



# HIV in the Workplace:

A Guide for Employers and Employees

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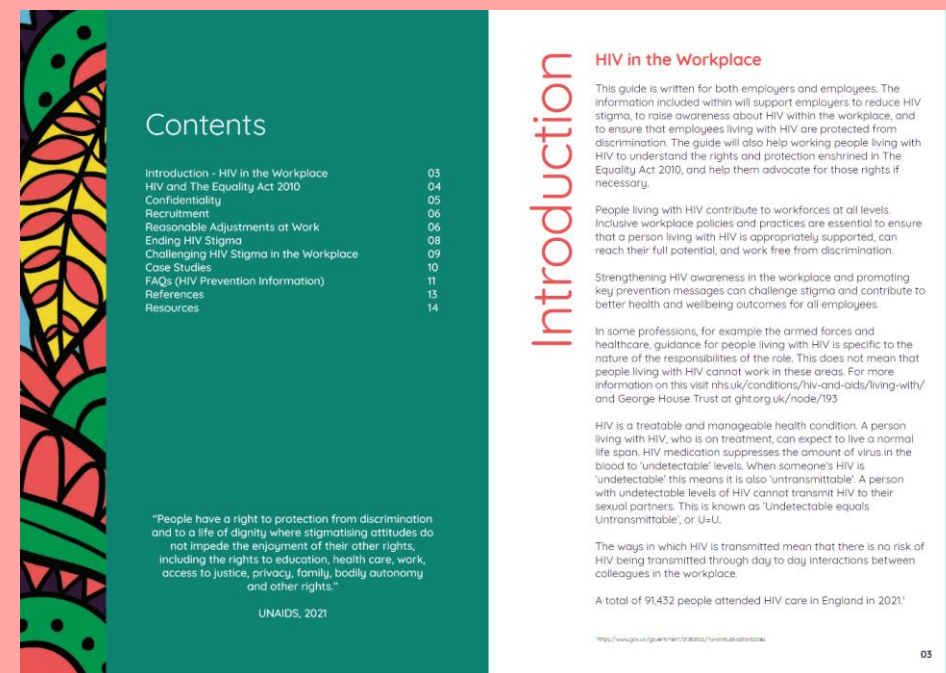
GEORGE HOUSE TRUST



Greater Manchester  
Integrated Care  
Partnership

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- The PaSH Partnership has created a booklet to support employers to reduce HIV stigma in the workplace.
- This booklet also ensures that employees living with HIV understand their rights and protections enshrined in the Equality Act 2010 and helps them advocate for those rights.
- The guide was developed in co-production with employers, HR departments, professionals working in the field, and people living with HIV.



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## Production process

- The protection of the Equality Act 2010 upon recruitment processes, confidentiality and reasonable adjustments formed the initial research.
- Co-production was then vital in the development of the resource. It was reviewed by HR departments, people living with HIV, professionals in the field, and GM Good Employment Charter.





# Co - production, Distribution and Training

## Case Studies

P has been living with HIV since 2005. She has accessed support through George House Trust since that time and has slowly regained self-confidence. Her partners have all been accepting and understand that P's medication means that the HIV is untransmittable. However, someone at P's workplace has found out about her HIV status and has told other colleagues, some of whom have started to ignore her.

P has overheard one of her colleagues describe her as 'riddled with disease'. P tried to speak to her manager but was told to 'ignore them' and get on with her work. P feels like an outcast in the workplace where she has been employed for five years and is looking for alternative employment. She feels pushed out by her colleagues and her manager and has started to lose her regained self-confidence because of this experience.

J was recently diagnosed with HIV. As a former medical student, he already knew a lot about HIV and HIV medication and his diagnosis did not impact him particularly severely. However, once J started his medication, he needed to take some time off work because of side effects. J's continued nausea means that he is considering switching his medication, but he's nervous about making things worse at work. J doesn't feel confident about talking about this with his manager because it feels personal and hypothetical, and his manager may think it a waste of time. Though J feels confident about his own HIV knowledge, he doesn't know how his manager will react. He knows that his workplace has never marked World AIDS Day, nor provided any HIV awareness training.

