



NHS
Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester World Aids Day Briefing 2025

1 December 2025



About World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day is marked on 1st December each year to raise awareness about HIV, remember those we've lost, reflect on the impact of HIV and promote efforts to prevent and treat HIV. It offers the opportunity to explore and address the challenges that remain for people and communities around HIV and to educate and inform people on the facts relating to HIV.



It also provides the opportunity to highlight the work led by partners across Greater Manchester over the last 12-months and share our plans for the year ahead.

This briefing includes some of the achievements and areas of focus for Greater Manchester. In 2025 across Greater Manchester:

- over 7,100 people are now accessing PrEP.
- there's been a decrease in the number of new HIV diagnoses.
- over 26,000 people have completed the NHS mandatory HIV stigma e-learning module rolled out across Manchester NHS Foundation Trust.
- we've expanded Emergency Department HIV [and wider blood-borne virus] opt-out testing programme to 9 sites [7 boroughs] and soon to be 10 sites [8 boroughs]. More than 500,000 people have been tested with over 1.1 million tests to date across HIV, Hepatitis C and Hepatitis B.
- we've rolled-out a programme of in-clinic HIV peer support across 9 HIV clinic sites and covering HIV care for people living in all 10-boroughs.
- delivered a programme of training and education for Primary Care including a mix of online and in-person sessions.
- we've amplified the voice of lived experience and the experiences of marginalised and diverse people and communities across all elements of HIV prevention and support in Greater Manchester.
- hosted a Fast Track Cities Conference for Greater Manchester welcoming over 100 attendees, led by The Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham.
- we've delivered over 3000 community HIV tests across Greater Manchester, 70% who had never tested before.



HIV in Greater Manchester

Last year, 6,618 residents accessed HIV treatment and care in Greater Manchester. It's estimated that around 400 people in Greater Manchester are living with HIV and unaware of their status.¹

Nearly 40% of HIV diagnoses made within the city region during 2022-2024 were made at a late stage.² This is important, because late diagnosis substantially increases the impact of HIV on people's health, the risk of onward transmission and the impact on the NHS.

Whilst Gay, Bisexual and all men who have sex with men had a much lower late diagnosis rate of 27%,³ 56% of heterosexual men were diagnosed at a late stage.

Late diagnoses mean we must work together to tackle the stigma that exists around HIV and HIV testing. The importance of the issue of people remaining undiagnosed or diagnosed at a late stage within Greater Manchester was highlighted by a letter from the Coroner in January 2025, highlighting the avoidable deaths of 4 people due to HIV being diagnosed at a late stage, with missed opportunities for testing within healthcare services prior to diagnosis. This has led to continued work to expand HIV testing within both primary care and non-emergency hospital settings and a focus on tackling HIV stigma wherever it exists.

"The expansion in Blood Borne Virus testing within Emergency Departments, PrEP provision and Peer Support within Greater Manchester in the last 12 months has been fantastic, as has the ongoing support for HIV-related stigma training. There is still work to do to reduce late diagnosis and improve the quality of life

of those living with HIV. We can only do this by working together, now also with our colleagues in Hepatitis and TB services meaning that Greater Manchester Fast Track Cities can benefit a wider population."

Doctor Orla McQuillan,
Consultant in HIV and Sexual Health at Manchester Foundation Trust and Co-Chair of Fast Track Cities Greater Manchester.

HIV is a health inequalities issue

HIV in Greater Manchester continues to disproportionately impact Black African men and women, gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men. The data also highlight that there are continued disparities in progress on HIV between different groups.

While there's been a fall in HIV transmissions among gay and bisexual men in recent years, diagnoses appear to be increasing amongst some groups, suggesting ongoing transmissions.

Late diagnoses are also more common in people over the age of 50, men exposed through sex with women and people of Black and Asian ethnicity.

In 2024, 63% of new HIV diagnoses in the city region had a probable route of exposure of sex between men and women (59% of these in men and 41% in women). and 29% by sex between men.

