosed spend an average of three to five years unaware they have the virus.

✓ HIV testing is working, but more needs to be done.

- Despite improvements in overall testing rates, the average proportion of people diagnosed at a late stage of infection has remained persistently high over the past five years at close to 40%².

✓ There are many testing options available.

- HIV testing in the UK is freely available to everyone in a range of options to suit individual needs. This could be at their local clinic, a community-based testing event or in the privacy of their own home. Most commonly, testing can be carried out via a finger-prick test or a clinical blood test.

✓ HIV testing is cost-effective.

- Diagnosing HIV early is cost-effective. It significantly reduces the costs of inpatient admission and treatment and also averts onward transmission.

✓ Increasing HIV testing is widely recommended.

- National HIV testing guidance recommends the expansion of HIV testing across clinical and community settings in the UK to identify people who may have undiagnosed HIV. However, there is concern over limited implementation and lack of commissioning in some settings⁴.

✓ National HIV Testing Week puts a spotlight on HIV testing.

- More than any other time of the year, National HIV Testing Week magnifies HIV testing and prevention services; driving up the opportunities to increase HIV testing and raise awareness of HIV issues.

✓ National HIV Testing Week complements local services.

- The different elements of National HIV Testing Week work to complement and amplify existing local services; with the ultimate goal of getting individuals from most-affected groups who would otherwise never test to do so.

CAMPAIGN PROMOTION

Outdoor Advertising

An extensive outdoor advertising campaign will launch at the beginning of November 2018 in major areas of high prevalence.

Digital and Social Media

The campaign will be promoted nationwide via targeted digital advertising and social media activities. Digital platforms will include dating apps and websites relevant to people from most-affected groups.

The campaign will also be extensively promoted on social media using content that includes videos, personal stories, blogs, articles, news stories, etc.

The hashtag for this year's campaign is **#HIVTestWeek**.

Resources, merchandise and social media pack

Free, high-quality and award-winning resources are available to support sector professionals amplify the campaign.

These resources include customisable posters, pocket-size leaflets and promotional merchandise.

We are also designing a social media pack for you to promote via your own social media channels and networks.

Press Coverage

News and personal stories will be shared via targeted national and local press. The focus will be on sharing real stories of real people, individuals from most-affected groups talking about their testing experiences and encouraging others to do the same.

Influencer Engagement

Various influencers and celebrities will also support **National HIV Testing Week 2018** to increase the reach of the campaign, by creating and sharing photo and video content on social media with messages on testing.



Great, I'm on board.

How can I support the campaign?

We encourage you to do whatever is best for your local area and community. Consider the list of actions below.

TO DO LIST

- ✓ Order and use **National HIV Testing Week 2018** branded posters and resources.
- ✓ Organise local testing events in clinics and as part of outreach in community settings.
- ✓ Co-ordinate any outreach activities with your Local Authority and other community groups.
- ✓ Organise local publicity to raise awareness and explain the benefits of testing.
- ✓ Invite your local MP, mayor and other public figures and influencers to test or pledge their support.
- ✓ Promote the 'When to Test', 'Test Finder' and 'Which Test' tools available on the www.startswithme.org.uk website.
- ✓ Share, repost and retweet **National HIV Testing Week 2018** social media content to all public networks, and use the social media pack on our website to customise your posts. The Twitter and Facebook handle for **National HIV Testing Week 2018** is **#HIVTestWeek**.
- ✓ Invite your partner organisations, including educational and health bodies, as well as Social Services and other groups, to take part in **National HIV Testing Week 2018**. They can also do this by promoting the digital information and services on the www.startswithme.org.uk website through their own social media channels.
- ✓ Are you based in a high or very high prevalence area? Visit the PHE 'Fingertips' tool to find out the HIV and sexual health needs of your area: <http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/sexualhealth/>
- ✓ Visit the PHE, NICE and BHIVA websites for the most up-to-date national data and best practice recommendations for HIV testing and prevention:
www.gov.uk/government/collections/hiv-surveillance-data-and-management
www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng60
www.bhiva.org/guidelines.aspx

From 17 October 2018 order information resources:
<http://hperesource.nflex.co.uk>

Download the National HIV Testing Week social media pack:
www.hivpreventionengland.org.uk

We would love to hear from you about your National HIV Testing Week 2018 plans and get feedback about the campaign.

Please email hpe@tht.org.uk for help facilitating National HIV Testing Week 2018 events or for more information or support.