## FAQs

**These case studies detail examples of real-life HIV discrimination within the workplace. What's the best advice and plan of action for the employee and the employer in each situation?**

**S** was shocked to receive a diagnosis of HIV as she has always associated the virus with gay men and it was never something she felt she needed to be aware of. She works in a health organisation and feels angry that she has never had any training around HIV. S also feels isolated because her colleagues don't seem aware of HIV, and it feels like too big a conversation to have to start on her own. S has tried to talk to her manager about bringing in someone to provide HIV awareness training, but her manager doesn't think it is a priority because "HIV is a thing from the past". S feels like she isn't being listened to and her manager's response has made her start to feel very depressed about her own diagnosis.

**What is HIV?**  
HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus and is a virus that attacks cells in the immune system (the body's natural defence against illness). HIV is now a treatable and manageable health condition.

**How can HIV be transmitted and how can I prevent it?**  
The most common way of acquiring HIV in the UK is through having anal or vaginal sex without a condom.

Other ways of getting HIV include sharing needles, syringes or other injecting equipment; perinatally; or through breastfeeding.

- HIV is found in:
  - semen (cum)
  - vaginal and anal fluids
  - blood
  - the breast milk of someone living with HIV

HIV **cannot** be transmitted through sweat, urine, or saliva. In other words, HIV cannot be transmitted by kissing, touching, hugging, or sharing utensils.

Using a condom during sex is an effective way to prevent the transmission of HIV and STIs.

Another prevention method is PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) which is a pill that can be taken to protect against HIV. PrEP is freely available from the NHS or can be bought from [iwantprepnw.co.uk](http://iwantprepnw.co.uk). However, please note that PrEP protects against HIV but does not prevent other STIs such as chlamydia or gonorrhoea.



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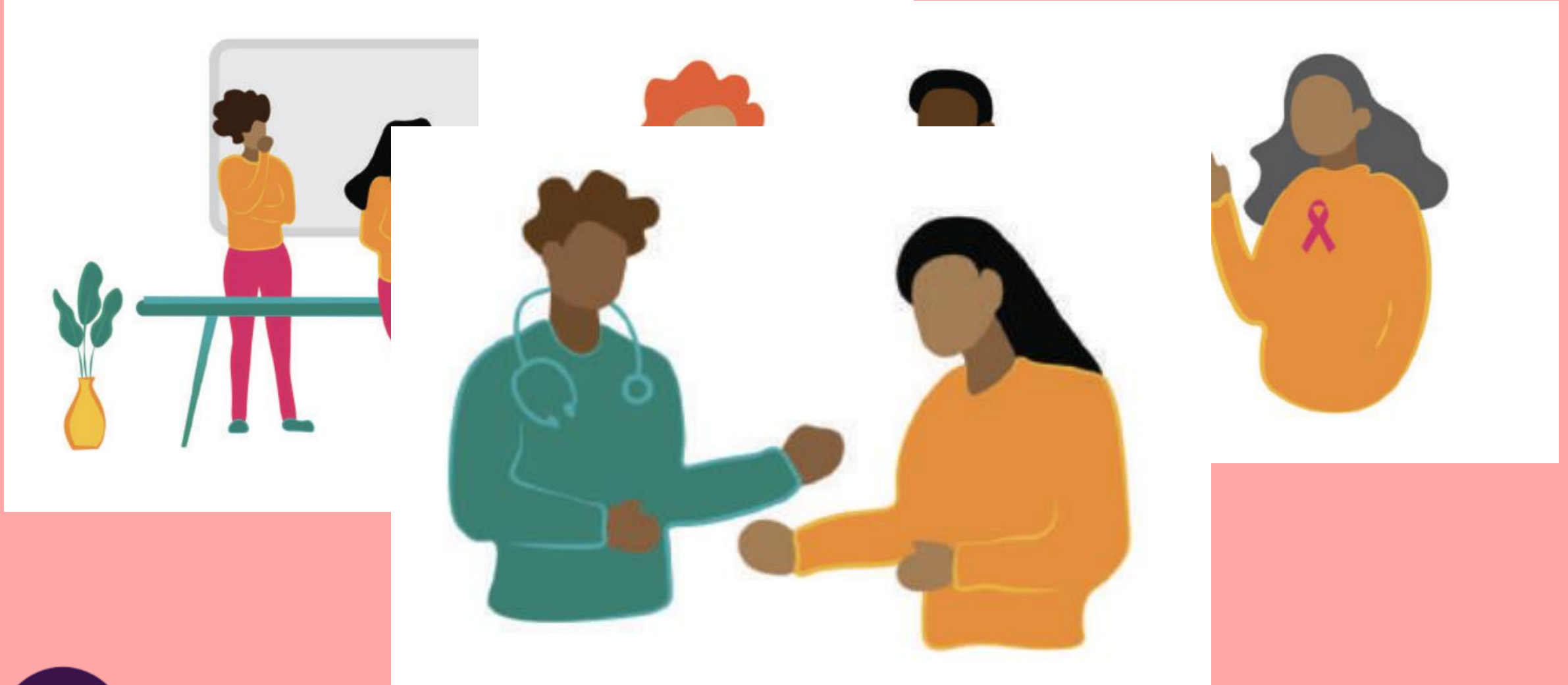
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## Production process (continued)

