

World AIDS Day 2025

World AIDS Day takes place on 1 December each year. It's an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, to show support for people living with HIV, and to commemorate those who have died from an AIDS-related illness.

This year for World AIDS Day we want to challenge HIV stigma by raising awareness about testing prevention.

Below are some key messages for you to use and share with your colleagues and clients:

Preventing HIV

- Safer sex- The best way to reduce your risk of STIs, including HIV, is to practice [safer sex](#). This means using a [condom](#) for vaginal, anal and oral sex. If you're having anal sex it's important to also use water-based or silicon-based lubricant. Find free condom distributors in Grampian here: <https://www.grampiansexualhealthservices.com/free-condoms/>
- U=U- If someone is on effective treatment their viral load becomes undetectable and they can't pass it on.
- Pre Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)- medication that can be taken to prevent becoming infected before exposure to HIV. <https://www.nhsinform.scot/hiv-prep-pre-exposure-prophylaxis/>
- Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)- medication that can be taken to prevent becoming infected after exposure to HIV. <https://www.grampiansexualhealthservices.com/pep-post-exposure-prophylaxis-for-hiv/>
- If you inject drugs, you should never share needles or other injecting equipment (including syringes, spoons and swabs). You can get free clean needles and other injecting equipment from your local injecting equipment providers, which are sometimes also called [needle exchanges](#).
- Go to a licensed practitioner if you are getting a tattoo, piercing or any other procedure involving skin piercing

Testing

Have you ever been tested for HIV?

Did you know that it is estimated that 9% of people living with HIV in Scotland don't know they have it? Most people with HIV don't have any symptoms and people can live with the virus for many years before it eventually affects their immune system. Remember that testing and treatment is free and confidential.

- You can get a test for HIV from your GP or local Sexual Health Service. For information about testing visit <https://www.grampiansexualhealthservices.com/blood-borne-viruses-bbvs/>
- NHS Grampian is the first board in Scotland to introduce opt out testing for blood borne viruses (BBVs- HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C) in our Emergency Department. This means that anyone coming into the ED who needs a blood test will be tested for BBVs in

addition to their other blood tests, unless they opt out. Early detection of Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV can be lifesaving, as they are treatable - but if left undiagnosed they can lead to serious illness and death.

- You can order a free blood borne virus testing kit to be sent to your home:
Email gram.bbvpostaltesting@nhs.scot
Or call 08085 202030 and ask for a kit to be sent to you.

For more information, support, how to prevent HIV transmission and where to get tested visit:

NHS Grampian Sexual Health Service:

<https://www.grampiansexualhealthservices.com/>

Local patient forum and peer support services for people living with or affected by HIV;

Our Positive Voice (Grampian) <https://ourpositivevoice.org>

Four Pillars- Positive Peers <https://www.fourpillarsuk.org/groups/#positivepeers>

Posters and resources

<https://www.hpac.durham.gov.uk/HPAC/HPACIndex.jsp?sitename=www.nhsghpcat.org>

HIV stigma and awareness raising training

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/Scorm/Launch/81885>

<https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/search/searchresults?searchterm=HIV&relationrootnode=Sexual+health+and+blood+borme+viruses>

HIV Informed Microsite

<https://hiv-informed.scot/>