

# TOGETHER WE CAN

terrence  
HIGGINS  
TRUST



# Together We Can

**Our strategy 2022-25**



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# Chair's introduction

**This year will mark 40 years since the death of Terry Higgins and the formation of Terrence Higgins Trust, the first charity in the UK to be set up in response to the HIV epidemic. We have been at the forefront of the fight against HIV and AIDS, and the promotion of good sexual health ever since.**

Throughout our history, we have adapted to the changing world around us to ensure we are delivering the support people need and campaigning on the issues that really matter. From the first AIDS activism in the UK to our work in tackling sexual health inequalities and preventing new cases of HIV, we have always been a radical and ambitious force. Our strategy for the future embraces this spirit.

We know that ending new cases of HIV in the UK is within our grasp and we will continue to work in partnership with others to make this a reality. We will increase our work internationally, sharing what we have learned with global partners to help drive down transmission.

We will continue to be there for people living with HIV – offering the support they need, continuing to fight stigma, and campaigning for the right to live well with HIV.



We will expand our ambition around sexual and reproductive health; promoting good sexual health for all and being unashamedly sex positive.

The coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated many of the inequalities faced by some communities. It has also shown what we can achieve when we work in partnership and collaborate – which remains critical to the delivery of our strategy.

**It is an exciting and historic time. We will do everything in our power to end new cases of HIV by 2030.**

Equity, diversity and inclusion are key strands that run throughout our new strategy. We will work with a renewed vision to become a truly anti-racist, anti-sexist and inclusive organisation that challenges systemic health inequalities. To meet the needs of the communities we serve, we will ensure that our leadership and staff team reflect those communities. To keep us on track, we will set very clear targets and milestones so that we can see what we are changing.

As a charity, we have never shied away from challenging government to do more around HIV and sexual health, and we won't stop now. We will continue our campaigning, working directly with affected communities to make sure their voices are heard.

We will ensure we are delivering safe and empowering services to the highest standard; protecting and safeguarding service users, and helping people to have the right tools to make the right choices for themselves.

Co-production is vital to us, and working together with our service users, volunteers and donors ensures that our work is shaped by the communities we serve.

During these very challenging times, we have shown considerable resilience as we work to ensure sustainability. We will work to ensure that the charity remains financially resilient in a post-COVID world and that we grow our income to deliver this strategy. We will strive to drive down our impact on the environment, and become more sustainable.

Over the life of this strategy, we anticipate and welcome change. We will continue to reflect as we go and always ensure we keep adapting to the needs of our existing, new, and potential service users every step of the way.

The progress made so far has only been through the dedication and generosity of supporters across many years, and for that we are truly grateful. We ask once more for your help, to make the ambitions in this strategy a reality.

It is an exciting and historic time. We will do everything in our power to end new cases of HIV by 2030. We will ensure those living with HIV are supported. We will create change to improve sexual and reproductive health services.

We have much to do, but we cannot do it alone. Together we can.

**Jonathan McShane**  
**Chair of Trustees**



# How we will deliver our strategy

## Equity, diversity and inclusion

We will honour our deep commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, by playing an active role in tackling racism and other forms of discrimination. This is critical to improving outcomes for our service users and to respecting and supporting our colleagues.

## Delivering safe and empowering services

All our work is done to the highest standard, protecting and safeguarding service users, and helping people to have the right tools to make the right choices for themselves.

## Co-production

We work together with our services users, volunteers, donors and commissioners as strategic partners to develop our work collaboratively.

## Partnerships

We never work in isolation, but embrace partnerships across the HIV, sexual and reproductive health sectors and beyond to do the best for our beneficiaries, volunteers and donors. We will be a generous leader working in collaboration across the sector to impact positively upon society.

## Our supporters

We are taking the time to understand our supporters, giving them the ways to engage and make a difference that suit them, never forgetting their commitment in the past and to our goals for the future.

## Financial resilience

We will use our financial resources wisely whilst growing our income to ensure that we can deliver our strategy.

## Activism

We remain at heart an organisation of activists who are impatient for change. As we celebrate 40 years of activism we will renew that spirit.

## Our people

We will work in partnership with staff and volunteers to ensure that they have the tools available to make a difference, that they are enabled to reach their potential, are recognised and supported for their work and share in decision-making.





# Our vision and mission




## Our vision

We strive for a future where there are no new cases of HIV, where people living with HIV get the support they need and there is good sexual health for all.