- Real case studies of workplace discrimination were integrated, as well as a list of local and national organisations dedicated to supporting employers and employees.
- The booklet was launched with a webinar event attended by 118 people in September 2023.
- Speakers at the event included representation from George House Trust, GM Good Employment Charter, and a person with lived experience of HIV-related workplace discrimination.



Production process (continued): graphic design by  
Chloe and Gabe

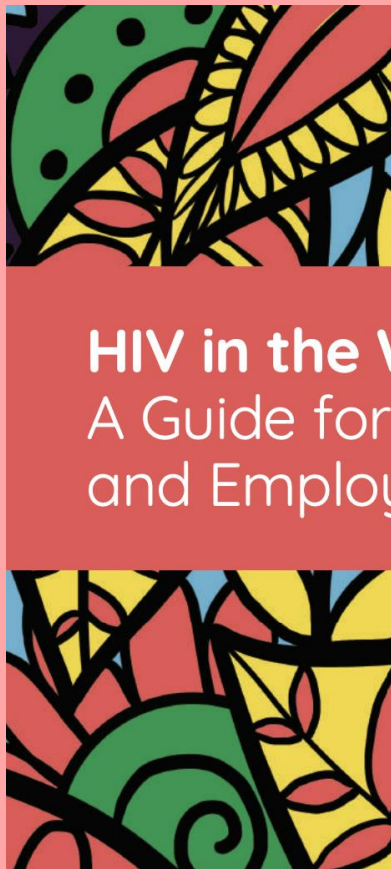


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Production process (continued): booklet design by Jen Corcoran 27eleven.co.uk



# FAQS

## What is HIV?

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## What is the learning from the project?

- Many workplaces do not understand that HIV is a treatable and manageable condition with minimal side effects on an individual's working life.
- Many employers do not know how to be an HIV confident employer.
- Training and awareness raising work needs to be provided in workplaces to reduce HIV stigma and discrimination. This guide can support this work.



## What are the next steps?

- The free to access guide will be promoted to workplaces.
- Training sessions will be provided to ensure employers can confidently align themselves with The Equality Act 2010 and challenge HIV stigma and discrimination.
- The guide could contribute to further HIV stigma projects, for example the creation of an HIV Charter Mark.



## HIV in the Workplace training

### feedback

"Great session on a topic I (selfishly) wouldn't have really thought about before, I truly learned a lot! Thank you!"

"It was great to learn a bit more in depth about the stigma and taboo still surrounding HIV, as well as ways I can be an advocate for HIV acceptance in the workplace as well as in my personal life."

"I believe this is a necessary step for everyone to take in terms of raising awareness, not only educating the employees but also the employer!"

"It was a great presentation and very informative. Clear from start to finish and some useful practical advice."



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## Please download HIV in the Workplace: A Guide for Employers and Employees

Available online:

- Online + PDF Download HIV in the Workplace Guide
- Video of webinar launch event
- Online + PDF Download of National Edition of HIV in the Workplace
- Contraception and STI booklet resources

### Acknowledgments:

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Greater Manchester Good Employer Charter  
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Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership

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