



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

*From the Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care*

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18 December 2020

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your letter of 10 December about ending new HIV transmissions in England by 2030.

I am pleased to be able to reaffirm the Government's commitment to reaching zero new HIV transmissions in England by 2030 and would like to thank you for your offer to work with us to deliver this important goal.

As a first step towards our 2030 ambition, the Department endorsed the independent HIV Commission in 2019, which was led by Terrance Higgins Trust, National AIDS Trust and Elton John AIDS Foundation, to consider how zero new HIV transmissions might be achieved. I am, therefore, delighted to welcome publication of the HIV Commission's report and would like to thank Steve Brine MP and Wes Streeting MP for their work as Commissioners. We will give its recommendations careful consideration as we develop our new sexual and reproductive health strategy and HIV Action Plan, which will be published in 2021, and will outline our plans to achieve the 2030 commitment. We will then update Parliament annually on progress and agree this is an important step to ensure effective scrutiny and monitoring arrangements are in place.

Meanwhile, good progress continues to be made. In 2019, the UK met the UNAIDS 90-90-90 target for the third consecutive year with 94% of people living with HIV being diagnosed, 98% of those diagnosed being on treatment and 97% of those on treatment having an undetectable viral load. This inspiring achievement would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the professionals working in our health and care services and voluntary sector.

As you are aware, this year we provided £11million ring-fenced funding to local authorities for routine commissioning of PrEP. Routine commissioning is now in place in many areas with anecdotal evidence collected by PHE showing that as of week commencing 14 December around 80% of potential sites across England were delivering routinely commissioned PrEP. This is particularly welcome progress given the ongoing demands placed on local Government and sexual health services in managing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Of course there is more to do to. For example, the sharp decline in new HIV diagnoses among gay and bisexual men in recent years is very welcome, but we need to achieve declining new HIV diagnosis across all demographic groups if we are to meet our commitment of zero new HIV transmissions in England by 2030. This, and the settings in which PrEP should be made available outside of sexual health services, will be two of the

issues considered as part of our upcoming work to develop the sexual and reproductive health strategy and HIV Action Plan.

Finally, I would like to thank you again for your support. It is really welcome to see such strong cross party support for our work here. Ending new HIV transmissions in England is not a goal the Department, or even the Government, can achieve on its own and I look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve our shared goal of zero new HIV transmission in England by 2030

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

**MATT HANCOCK**