



One Senedd Left

A manifesto for ending HIV transmission
in Wales by 2030



Our vision

Wales could be – should be – the first country in the world to end new transmissions of HIV. The next Welsh Government must seize that opportunity and deliver on our historic goal.

This manifesto sets out how we can achieve our shared vision for Wales: a Wales that has ended HIV transmission, where prevention tools are accessible to all and where people living with HIV have the support they need to access treatment and care, free of stigma and discrimination.

Medical advances mean that today, a person living with HIV and on treatment can live a long, happy, and healthy life and cannot pass HIV on¹. This progress, alongside the availability of the HIV prevention drug PrEP and rapid HIV testing, means we have all the tools we need to end new HIV transmissions by 2030. We can achieve a historic first: ending the onward transmission of a virus without a vaccine or a cure.

The HIV Action Plan for Wales² has driven progress in the 2021-2026 Senedd. Wales has continued to lead the way in the UK through its national online Test and Post service, with record numbers of people now accessing HIV testing³. The HIV prevention drug, PrEP, is now available as an injection⁴, helping address barriers to access. And Wales has become the first 'Fast Track Nation' in the world, with all health boards across the country having signed up to the Fast Track Paris Declaration⁵ helping to drive forward change through cross-sector collaboration. The Welsh Government has commissioned an all-Wales peer support network and has also committed to fund an All-Wales coalition to continue work regionally and nationally around HIV.

However, if we are to succeed in our shared 2030 ambition, it's time to accelerate. Late diagnosis of HIV remains a significant issue in Wales, meaning people are at increased risk of falling seriously unwell and passing the virus on. Meanwhile, limits in our HIV data collection and reporting are hindering efforts to target interventions towards people who are living with undiagnosed HIV and those who are diagnosed but are no longer engaged in treatment and care. Despite medical progress, people living with HIV continue to face stigma and discrimination, including in healthcare settings. These issues must be addressed with urgency if we are to succeed in ending new transmissions.

In developing this manifesto, we have held discussions with a wide range of people living with HIV, as well as NHS colleagues and our third sector partners about what they think is needed to achieve our shared 2030 ambition. We are very grateful to everyone who took the time to share their views and experience.



Richard Angell OBE
Chief Executive at
Terrence Higgins Trust



Robbie Currie
Chief Executive at
National AIDS Trust



Sarah Malsen
Executive Director at
Fast Track Cymru

Our Recommendations

We are calling for all political parties to re-commit to ending HIV transmission in Wales by 2030 and to renew the HIV Action Plan.

To end new HIV transmissions in Wales by 2030, the next Welsh Government must:

1

Deliver a national online HIV Prevention Service, building on the national HIV and STI Test and Post platform to deliver online PrEP access.

2

Explore the merits of opt-out HIV and blood borne virus testing in emergency departments and other health settings in areas with the highest prevalence, in line with national clinical guidelines.

3

Fund national HIV awareness campaigns to normalise testing, improve knowledge of PrEP and tackle stigma, including through education resources for all health and social care staff who need them.

4

Conduct a national audit to identify those lost to HIV care and develop a programme to re-engage them, ensuring the evolving care needs of everyone living with HIV are met through investment in vital third sector support services.

5

Deliver a national Sexual Health Case Management System to improve patient experience and better monitor HIV trends across the country through refined data reporting.

Prevention

The next Welsh Government must deliver a national Online HIV Prevention Service, building on the national HIV and STI Test and Post platform to deliver online PrEP access.

The Welsh Government has led the way in digital access to healthcare through the pioneering national online Test and Post service. Rolled-out in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the testing service now accounts for nearly 20% of HIV tests taken in Wales every year and has driven testing in Wales to record levels⁶.

Testing is a crucial way to prevent new HIV transmissions: if you test positive, you can access the care and treatment you need to live a long, healthy life and not pass HIV on; if you test negative, you can access prevention tools, like PrEP that will prevent you from getting HIV. However, while uptake is increasing year-on-year, many barriers to accessing PrEP persist.

