



HIV GP Champions

Leading primary care's role in ending new HIV transmissions in London

The GP Champions Pilot Project launched in January 2024 as part of Fast-Track Cities London's mission to achieve zero new HIV transmissions, zero AIDS-related deaths and zero HIV stigma by 2030.

The aim was to work collaboratively between all care settings to support people living with HIV, reducing obstacles to treatment and care, improving health and quality of life:

- Tackle HIV-related stigma in primary care
- Improve HIV awareness and testing
- Promote uptake of statins among people living with HIV aged 40+ (aligned with British HIV Association guidance)
- Strengthen links between primary, secondary and community care

15 months

Project support and small grants awarded for targeted projects in addition to the agreed work programme

An oversight group met bi-monthly, the GP Champions met monthly with Dr Noonan, Deputy Medical Director, NHS England London and the programme team which reported to the Fast-Track Cities London Leadership group quarterly.

Evaluation

King's College London has completed a qualitative evaluation, interviewing 19 participants, including GP Champions, HIV consultants and project managers. Key findings included:

- GP-led flexibility encouraged local innovation
- HIV testing, education and statin uptake showed strong results
- Relationships between GPs and HIV consultants were essential to success
- Systemic issues limited impact – such as lack of protected time for HIV consultants
- Future success requires better data tracking and closer ICS alignment

Primary care has a vital role...

identifying, supporting and sustaining care for people living with HIV – who can face stigma, missed testing opportunities or disconnected care across services. The GP Champions initiative addressed this by placing 16 GP Champions across London's five integrated care systems (ICS) to work alongside HIV consultants and voluntary and community organisations to lead change from within primary care.

“We need to reframe HIV as a long-term condition. That's how it will be normalised in general practice.”
– GP Champion

Results at a glance

- 29% increase in HIV testing in southwest London (from 7,910 in 2023 to 10,232 in 2024)
- Over 2,025 London primary care professionals trained on stigma and testing
- One-third of eligible patients offered statins through GP-led initiatives in Islington
- 56% increase in statin prescribing in City and Hackney
- 100s people living with HIV re-engaged in HIV care with insights from dashboards and audits

Impact and insights

The London HIV GP Champions Pilot has shown what is possible when leadership, collaboration and innovation meet at the frontlines of healthcare. From January 2024 to March 2025, 16 GP Champions across London's ICS embedded HIV-focused care in primary care, improving testing, reducing stigma and supporting people living with HIV.



Improving HIV testing and early diagnosis

- Routine opt-out HIV testing in GP clinics for vulnerable patients, mental health reviews, and community gynaecology clinics; through clinician training, EMIS alerts, and communication materials.
- Supported point-of-care testing events – for example, over 500 men were tested for HIV in homeless health services in northeast London.
- Advocated for testing across services, including cancer, colposcopy, harm reduction hub and substance misuse services.

HIV testing in southwest London increased by one-third from 7,910 HIV tests in 2023 to 10,232 tests in 2024

Pop-up alerts appeared in Lambeth, Southwark, and Lewisham during national HIV testing week when GPs were ordering patient's blood tests, prompting them about opt-out testing.

This matched with a spike in HIV tests from the baseline of 4% to 13.5%. It has gradually declined but remains above the original baseline performance.



Strengthening primary-secondary communications

- Established and reinforced regular multidisciplinary team and joint planning with secondary care teams – for example, with Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust and Barts Health NHS Trust (including Royal London Hospital).
- Addressed system-level communication gaps by improving EMIS access, redesigned secondary care letters and shared audits.
- Launched shared care pilots to streamline support for people living with HIV and facilitate coordinated care – for example, with Homerton Hospital.

“We've built better relationships with secondary care and removed barriers to good HIV care.” – GP Champion



During this time, at least 3 people living with HIV were identified.

