

Key messages – general audiences

The following key messages have been developed to support you when communicating the benefits of HIV, hepatitis B and c testing to general audiences. The messages can be edited for local use to allow you to communicate HIV and/or hepatitis messages, as relevant according to your individual ETW programme.

Overarching message

- EuroTEST is calling on the European community to unite for **one week twice a year**, in Spring (**May**) and Autumn (**November**), to increase awareness regarding the benefits of HIV and hepatitis testing, so that more people become knowledgeable about their risks, understand that there is effective treatment available and are aware of their HIV and/or hepatitis status.

Core messages

- In 2015, the ETW expanded to include not only HIV but also hepatitis due to high prevalence of co-infection and overlaps in key populations and/or common modes of transmission. This is because hepatitis B and C are transmitted in many of the same ways HIV is transmitted – through injection drug use and condomless sex
- It's better to know your status as soon as possible because today people living with HIV and/or hepatitis B can live well with a long-life expectancy when treatment starts early; and those with hepatitis C can be cured.

HIV specific

Treatment

- It's better to know your status as soon as possible because today people living with HIV can live well with a long life expectancy when treatment starts early.
- HIV treatment advances mean that you can live healthily for a long time if you are diagnosed early. Data from the START (Strategic Timing of AntiRetroviral Treatment) trial indicate that starting anti-HIV treatment soon after diagnosis of HIV infection protects people's health, instead of waiting for the CD4 count to drop to 350.

Prevalence

- 1 out of 5 of the 2.3 million people living with HIV in Europe are currently unaware that are HIV positive; and over 50% of those who are positive are diagnosed late, delaying access to treatment.

Hepatitis C & B specific

Treatment and Prevention

- It's better to know your status as soon as possible because today people with hepatitis B can live well with a long life expectancy when treatment starts early, and those with hepatitis C can be cured.
- Knowing your status can also help prevent you from passing on the viruses to others.
- **Hepatitis C** treatment advances mean that a cure is now available. **Hepatitis B** treatment exists to prevent liver cancer and liver cirrhosis. There is also a vaccine to help prevent you from getting infected with HBV.

Prevalence

- **Hepatitis C:** In the WHO European Region it is estimated that 14 million people are living with hepatitis C; however, only a small minority of people receive treatment. In the WHO European Region, the average treatment rate is estimated at only 4.6%.
- **Hepatitis B:** It's estimated that around 15 million people are living with hepatitis B in the WHO European Region. Approximately 20-30% of infected individuals will develop cirrhosis, liver failure or hepatocellular carcinoma.