It is only possible to get PrEP through specialist sexual health services in Wales, meaning there is a lack of awareness of the prevention tool and people who don't go to sexual health services can't access it. This is further compounded by rurality in Wales and the large distances many must travel to get to their local sexual health clinic. While women make up 26% of people diagnosed with HIV in Wales, they only account for 2% of those receiving PrEP.

The next Welsh Government must build upon the success of the Test and Post service and use this existing infrastructure to make PrEP available through an online service. As health services in Wales move towards a 'digital first' approach to deliver better quality care across the country⁷, an Online HIV Prevention Service must be introduced, allowing for a single point of access to HIV home testing and PrEP initiation.



Testing

The next Welsh Government must explore the merits of opt-out HIV and blood borne virus testing in emergency departments and other health settings in areas with the highest prevalence, in line with national clinical guidelines.

Finding and supporting everyone living with undiagnosed HIV and those not engaged in care is vital for their health and ending new transmissions of HIV.

Emergency department opt-out blood borne virus testing has been a game-changer elsewhere in the UK, finding new cases of HIV and re-engaging those who are no longer accessing treatment and care. Data published by the UK Health Security Agency in October 2025 found that, in only 33 months, over 7 million tests were undertaken for blood borne viruses in 34 emergency departments (namely in London, Manchester, Brighton and Blackpool)⁸. The testing programme found 719 new HIV diagnoses, 831 new Hepatitis C diagnoses and 3,667 Hepatitis B diagnoses. Nearly three quarters of people newly diagnosed had no record of a previous test for blood borne viruses, highlighting the success of the opt-out programme in reaching populations who would not normally interact with sexual health services.

The success of this programme has led to the roll-out of A&E opt-out blood borne virus testing in Scotland's largest urban areas⁹, including in NHS Grampian¹⁰ where new diagnoses of HIV in 2024 were less than in NHS Cardiff and Vale and NHS Aneurin Bevan¹¹.

Early diagnosis of HIV helps to improve health outcomes and relieves pressure on a stretched health system whilst saving money, with an estimated £6-8 million in care costs saved as a result of £2.2 million spent in the first 100 days of the scheme¹². In Croydon University Hospital, when they first started opt-out testing in 2020, the average hospital stay for a newly diagnosed HIV patient was 34.9 days. After two years of opt-out HIV testing, the average stay was reduced to just 2.4 days¹³.

The next Welsh Government must review this evidence and undertake an anonymised seroprevalence study, as committed to in the current HIV Action Plan, to further understand HIV prevalence rates in the country. This study must take place within one year of the new Senedd and be used to explore the merits of opt-out testing in emergency departments where HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C prevalence is at its highest. HIV testing across the health system must be in line with British HIV Association (BHIVA)¹⁴ and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence¹⁵ guidelines.

Conduct a national audit to identify those lost to HIV care and develop a programme to re-engage them, ensuring the evolving care needs of everyone living with HIV are met through investment in vital third sector support services.

HIV support services, including peer and mental health support, are integral to helping people living with HIV to come to terms with their diagnosis, foster community with other people living with HIV and engage in treatment and care. Research undertaken by HIV Outcomes UK found that 89% of people living with HIV reported that accessing HIV support services improved their overall life satisfaction and well-being and 78% reported that they felt more empowered to manage their HIV after engaging with support services¹⁶.

However, currently across Wales there are geographical divides in access to peer support services. While everyone has access to online support, including through Terrence Higgins Trust's My Community online peer-support platform¹⁷, inconsistencies in health board commissioning leave many people living with HIV with an unmet peer support or mental health need¹⁸: at the time of writing, throughout North Wales there are no in-person HIV support services beyond clinical care in sexual health clinics¹⁹. As more people are now living longer with HIV, with nearly half (49%) of people living with HIV and receiving care in Wales aged 50+, it is vital that tailored support is in place so that older people living with HIV can access the stigma-free care and support they need.



Tafod+ peer support has been and is an invaluable online resource, with fortnightly meetings, a meaningful sense of community and someone to one support when needed. It significantly helps with isolation providing a stigma free environment with committed service users and facilitators. A much valued and needed support lifeline."