It is important for us to talk about HIV in all conversations about health with key identified groups.

¹ Estimation of 5% undiagnosed from UKHSA. Diagnosed Prevalence from [Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)

² [Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)

³ [Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)

What is Fast Track Cities Greater Manchester?

Greater Manchester became part of the global **Fast Track Cities** initiative in 2018, joining more than 400 cities committed to ending new HIV transmissions and eliminating HIV-related stigma by 2030. The commitment was signed by The Mayor of Greater Manchester and all 10 local authority leaders.

Fast Track Cities Greater Manchester is a coalition of the willing, with lived experience at its heart. Co-Chaired by Doctor Orla McQuillan [Consultant in HIV and Sexual Health at Manchester Foundation Trust] and Darren Knight [Chief Executive of George House Trust], it brings together Greater Manchester's Passionate about Sexual Health [PaSH] Partnership, voluntary sector partners, the NHS, local authorities, public health teams, grass roots organisations and people living with HIV.

The global Fast Track Cities movement has at its core the commitment to the 95-95-95 targets. These targets mean that 95% of people are diagnosed with HIV, 95% of them are on effective treatment and 95% of them have an undetectable viral load, meaning they can't pass HIV on. In Greater Manchester, we're currently performing well against those targets:

- 95% of people living with HIV know their status.
- 99% of people accessing HIV care are on Antiretroviral therapy (ART).
- 97% of those engaged in effective treatment have an undetectable viral load (Undetectable =Untransmittable).

Furthermore, there has been a 63% reduction in the number of new HIV diagnoses in Greater Manchester between 2014 and 2024.⁴

⁴ Sexual and Reproductive Health Profiles | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care

What we've been doing: Emergency Department Opt-out HIV and Blood Borne Virus Testing

Emergency Department Blood Borne Virus [BBV] Testing continues to be an incredibly successful programme which was expanded to include five additional areas within Greater Manchester in the last 12 months, with 7 (soon to be 8) out of 10 Greater Manchester boroughs now having a local offer.

Opt-out testing for HIV and Hepatitis C in Emergency departments commenced in Manchester in December 2021 starting in Manchester Royal Infirmary followed by Wythenshawe March 2022 and North Manchester General Hospital in September 2022 with testing for Hepatitis B included from July 2024. Salford Royal Emergency Department began opt-out testing for HIV and Hepatitis C in October 2023 and Bolton, Tameside, Oldham, Bury and Rochdale all commenced testing for HIV, Hepatitis C and Hepatitis B in March 2025

This work has been key to normalising HIV testing and reducing health inequalities and led to an expansion of the George House Trust Peer Navigators programme [people living with HIV providing advice, support and information in clinic] across Greater Manchester.

Since Greater Manchester started testing in Emergency Departments in 2021, more than 1.1 million tests have been done.

- 9 Emergency Departments, covering 7 Greater Manchester Local Authorities.

- over 170 people have been newly diagnosed with HIV, 75 people already living with HIV not in care have been linked to care.
- 470 new Hepatitis B diagnoses with 131 previously diagnosed but not in care.
- 525 new Hepatitis C diagnoses, 88 previously diagnosed not in care.

Tackling HIV stigma in Greater Manchester

Manchester Foundation Trust remains the only hospital trust in the UK to have mandated HIV stigma training across its workforce, and over 26,000 members of staff have completed this. Manchester Foundation Trust have achieved HIV Confident status. Northern Care Alliance partnered with MFT and George House Trust to roll-out the mandatory course to their staff in Emergency and Urgent Care, Surgery, Maternity and Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

George House Trust's Positive Speakers continues to build the voice of lived experience in educating the workforce across health, care, education and wider sectors to use that voice and experience to tackle HIV stigma.

BHA for Equality, George House Trust and LGBT Foundation have been working with clinicians on tackling HIV stigma in primary care and other health and care settings through a programme of workforce training.

