



# The Association of Directors of Public Health

## Statement on the provision of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)

### Directors of Public Health concerned at NHS England actions on HIV treatment as prevention

The Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) expresses grave concern at recent announcements from NHS England on HIV treatment as prevention. Both Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post-exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) are proven, cost-effective interventions to prevent HIV infection. As part of NHS England's "radical upgrade in prevention" ADPH would like to see wider access to both PrEP and PEP.

Commissioning guidance has always been clear that the responsibility for anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) rests with NHS England, including PrEP and PEP. This is part of a wider programme of prevention for HIV led by Directors of Public Health in local authorities. It is concerning that this comprehensive prevention effort is being weakened by NHS England decisions.

Both the UK PROUD trial of daily PrEP and the French IPERGAY trial of on-demand PrEP showed a high degree of protection (86%). Based on the lifetime costs of HIV treatment, implementation of an HIV-PrEP policy for high-risk men who have sex with men in England would be cost effective and in some models has been shown to be cost saving. An estimated 8,000 people in England could benefit from PrEP. NHS England's announcement that only 500 people will receive PrEP over the next two years is very disappointing. ADPH would like to see more benefit from this intervention which is amongst the most effective prevention tools available for people at high risk of HIV acquisition.

ADPH is also concerned that NHS England is restricting access to PEP. Correspondence from NHS England to local authority commissioners makes it clear that they will only commission PEP within specialist sexual assault referral services, HIV treatment services or NHS Accident and Emergency departments. NHS England have said they will not reimburse other providers, for example those commissioned by local authorities, to provide integrated sexual health services. Such a policy does not seem in the best interests of service users who are at a risk of HIV or designed to maximise the opportunities to prevent HIV transmission.

ADPH is calling for NHS England to commission a national programme for PrEP and for their commissioning of PEP to include the open access sexual health services commissioned by local authorities.

Dr Andrew Furber, President of ADPH, said:

*"It is deeply disappointing that NHS England are restricting access to treatments which are proven to reduce HIV transmission. The human cost of HIV infection is considerable, but with lifetime treatment costs of HIV to the NHS and social care in excess of £350,000, saving money on prevention is a false economy."*

**ENDS**

### Further information

The Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) is a Company Limited by guarantee with charity status registered in England and Wales and is the representative body for Directors of Public Health (DsPH) in the UK. The Association



is hosted by the UK Health Forum.

It seeks to improve and protect the health of the population through collating and presenting the views of DsPH; advising on public health policy and legislation at a local, regional, national and international level; facilitating a support network for DsPH; and providing opportunities for DsPH to develop professional practice.

The Association has a rich heritage, its origins dating back more than 150 years. It is a collaborative organisation working in partnership with others to maximise the voice for public health.

[www.adph.org.uk](http://www.adph.org.uk)

**Association of Directors of Public Health**

**March 2016**