

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL
Wednesday 12 September 2018

1. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD
Re: PREP Trial

Following the loss of the High Court case is there a trial of PREP in the DCC area?

If so, are there any preliminary indicators on prevention and treatment rates?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, is a way for people who do not have HIV, but who are at substantial risk of HIV infection to reduce their risk of acquiring HIV. This involves taking the PrEP drug as instructed, prior to any exposures that might put the individual at high risk of getting HIV.

The single-tablet PrEP drug contains two medicines. When someone is exposed to HIV through sex or injection drug use, these medicines can work to keep the virus from establishing a permanent infection. The results of the PrOUD trial in England, released in 2015, indicated that the risk of HIV infection was reduced by 86% in those taking PrEP.

The PrEP Impact Trial was announced by NHS England and Public Health England in December 2016. The allocation of trial places commenced nationally in September 2017 and was rolled out to sexual health clinics such as Devon, in early 2018. It is planned to last three years, enrol 10,000 participants and measure how many participants at high risk of acquiring HIV will take up the offer of PrEP:

- men who have sex with men (MSM);
- trans men and trans women;
- HIV-negative partners of individuals diagnosed with HIV who are not known to be virally suppressed;
- heterosexual people who are considered to be at high risk of HIV acquisition.

The re-allocation of places has occurred twice since the start of the trial. In the Devon County Council area, the lead sexual health service provider Northern Devon Healthcare Trust has recruited participants to 56 of the available 60 trial places, who meet the eligibility criteria at 2.1. It is too early to comment on the impact of the PrEP trial. Public Health England data from sexual health centres in London in 2015/16, reported a significant reduction in new HIV infections, amongst men who have sex with men, attributed to frequent testing; early treatment and significant numbers of men who have sex with men using PrEP.

Public health was notified this week that NHS England have made a further 3000 places available nationally for the PrEP Impact trial. These will be distributed nationally across all the registered clinic trial centres and will result in some additional recruitment to the trial in both the Exeter and North Devon clinical sites.

Access to PrEP outside of the PrEP trial - Truvada, the PrEP medication is currently protected by a patent in the UK (the NHS and UK pharmacies should normally use Truvada rather than generic versions that are cheaper). It is legal to buy generic PrEP online, sourced from outside the EU, so long as this is for personal use. Currently, the cost of Truvada is approximately £400 per month compared to a generic version at a monthly cost of about £45.00. The quoted costs are based on a daily PrEP (1 pill per day) routine.

The concern about purchasing generic medication online is offset by the reported experience of people buying PrEP drugs through websites listed on <https://www.iwantprepnw.co.uk/>, where some drug preparations have been tested for clinical reliability.

2. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR HANNAFORD
Re: HIV and AIDS figures and trends

What are the overall HIV and AIDS figures and trends for the DCC area?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

The data below for HIV prevalence and newly diagnosed infections for residents in the Devon County Council area, is compiled from a report of those individuals aged between 15 and 59, accessing NHS treatment services.

- The rate of newly diagnosed infections has marginally reduced in keeping with national trends and is lower than both the Southwest and England rate.
- The HIV diagnosed prevalence rate has remained the same for the last three years and continues to remain lower than both the Southwest and England rate.

Devon County Council

	Rate						Numbers (numerator)					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
New HIV diagnosis rate per 100,000 aged 15+	4.7	4.7	3.4	3.7	3.4	3.2	30	30	22	24	22	21
HIV diagnosed prevalence rate per 1,000 aged 15-59	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	278	278	300	326	332	347

This information should be interpreted with caution as the national indicator excludes those above the age of 60. We are working with Public Health England to review this indicator and consider parameters that more accurately reflect the local demographic for retirement destinations such as Devon.