## Our mission

- There are no new HIV cases.
- People living with HIV get the support they need.
- Everyone can access good quality sexual and reproductive health services and information tailored to their individual needs.
- HIV and sexual and reproductive health are free from shame and stigma.
- Everyone in our organisation respects and values diversity, creating an environment that is inclusive of all, and by working in partnership with others we reduce inequalities in sexual health.





Every week around 60 people are diagnosed with HIV and have to learn to cope with the impact this has on their lives. But with the advent of effective treatment (as prevention), testing, PrEP/PEP and condoms, it doesn't have to be this way.

# How we will deliver our mission

Over the next three years, we will continue our service delivery, campaigning, public awareness and health promotion work in partnership with others.

We will work together with our communities, service users, staff, partners and supporters to drive change and deliver our vision.

## There are no new HIV cases

Every week around 60 people are diagnosed with HIV and have to learn to cope with the impact this has on their lives. But with the advent of effective treatment (as prevention), testing, PrEP/PEP and condoms, it doesn't have to be this way.

In 2020, we worked with our partners at National AIDS Trust and Elton John AIDS Foundation to initiate a multi-stakeholder

HIV Commission for England, working to identify what needs to be done to ensure that there are no new HIV cases in the UK by 2030. It went above and beyond, providing a road map for the UK to be the first country in the world to meet this ambition. We are committed to seeing this plan delivered, as well as looking to what we can do globally to drive down new HIV cases.

### 30

- We will challenge all UK governments to have ambitious HIV prevention action plans which are properly funded and actively implemented, making sure no communities are left behind.
- We will deliver public awareness campaigns which raise the importance of HIV testing and HIV prevention strategies including PrEP, condoms and treatment as prevention (U=U).
- We will provide HIV tests, free to those who need them, with specific targeting to underserved and marginalised communities disproportionately impacted by HIV.
- We will champion innovations in HIV testing and prevention, learning from others and sharing our knowledge.
- We will work to better understand the needs of the communities who need us most.

### We'll play our part internationally

- We will explore how to use what we have learnt to assist in driving down new HIV transmissions globally, collaborating with international organisations and global partners with a particular focus on U=U/"Can't Pass It On".
- We will pilot specific work where opportunities arise aligned to this strategy, focussing on those most in need.





**We are here for anyone concerned by, or living with HIV, whenever they need us. We are here to help everyone living with HIV to thrive.**

## People living with HIV get the support they need

For many people, living with HIV does not cause many issues in their day-to-day lives. However, for others, particularly people who have been long-term diagnosed, daily life can be a struggle. People living with HIV are around twice as likely to have issues with their mental health, and 1 in 3 live in poverty compared to 1 in 5 in the general population. People who are newly diagnosed often need support around

coming to terms with their diagnosis and getting used to their treatments. Many others are concerned about their risk of HIV, and need vital information and access to prevention tools.

We are here for anyone concerned by, or living with HIV, whenever they need us. We are here to help everyone living with HIV to thrive.

- We will expand THT Direct to act as a gateway point for people who need support or information about living with HIV.
- We will deliver high quality information on HIV, delivered across a range of platforms.
- We will grow our offer to provide a greater level of tailored support for those with more complex and immediate needs. This could include people who are at risk of being diagnosed late; people from marginalised communities; those who are growing older with HIV; chemsex users.
- We will continue to deliver appropriate peer support.
- We will continue to provide grants for people who are experiencing financial hardship.
- We will work in partnership with the NHS and wider social care to provide tailored, community-based HIV services.
- We will work to influence governments to have HIV strategies offering the care and treatment people need.





**We are here to support everyone living with HIV and impacted by poor sexual health. With so many health inequalities being deeply engrained throughout health and social systems our work will challenge them and innovate to tackle them at source.**

## **Everyone can access good quality sexual and reproductive health services and information tailored to their individual needs**

Health inequalities in sexually transmitted infections (STIs) have only been made more evident in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Race and ethnicity-based differences in STI diagnosis and rates cannot be explained by differences in healthcare seeking and use. The causes of health inequalities are largely socially determined by wealth and power.

We will expand and adapt our service offering to meet communities' needs, continuing to provide a range of sexual and reproductive health and HIV services across the UK, often in partnership with local authorities, health boards and other statutory partners where these meet our strategy.

We are here to support everyone impacted by poor sexual health. With so many health inequalities being deeply engrained throughout health and social systems our work will challenge them and innovate to tackle them at source. Inclusive Health is a human rights based approach aiming to redress and prevent health and social inequities amongst the most vulnerable and marginalised populations. We have created a new role to focus on Health Equity in key populations, prioritising greater diversity at all levels in the workforce including leadership roles.

