

Progress towards ending HIV transmission in Scotland

Assessing the HIV Transmission Elimination Delivery Plan

Terrence Higgins Trust and Waverley Care

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Introduction

One year ago, the Scottish Government published the HIV Transmission Elimination Delivery Plan 2023-2026, setting out actions the Scottish Government committed to take to end HIV transmission in Scotland by 2030.

We have had meaningful collaboration with the Scottish Government and have welcomed progress towards the Plan's goals: the 'Stigma is more harmful than HIV' campaign marked Scotland's first national HIV awareness drive since the 1980s and opt-out HIV testing pilots in A&Es showed promise, leading to a commitment to roll out the intervention in health boards with high HIV prevalence. However, gaps remain in our HIV response, and we are missing opportunities to test for HIV, to prescribe PrEP and to ensure everyone living with HIV has the care they need.

With five years remaining until 2030, as Scotland's leading HIV charities, we have assessed progress and identified areas requiring urgent action. This scorecard evaluates progress against the Scottish Government's commitments, focusing on seven high-impact actions in PrEP, testing, and stigma reduction. The data is clear: we must go further, faster. With bold action now, Scotland can lead the world in eliminating new HIV transmissions.

Recommendations

To succeed in ending new HIV transmissions in Scotland by 2030, the Scottish Government must:

- 1 Deliver on the commitment to roll out opt-out HIV testing in A&Es** in NHS Lothian and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. This commitment must be funded, with ring-fenced investment for wrap-around support for those newly diagnosed with HIV or who are re-engaged in care.
- 2 Enable PrEP access outside of sexual health clinics**, including through community pharmacies.
- 3 Fund a National HIV Testing Week** to increase testing uptake and tackle HIV stigma.
- 4 Invest in HIV support services and develop a national programme to re-engage the growing number of people lost to HIV care**, who now represent nearly 20% of Scotland's HIV-positive population.
- 5 Commit multi-year funding to build upon the success of the anti-stigma campaign** and improve HIV awareness in the health and social care sectors.

Progress Rating

We have assessed the following key commitments using the rating system:

- Significant progress
- Some progress
- Little to no progress

DELIVERY PLAN – HIGH-LEVEL GOALS	SPECIFIC ACTION	PROGRESS AGAINST ACTION
To prevent people from acquiring HIV, regardless of age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, deprivation or disability status.	Fund an ePrEP clinic pilot (Action 8).	■ Funded and underway at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.
	Explore PrEP access via primary care and pharmacies (Action 10).	■ Pilot funded in Northeast Scotland, but PrEP remains restricted to sexual health clinics.
To find people living with HIV in Scotland (some of whom are undiagnosed) and support entry or re-entry into equitable and accessible HIV care and treatment, thereby improving health and quality of life, as well as preventing onward transmission of HIV.	Review the benefit of a National HIV Testing Week (Action 3).	■ No investment: Scotland remains an outlier in the UK.
	Develop a national Online Postal Self-Sampling HIV and STI testing service (Action 13).	■ There is no national self-sampling testing service for HIV and STIs; availability depends on local health boards. Terrence Higgins Trust is funded by the Scottish Government to provide a postal HIV self-testing service.
	Fund pilots of opt-out HIV testing in A&Es (Action 17).	■ Following short pilots of opt-out HIV testing in three NHS boards, the Scottish Government has committed to rolling-out this intervention in NHS Lothian and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Further detail is now needed on funding and timescales.
To reduce stigma that makes some people less likely to access HIV prevention, testing, and treatment services and adversely affects quality of life.	Improve HIV education for health and social care staff (Action 1).	■ Waverley Care received single-year funding to develop a digital hub and educational materials.
	Launch a national HIV anti-stigma campaign (Action 2).	■ The Scottish Government funded Terrence Higgins Trust to deliver a national HIV anti-stigma campaign. This launched in autumn 2023.