

Statement from the European HIV Hepatitis Testing Week working group on principles to advance safe and voluntary testing for key and most affected populations, combination prevention and prompt linkage to care

The European HIV–Hepatitis Testing Week initiative (ETW) aims to ensure access to effective, comprehensive, rights-based, safe, anonymous and voluntary HIV Hepatitis testing for everyone in order to promote early diagnosis and linkage to care. It underlines that increased efforts are needed to overcome the obstacles that many people from key and most affected populations still face in accessing services.¹

ETW calls on all stakeholders – within their remit to:

1. Ensure investment in and participation of key population-led networks and organisations in the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes
2. Support low threshold testing options such as peer to peer testing, harm reduction programmes, rapid testing in community-based settings and self-testing
3. Improve access to affordable rapid and self- test kits
4. Facilitate swift and smooth linkage to care upon diagnosis with access to treatment in line with [WHO](#) and [EACS](#) guidelines
5. Offer combination prevention tools for people who test negative and are at continued risk of infection
6. Remove laws and policies that criminalise HIV and/or hepatitis transmission, exposure and non-disclosure
7. Remove all forms of legal oppression of key and most affected populations such as criminalization of drug use, same sex consensual practices and sex work
8. Eliminate mandatory and coercive testing, forced registration, non-confidential testing, and other forms of testing that raise privacy concerns and put key populations at risk of prosecution or persecution
9. Address data protection and privacy concerns that create barriers to testing.
10. Remove restrictions on testing which prohibit community-based testing and self-testing

For more information, please contact the European HIV-Hepatitis Testing Week coordinating centre at hie.rigshospitalet@regionh.dk.

On behalf of the HIV in Europe Initiative and the European HIV-Hepatitis Testing Week.

Yours Sincerely,

Cary James
Head of programmes,
Terrence Higgins Trust
Co-chair ETW Working Group

Valerie Delpech
Head of National HIV surveillance, HIV & STI
Department, Public Health England
Co-chair ETW Working Group

¹ See [joint statement](#) from the informal alliance of key and most affected population and regional groups and networks (Africa Advocacy Foundation, AIDS Action Europe, CliniQ, Correlation Network, ECOM, EuroNPUD, EATG, HIV Justice Network, HIV TB Response, ILGA Europe, ICRSE, IHP and TGEU) on developing testing goals that take into consideration and address for key and most affected populations. It is available in many languages on the European Testing Week website at www.testingweek.eu