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ADPH
North East



North East and
North Cumbria

NORTH EAST AND NORTH CUMBRIA ACTION ON HIV

REGIONAL HIV ACTION PLAN 2024 – 2025



DECEMBER 1, 2024

Introduction: HIV remains a significant public health challenge with far reaching impacts on individuals communities and healthcare systems. Despite advancements in treatment and prevention, new HIV infections still occur, and people living with HIV often face stigma and disparities in care. Achieving zero new HIV infections and eliminating AIDS-related deaths requires a sustained, coordinated effort across prevention, testing, treatment, and social support.

Background: In 2019, the Government set an ambitious goal to eliminate new HIV infections, AIDS, and HIV-related deaths in England by 2030. To advance this vision, 'Towards Zero – An Action Plan towards Ending HIV Transmission, AIDS, and HIV-Related Deaths in England 2022 to 2025' was launched in December 2020, establishing four main objectives:

- i. Ensure equitable access to HIV prevention programs
- ii. Expand HIV testing in accordance with national guidelines
- iii. Optimise rapid treatment access and retention in care
- iv. Enhance the quality of life for people living with HIV and address stigma

The North East and North Cumbria regional HIV Action Plan has been developed by local epidemiological data and extensive stakeholder input, including contributions from sexual health commissioners, service providers, voluntary and community sector organisations, people living with HIV, and through a regional engagement event. The HIV plan's priorities were updated after a comprehensive review of current HIV-related activities in the North East. In anticipation of a new and updated national HIV Plan beyond 2025, this plan will be reviewed in 12 months to maintain its relevance and effectiveness.

The North East and North Cumbria Regional HIV Action plan has 6 priority areas:-

1. Improve awareness of HIV prevention in North East and North Cumbria
2. Reduce barriers to HIV testing
3. Strengthen partner notification
4. Optimise rapid access to treatment and retention in care
5. Reduce HIV stigma and enhance knowledge and skills in healthcare workers (HCW) and partner organisations
6. Equip and empower people living with HIV with the skills to manage their condition and improve their quality of life

Moinitoring and Evaluation: The North East and North Cumbria HIV Action Plan will be reviewed regularly by the regional HIV steering group with progress reports to the Regional Director of Public Health and the Association of Directors of Public Health North East (ADPHNE) Network.

National Objectives	North East Action Area	Priority for Action 2024/25	Strategic Lead	Measurable Outcome
Ensure equitable access and uptake of HIV prevention programmes	Improve awareness of HIV prevention in North East and North Cumbria	Develop and implement a regional communication and awareness plan focused on HIV, including PrEP, aligned with key dates such as World AIDS Day, National HIV Testing Week, and the release of annual HIV data	Chair of HIV Prevention Subgroup / sexual health comms subgroup	- Campaigns and coverage in region for World Aids Day / HIV Testing week data - PrEP Awareness Surveys
Scale up HIV Testing in line with national guidelines	Reduce barriers to HIV testing	- Increase HIV testing outside Sexual Health Services eg drug and alcohol services - Implement the HIV ED Opt-out Testing programme within Newcastle RVI	Chair of HIV Testing Subgroup / sexual health comms subgroup	- National HIV Community Testing data report - Evaluation of Newcastle ED opt out testing
	Strengthen partner notification (PN)	- Develop shared learning opportunities with clinical teams whose work involves PN eg CPD training session - Share PN resources and develop collaboration between services in the region	Chair of HIV Treatment and Care subgroup Chair of HIV Treatment and Care subgroup	- Regional HIV Training Plan - Training evaluation report - Examples of collaborative working between teams

Optimise rapid access to treatment and retention in care	Optimise rapid access to treatment and retention in care	• Ensure equitable access to mental health / psychology support across the region • Explore models of shared delivery between services / remote access – with suitable support for digital exclusion etc • Strengthen partnership between primary and secondary care for support of HIV and non-HIV healthcare needs	Chair of HIV Treatment and Care subgroup Chair of HIV Treatment and Care subgroup Chair of HIV Treatment and Care subgroup	• Service User / Provider Survey relating to mental health support and access to psychology support • Examples of promising practice relating to information sharing and shared decision making
Improving quality of life for people living with HIV and addressing stigma	Reduce HIV stigma and enhance knowledge and skills for Healthcare Workers and partner organisations	• Support the implementation of HIV confident charter in Newcastle Healthcare Trust and selected Local Authorities across North East & North Cumbria • Develop a regional HIV Training Plan with a range of quality assured on-line and in-person training e.g., a series of ‘HIV in Focus’ CPD sessions for Social Care staff	Chair of HIV Stigma Subgroup Chair of HIV Stigma Subgroup	• Newcastle Trust signed up to HIV Confident Charter and completed an initial assessment • Training plan and evaluation reports
	Equip and empower people living with HIV with the skills to manage their condition and improve their quality of life	• Address barriers to social care access in the region by sharing care models with commissioners and service providers, supported by the strategic use of contracting levers	Chair of HIV Stigma Subgroup	Regional Directory of support services for people living with HIV is available online

		Develop an empowerment programme that includes addressing self-stigma	Chair of HIV Stigma Subgroup	Training Programme developed and promoted

Further Information on the HIV Action Plan for the North East and North Cumbria : Dawn.Phillips@ukhsa.gov.uk