- We will continue to provide support and information for people when they need it, expanding the use of THT Direct as a way in.
- We will work in partnership with local authorities, NHS and the wider health and social care economy throughout the UK to deliver community-based sexual and reproductive health and blood borne virus (BBV) services.
- We will deliver high quality information on sexual and reproductive health delivered across a range of platforms.
- We will have a greater focus on understanding the needs of, and expanding our support for, those in marginalised and underserved communities. This includes racially minoritised communities, trans and non-binary people, people impacted by the infected blood scandal, people growing older living with HIV or who are experiencing poor sexual health.
- We will actively influence all UK governments to have clear sexual and reproductive health strategies resulting in equitable services for care and treatment.
- We will work collaboratively with partners including the NHS to ensure that the most accurate data on inequalities associated with the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of BBVs and STIs is available and can influence service delivery.
- We will assess our information, services and fundraising to determine and fill any accessibility or inclusivity gaps.





**People living with HIV often face prejudice and discrimination in their daily lives which can affect relationships, employment and health. Talking about sexual and reproductive health is often still taboo. All of this can stop people getting the testing, treatment and support they need, and cause further mental and physical health problems.**

## HIV and sexual and reproductive health are free from shame and stigma

Stigma and discrimination around sex are still far too common. People living with HIV often face prejudice and discrimination in their daily lives which can affect relationships, employment and health. Talking about sexual and reproductive health is often still taboo. All of this can stop people getting the testing, treatment and support they need, and cause further mental and physical health problems.

STIs are on the rise in the UK; sexual health services are strained, while there are clear inequalities in terms of the communities most impacted by poor sexual health, particularly among racially minoritised communities, young people, gay and bisexual men, and people living with HIV. Black people bear a far higher burden of common STIs, with a 9% increase in STI rates among those of Caribbean heritage in 2019. In the last four years, gay and bisexual men have seen an 83% jump in chlamydia diagnoses. Living in the most disadvantaged parts of the UK is also associated with higher admissions for

conditions such as pelvic inflammatory disease and ectopic pregnancy, higher rates of teenage pregnancy, and higher abortion rates, indicating difficulties in accessing contraception for women in these areas. These inequalities aren't new but there's still a shocking lack of information about the impact of structural inequalities including misogyny, racism, homophobia and transphobia.

We are determined to make stigma around HIV, sex, and sexual and reproductive health a thing of the past. We'll tackle outdated information in the public sphere and amplify the stories of those living with HIV or experiencing poor sexual or reproductive health, ensuring that their lived experiences are at the heart of our work.

We know that many communities continue to face massive health inequalities, and so we will expand our work to respond to those needs in relation to HIV and sexual and reproductive health for women, racially minoritised communities, trans and non-binary people and young people.

- We will campaign to change institutionally stigmatising legislation and policy practices in private, public and voluntary organisations.
- We will deliver public awareness campaigns to increase knowledge and bust myths that perpetuate stigma, highlighting the disproportional impact on certain groups and communities.
- We will expand our peer voices HIV outreach and inclusion programme with a focus on diversity and intersectionality.
- We will educate young people and others who require it about sex and consent, sexual and reproductive health, and HIV.
- We will work with healthcare professionals to ensure safe, appropriate, fully informed and non-stigmatising care around HIV and sexual and reproductive health.
- We will ensure our own services are fully inclusive and reflect our communities' diversity.
- We will improve the accessibility, inclusivity and reach of our information by better using our channels to reach people with the right content for them.





**We will use our influence to promote equity, diversity and inclusion internally and in our work with others.**

## **Everyone in our organisation respects and values diversity, creating an environment that is inclusive of all, and by working in partnership with others we reduce inequalities in sexual health**

It is often marginalised communities that face the greatest inequalities in sexual health care and the poorest reproductive health outcomes.

Inclusivity has been at the heart of the charity since we began. As activists we

work within many different communities to challenge health inequalities and we work to overcome stigma and misinformation, ensuring our services and information meet the needs of all communities. Through our work we will help drive down prejudice and discrimination.