“A lot of people didn't know who we were at first. Now, HIV clinicians reach out to us. That's a big shift.”
– GP Champion



Enhancing engagement with voluntary, community and social organisations

- Partnerships with key voluntary and community organisations to jointly deliver training and outreach – for example, Positive East, Terrence Higgins Trust, Metro.
- Facilitated peer involvement in educational events and patient support proposals – such as planned peer support group in Bromley.
- Promoted inclusion and community outreach via events like Guildhall Freshers Fair, UK Black Pride, Preventative Health Day for Latin Americans, Spanish and Portuguese speaking communities in southeast London.



Advancing preventative care – particularly statins and cardiovascular health

- Standard operating procedures for HIV-specific statins and alerts across ICS areas, supported by local pharmacist training, increased statins prescriptions for people living with HIV over 40 – for example, City and Hackney grew by 56%.
- Engaged GP registrars and primary care networks in quality improvement and personalisation for statins, improving prescribing in line with [BHIVA guidelines](#).
- Collaborated with cardiovascular leads, pharmacy groups and tech providers to embed HIV-informed cardiovascular care in primary care pathways.
- Dashboard for HIV as a long term condition, with specific metrics for people living with HIV, such as immunisation, statins, cervical screening and osteoporosis.

Seven practices in Islington, offered statins to 150 people living with HIV – one-third of those eligible successfully began treatment



Engagement and re-engagement in HIV care

- 'Lost to follow-up' audits and dashboard tools introduced in some boroughs, including Camden, Islington and Bromley.
- Partnered with UKHSA and GP surgeries to identify and re-engage patients lost to care.
- Developed innovative approaches to support vulnerable groups, including those sofa surfing or with undocumented status.

100s of people from marginalised and vulnerable groups were audited to check if anyone was lost to follow-up from HIV treatment and care



Tackling stigma

- 2,025 primary care professionals attended London stigma-focused teaching sessions.
- A southwest London GP trialled a new way to engage busy colleagues in education training by producing podcasts.
- Engaged professionals and communities on stigma and testing during awareness events including National HIV Testing Week, UK Black Pride and World AIDS Day.
- Integrated HIV and sexual health content into mainstream GP education platforms – such as Red Whale, training hubs, social prescriber webinars.

Trainees in North Central London...

82%
felt more confident discussing HIV testing

78%
committed to improving testing practices

100%
said they had learned more about HIV



London HIV GP Champions Pilot Project Service Evaluation

Final Report

King's College London

Fraser, A. & Baeza, J. I. (2025)

Download the full report at:

fasttrackcities.london/HIVGPChampions-Evaluation-Report-2025

Independent evaluation: recommendations

The evaluation offers five clear recommendations to sustain and build on the success of London's HIV GP Champions model:

- 1 Extend and sustain the programme beyond the pilot to maintain momentum**
- 2 Fund HIV consultant involvement to reflect their vital role in the model**
- 3 Develop shared metrics to track progress while allowing for local flexibility**
- 4 Provide local incentives to support GP practice-level engagement**
- 5 Reframe HIV as a long-term condition, enabling better integration into routine care**

These insights offer a roadmap for system leaders, ICSs and commissioners to embed HIV care in general practice and continue progress toward London's goals of getting to zero by 2030.

A model for the future

The HIV GP Champions network established as part of this work consisted of 16 GP champions spread across the five London integrated care systems, working closely with a HIV consultant in each ICS area and voluntary and community partners.

The GP Champions model is funded through 2026; however its long-term value lies in embedding HIV in everyday care, where stigma can be tackled, earlier diagnoses made and lives improved.

“This holistic approach has improved HIV care by integrating treatment in a way which we hope will be replicated across other parts of the country.”

– Professor Yvonne Gilleece, Chair, BHIVA



Three of the 16 GP Champions shared their insights and the potential for achieving impact at the BHIVA Spring Conference 2025 in two inspirational sessions: 'Getting the Job Done' and a second focusing on addressing health inequalities and unmet healthcare needs.

Activities and partnerships



Monthly peer-learning & oversight groups



Pop-up testing & opt-out alerts in EMIS systems



Education & training across primary care



Collaboration with HIV consultants & community organisations