HIV Prevention

Through the PaSH Partnership, BHA for Equality and the LGBT Foundation have been instrumental in expanding HIV prevention across Greater Manchester, reaching people who don't ordinarily

engage with sexual health services, scaling and accelerating programmes that bring prevention directly to communities. Over the last year, they performed over 3,000 community HIV tests, successfully reaching ethnic minoritised and LGBTQ people, with 70% being first-time testers and distributed over 65,000 condoms.

In response to rising inequalities, BHA for Equality have directly engaged with over 4,500 people from ethnic minoritised communities providing testing, training and group sessions, demonstrating the breadth and depth of community engagement and translated HIV prevention resources into 12 community languages.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a preventative drug that is highly effective in preventing HIV transmission, is available from Sexual Health services across Greater Manchester. In 2024, 7,100 residents of Greater Manchester started or continued PrEP, a 30% increase on 2023. The offer across Greater Manchester has been expanded to include community and primary care PrEP, through community venues and supported primary care services in association with Manchester NHS Foundation Trust (MFT).

Partners have delivered a range of targeted information campaigns about testing and stigma throughout the year on key dates such as testing week; reaching thousands of people through online engagement, community engagement and community testing events.

Supporting people to live well with HIV

George House Trust has been working with clinical and community partners across Greater Manchester to expand the offer for people living with HIV.

Increasing capacity in the Intensive Support programme which provides support to the most vulnerable people living with HIV, has prevented disengagement from care and improved health outcomes. Widening peer-led support, which builds lived experience at the heart of the in-clinic and in-community support package has meant that George House Trust has connected with over 3,000 people living with HIV and provided one-to-one advice, support and guidance to over 1,100 people through targeted support, counselling, group work and peer-led support over the past 12-months.

Looking forward

Key priorities for partners across Greater Manchester over the next 12-months include:

- embedding the new national HIV Action Plan [to be launched 1st December 2025] into local approaches.
- working to explore options for raising awareness of HIV and testing in Primary Care and other settings.
- increasing access to PrEP for everyone who needs it.
- continuing the delivery of Peer Support across HIV clinics.
- a 'ramping up' of HIV stigma work in all settings, including online, in-person and community-led approaches.
- maintaining the current programme of work and building on the success and impact of Greater Manchester's partnership approach.

"Greater Manchester has been working so hard to tackle HIV stigma, increase access to testing for everyone and ensure that people living with HIV have the best care and support and seeing partners coming together to achieve this is fantastic, but there's still work to be done. I'm really excited about the new upcoming HIV Action Plan and how we're going to breathe life into that in

Greater Manchester and continue our focus on increasing opportunities to test, tackling HIV stigma and making life better for everyone living with HIV."

Darren Knight,
Chief Executive of George House Trust and Co-Chair of Fast Track Cities Greater Manchester

Show your support

There are many ways to raise awareness of HIV, from showcasing the impact of the work included in this briefing, to booking a Positive Speaker session for your work place. Even simple acts of solidarity and activism like wearing your red ribbon helps challenge HIV stigma and raise awareness.

You can also attend the annual World AIDS Day Vigil which will be held in Sackville Gardens in Manchester on Monday 1st December 2024 at 6pm, hosted by BHA for Equality, George House Trust and LGBT Foundation.

There are so many examples of work being led by Fast Track Cities Greater Manchester, if you'd like to find out more and how you can be involved, email darren@ght.org.uk.

Partners involved

The Greater Manchester HIV response is a true partnership. Through the Fast Track Cities Partnership, colleagues working in the NHS, Public Health, Local Authorities and the Voluntary and Community Sector have worked together with people with lived experience to ensure that more people know their HIV status, access the treatment and care that they need and can live well.

Thanks to everyone for their continued support.




World AIDS Day
1st December

World AIDS Day Vigil
1st December

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