- We will campaign to challenge the direct barriers and underlying structural issues that lead to inequalities in HIV, sexual health and reproductive health outcomes for all communities at risk of HIV and sexual and reproductive health inequalities.
- We will deliver specific and appropriate public awareness campaigns tailored to the needs of the diverse communities we serve; particularly for some African and Caribbean heritage communities, women, trans and non-binary people, young people, gay and bisexual men and people living with disabilities.
- We will use our influence to promote equity, diversity and inclusion internally and in our work with others.
- We will work with communities around delivery of education programmes tailored to individual groups around HIV, and sexual and reproductive health.



# Supporting our work

## Our financial resources

Delivery of this ambitious new strategy requires an increased and substantial financial investment. This will be funded in part through the use of our free reserves (in line with our reserves policy). Reserves alone are insufficient to provide that extra investment and therefore we have put in place bold fundraising targets, projecting growth from £5.9m in year 1 to £8.4m by Year 3. Meeting those fundraising targets will mean that at the end of the three-year period we will once again be generating a surplus, where growth is sustainable and driven by fundraising.

£000s	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Fundraising income	5,900	6,900	8,400
Contractual income	6,300	6,200	6,200
Other income	300	300	300
Total income	<b>12,500</b>	<b>13,400</b>	<b>14,900</b>
Expenditure	(14,600)	(14,250)	(14,150)
Operating Surplus/(deficit). Deficits will be funded from reserves	<b>(2,100)</b>	<b>(850)</b>	<b>750</b>

## Engaging with more people

In order to grow our income, we will need to engage more supporters and sustain the loyalty and generosity of our current donors. We have invested in our income generation programme, innovating new ways for supporters to get involved and learn about the impact their gifts are making. We have taken the time to listen to supporters, understanding the difference they want to see and how they want to be involved.

## Holding ourselves to account

Over the duration of our new strategy, we will be measuring against key outcomes so we know we are delivering impact and making a difference to the people we are here for. We understand that we do not do any of our work alone, always working in partnership and alongside many other individuals and organisations; these key outcomes will help drive us as we work to deliver our goals.

### Our mission

### Key outcome by 2025

There are no new HIV cases.	Reduction in HIV transmissions.
People living with HIV get the support they need.	People living with HIV experience improved wellbeing.
Everyone can access good quality sexual and reproductive health services and information tailored to their individual needs.	An increase in people accessing services earlier meaning a reduction in prevalence of STIs and unplanned pregnancy.
HIV, sexual and reproductive health are free from shame and stigma.	An increase in people feeling able to talk more openly about sex, sexual and reproductive health and HIV.
Everyone in our organisation respects and values diversity, creating an environment that is inclusive of all, and by working in partnership with others we reduce inequalities in sexual health.	Increase in people being aware of tailored, targeted services and feeling able to access these.

## Our impact on the environment

We are conscious of reducing the impact we have on the environment, and are working on a plan to limit this, to contribute towards the UK's plan to get to net zero carbon emissions.



Managing risk

There is risk in delivering any new strategy and committing to ambitious goals. By keeping a close eye on the following risks and taking appropriate mitigations, we plan to ensure we deliver for our beneficiaries.

Risk	Mitigating actions
HIV and sexual health become less prioritised by policy makers.	We are investing in our public policy work to hold those in power to account.
We do not maximise the value of our brand, and keep our cause high in the public consciousness.	By continual investment in our brand, in particular to get to underserved audiences, we will strengthen our brand presence.
Voluntary fundraising targets are not achieved meaning that we do not have the financial resources to fund the strategy.	We have developed a new fundraising strategy in line with our organisational plans, investing in fundraising teams, and will closely monitor our progress.
Our staff do not have the right skills and capabilities to meet the changing role and needs of the organisation.	We will continue to provide holistic support and management, including a detailed policy framework, clear recruitment processes, regular reviews with managers, and ongoing training and skills development as well as investing in L&D capability.
We do not keep pace with the necessary developments in digital technology and activity.	We will invest in the charity's websites so they are kept up to date and that digital investment is maintained to support digital development.
Our workforce does not adequately represent the communities we serve, and so our activities are not meeting their needs.	We are implementing an approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, with a focus on ensuring that we are a truly diverse organisation.

Our values and culture

How we deliver our work is vital to our success and so we have undertaken a full review of our culture; more remains to be done, but we know what we need now.

Meeting our goals will require us to be ambitious, being clear about what we want to achieve, and bold enough to fight for it. We must be driven by the lived experience of individuals, valuing the input of all people, and putting the needs of marginalised people at the core of our mission. We must engage effectively, collaborating with partners, donors, funders, beneficiaries, and our own colleagues; growing and learning from each other all the time.