Pawel, Terrence Higgins Trust Service User

There is also a risk that a significant population of people across Wales who have been diagnosed with HIV are no longer engaged in treatment and care. While Public Health Wales do not report on this data nationally, research undertaken by the HIV Engagement (HIVE) project in Cardiff found that, in 2023, over 20% of their patient cohort were not in care, had missed more than 3 appointments in 12 months or had only unscheduled attendance at clinic in the previous 12 months²⁰. Of those not in care, 59% had a detectable HIV viral load at last attendance. These people are at risk of getting seriously ill and passing the virus on. This is the result of many factors, including experiencing complex health needs, poverty, discrimination and stigma^{21 22}.

Pilots from HIV clinics and third sector organisations in Wales and across the UK have successfully returned people to care through case-finding, focused follow up and wrap-around support for people²³. As a component of the new HIV Action Plan for England, the UK Government have committed £9 million to fund a national initiative to boost retention and re-engagement, in partnership with the voluntary sector²⁴. We need a national approach to re-engagement in Wales to find and support everyone living with HIV and end new transmissions by 2030.

Action must also be taken to make peer support and mental health support accessible to all, addressing inequalities and supporting people with HIV to live and age well with dignity. Clear referral pathways into support services must be established and specialist mental health support embedded within HIV services. These services must be accessible to people no matter where they live in Wales.



Stigma

The next Welsh Government must fund national HIV awareness campaigns to normalise testing, improve knowledge of PrEP and tackle stigma, including through education resources for all health and social care staff.

Stigma continues to seriously impact the lives of people living with HIV and is preventing people from accessing testing, treatment and support. The 2022 Positive Voices survey of 4,618 people living with diagnosed HIV across the UK found that:



1 in 3 people (32.1%) reported low self-esteem due to their HIV status



1 in 7 people (13.7%) worried about being treated differently to other patients by healthcare staff



1 in 10 people (10.4%) have not shared their HIV status with anyone aside from healthcare staff



Almost half (45.1%) of the survey respondents reported feeling ashamed about their diagnosis

National campaigns, like Wales HIV Testing Week, help to raise awareness of HIV and encourage testing. In 2024, the testing campaign in Wales saw nearly 13,000 tests ordered over the course of November and sparked conversations about HIV across the country²⁵. Over the course of 2024, Wales saw the highest levels of testing recorded, the highest levels of PrEP being prescribed and new HIV diagnoses coming down. It is imperative that we continue to build on this momentum and that national campaigns, like Testing Week, are continued and adapted to best meet the needs of key populations.

The next Welsh Government must drive forward action to tackle HIV stigma, learning from best practice already happening in Wales and elsewhere in the UK. Meaningful training on HIV must be made available in all healthcare settings and nationwide campaigns to raise awareness of HIV must be funded throughout the life of the current HIV Action Plan for Wales and beyond 2026.



Stigma still shapes the lives of people living with HIV in ways that often go unseen. I've felt it directly; losing my job, being taken off a dentist's list, and even having a manager google my medication. Those moments stay with you. What's made a real difference is Fast Track Cymru's stigma campaign. It's given me the confidence, language, and facts to speak openly about the reality of living with HIV. It's also helped me bring HIV into everyday conversations across different communities, turning what was once a source of silence into an opportunity for understanding. That visibility and community engagement across Wales is changing attitudes and helping to dismantle stigma where it starts."

Richard, Fast Track Cardiff and Vale Volunteer

Data

The next Welsh Government must deliver a national Sexual Health Case Management System to improve patient experience and better monitor HIV trends across the country.