Measuring the success of National HIV Testing Week 2017

Last year, clinics and organisations got involved in **National HIV Testing Week** in a number of ways, including providing additional testing and promotion of services online, in clinics and community settings.

Kantar Public carried out an external evaluation of the campaign in December 2017, and they found that nearly 90% of the gay and bisexual men target audience recognised the campaign; while 75% of the black African men and women target audience recognised the campaign.

We also evaluated sector participation and found that:

- Over 1,000 unique orders were made for information and promotional resources from the HIV Prevention England resources portal.
- There were nearly 400,000 interactions on social media and 18,855 people visited the **It Starts With Me** website around the campaign period.
- 81% of organisations said **National HIV Testing Week 2017** helped them increase awareness of HIV testing and HIV issues among the community.

Overall, 93% of them agreed that they would support **National HIV Testing Week** in 2018.

CASE STUDY

LASS and Trade Sexual Health, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland - 2017 Raising the profile of HIV testing and the importance of prevention services

'To launch National HIV Testing Week 2017, we invited local politicians, Liz Kendall MP and Jon Ashworth MP, to visit our centres as part of a national drive to ensure that HIV remains on the political agenda, as well as having the opportunity to share the successes of our services.'

'Jon Ashworth MP visited Trade Sexual Health to learn about the important work we do in providing free, confidential health advice, information and support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) communities, including HIV testing. His visit was broadcast on Facebook Live to promote testing activities for the campaign.'

'Liz Kendall MP came to see us at LASS and recorded her visit and HIV test for YouTube to highlight the importance of HIV testing. During the visit she explained she was "delighted to be a part of and support the campaign".'

'At LASS we acknowledge that ensuring political will is key to sustaining the HIV response both at local and national level. National HIV Testing Week provides us with an excellent opportunity not only to engage our MPs but to get them into the building to see our services in action.'

'At Trade, we also believe that raising the profile of testing services locally and nationally is imperative in our HIV prevention work – National HIV Testing Week is one of the best vehicles we have to do this within and beyond our target audiences.'

CASE STUDY

Tomorrow's Women Wirral Merseyside - 2016

'This year we held an HIV awareness and testing event at the Tomorrow's Women Wirral (TWW) centre, in partnership with Sahir House.

'Sahir House has been offering HIV support, information and training across Merseyside since 1985. It offers a wide range of services to people living with or affected by HIV, HIV-related training, up-to-date HIV information, and opportunities to volunteer. We have also worked in partnership with Terrence Higgins Trust in the past, giving us invaluable support dealing with the sensitivities of HIV.

'Partnership with Sahir House, alongside our own work with women in Wirral, enabled us to hold a successful event.

'The session was relaxed and informative – Emma from Sahir House clearly knew her stuff and made everybody feel comfortable with a topic which has the potential to feel strange, scary or "taboo".

'One impact was that several women volunteered to be tested – something they may not have done, or been able to do without the event. In addition, staff, volunteers, and service users were involved in an open discussion about HIV, a topic that may previously have been off the table for many individuals.

'Some long-term benefits from our National HIV Testing Week 2016 activities are that women, staff, and volunteers at TWW are more knowledgeable about the transmission and symptoms of HIV, as well as prevention. Women are better informed, keeping them safer, but also more supportive of those living with HIV. This all has a knock-on effect on the general mental health and wellbeing of the local community.

'Getting involved in raising awareness, debunking myths and reducing stigma around HIV is not only worthwhile, rewarding, and informative – it's vital. Our top tip would be to approach the subject with as little trepidation as possible – HIV is a condition like any other. Taboos and stigma keep people in the dark: let's work together to combat that and keep ourselves safe.'

References:

1 Public Health England (PHE), 2017. HIV Testing in the UK Report 2016. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/610237/HIV_testing_in_England_2016_Report.pdf

2 PHE, 2018. Trends in new HIV diagnoses and people receiving HIV-related care in the United Kingdom: data to the end of December 2017. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hiv-annual-data-tables>

3 National Institute of Health and Care Excellence, 2016. HIV testing: increasing uptake among people who may have undiagnosed HIV. Available from: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng60

4 National Institute of Health and Care Excellence, 2016. HIV testing: increasing uptake among people who may have undiagnosed HIV. Available from: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng60

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

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

To find out more about our work visit: hivpreventionengland.org.uk



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The HIV and sexual health charity for life

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