

HIV pilot - Ensuring comprehensive HIV screening in emergency departments (EDs) across South London

With the exception of the PRUH, all hospitals in south London in high or extremely high prevalence areas offer opt-out HIV ED testing.

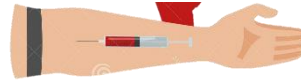


Cases identified in South London EDs:

- At KCH, the oldest patient identified through ED testing was 95.
- At GSTT, a significant number of patients testing positive in ED have primary infection (20%) with very high viral loads.
- At SGUH, an HIV diagnosis was suspected in only 11 (22%) of the subsequently 50 positive cases.
- At Croydon, newly diagnosed HIV-positive patients now need shorter hospital stays, from an average of 34.9 days down to only 2.4 days.



2. Opt-out HIV tests are offered to those who need blood tests (c.300,000 people).



5. If a test is reactive, the patient is invited for further tests by the sexual health service.



7. On appropriate treatment, patients with HIV can expect to live as long as someone without HIV. Those with undetectable viral loads cannot pass HIV onto anyone else, even in unprotected sex. Clinicians try to re-engage patients lost to follow-up.

The process of HIV screening in EDs

1. Over 1 million people attend Emergency Departments* in South London every year.



3. The level of uptake of HIV tests varies across South London, from 34% - 98%.

This variation across South London means that not all patients who have HIV are being identified. This is due to key factors such as the age of those tested, the length of time before re-testing repeat ED attendees, and general operationalisation of the screening strategy.

This pilot aims to address this through 'levelling up' across south London, supported by a minimum service specification.

What happens next



4. One sample and blood bottle can be used for both the blood tests and the HIV test, meaning the additional costs are largely lab-associated.

There is variation in lab costs across South London, with costs ranging from £2.50 to £5.55 per test. Some trusts use 2 blood bottles.



6. Newly diagnosed patients are brought into care and put on treatment. Early detection is vital to reduce HIV/AIDS related complications.

~150 patients are newly diagnosed with HIV in EDs in South London every year. Each person living with HIV newly linked to care could avoid NHS costs of over £200,000.

"Making a diagnosis of HIV today does mean spending money on the treatment tomorrow; missing a diagnosis today means greater treatment costs in years to come (and not just for one patient, but for anyone else before or after them in the chain of transmission)."

Uptake