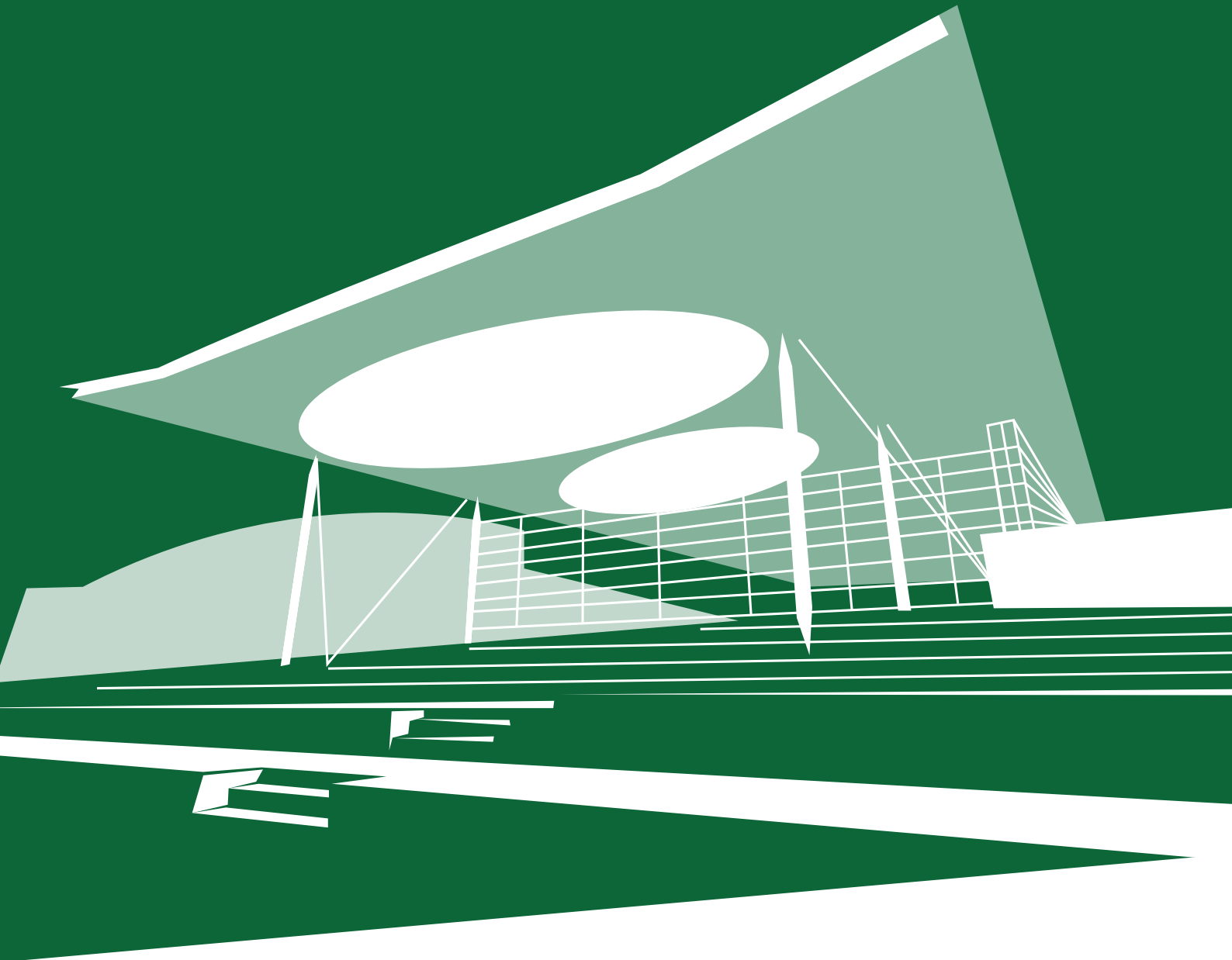
Robust data collection and reporting is vital to ending new transmissions of HIV by 2030, allowing for the monitoring of HIV trends and informing targeted public health interventions. However, the mechanism to accommodate this surveillance – a national Sexual Health Case Management System – has not been delivered, despite a commitment in 2023 as a component of the HIV Action Plan for Wales.

The next Welsh Government must deliver the national Sexual Health Case Management System as a matter of urgency, to allow for improved monitoring and reporting on estimates of undiagnosed HIV within the population and rates of disengagement in care.



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