

# [Press release: New PHE figures show decline in HIV diagnosis rates](#)

The decrease in HIV diagnoses in gay and bisexual men represents the most exciting development in the UK HIV epidemic in the last 20 years, when effective treatment became widely available.

Commenting on the figures, Dr Valerie Delpech, Head of HIV Surveillance at Public Health England, said:

This is very good news. It is the first time since the beginning of the HIV epidemic in the 1980s that we have observed a decline in new HIV diagnoses among gay and bisexual men, and is clear evidence that HIV prevention efforts are working in the United Kingdom.

Our success in reducing transmission is due to high levels of condom use among gay men, and a sharp rise in the number of men testing for HIV each year, with those at greatest risk testing more frequently. Early diagnosis is also key to making sure that people benefit from HIV treatments so they can live long and healthy lives and are protected from passing on the virus to others.

With continued investment in testing and diagnosis, the decline in HIV infection which has taken place for gay and bisexual men in London can be replicated in other parts of the country and in all those at higher risk of HIV. HIV testing enables diagnosis and the opportunity for treatment which not only means people can live long, healthy lives but also provides reassurance that the virus cannot be passed on.

It is easy to get tested for HIV. Testing is freely available through GP surgeries, local hospitals and sexual health clinics as well as on self-sampling and self-testing (see NHS Choices for further information). As well as getting tested, using a condom with new or casual partners protects against HIV and other STIs.

1. The [HIV in the UK health protection report and annual HIV data tables](#) comprise the number of HIV diagnoses, late HIV diagnoses and numbers accessing HIV care. Data can be interrogated and analysed at [local authority level](#) via an online tool allowing a range of outputs to be generated.
2. The December 2016 edition of Health Matters, PHE's resource for local authorities and health professionals focuses on [increasing HIV testing](#).
3. The HIV home sampling service offers an alternative to traditional

testing offered by GPs and sexual health clinic. Visit [www.freetesting.hiv](http://www.freetesting.hiv) to find out more about the HIV home-sampling test kit.

4. PrEP Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), has been a contributory factor in the downturn in new diagnoses in gay and bisexual men. Previous trials such as the PROUD trial have shown that HIV PrEP is clinically effective, dependent on drug adherence, and that risk behaviours and other STI infection rates did not increase. PHE is supporting NHS England in the 3 year [PrEP Impact Trial](#) beginning in October 2017. PHE helped finalise the trial design, governance, recruitment and drug procurement processes of the Impact Trial and will continue to be an active and committed partner during its running.

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## [News story: World Space Week: International Partnership Programme \(IPP\)](#)

The IPP is a £152 million programme, designed to partner UK space expertise with overseas governments and organisations.

In 2017 more than £70 million in funding has already been allocated to projects in partnership with the UK space industry, applying inventive satellite solutions to a range of areas such as deforestation, illegal fishing, marine pollution, disaster recovery, drought and flooding.

Later this year the Agency will announce which projects are to receive a share of a further £50 million to tackle more global challenges

Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

“World Space Week is about celebrating the contributions of space science and technology to improving life on Earth, which is what our International Partnership Programme is all about.

“The primary aim of IPP is to make a positive, practical impact on the lives of those living in developing countries. We do this by using space solutions to solve their specific challenges, partnering with end users in the developing countries and increasing their capacity to respond to those challenges.”

So far this year 22 projects have been selected to provide solutions for local issues in countries across Africa, Asia and Central and South America. All of the projects will have a long-term sustainable impact in the country

they are working with, which is a vital element of IPP.

The IPP is part of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), which aims to support cutting-edge research and innovation that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries.

You can find out more from the latest [IPP brochure](#).

World Space Week runs from 4 October to 10 October.

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## **Press release: Three...two...one...blast off! Dstl launches £50 million Space Programme**

The Science Programme at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) is set for a rocket boost of cash having recently begun a new 5 year £50 million programme of innovation.

The money will help to fund projects like the [Daedalus experiment](#) which is exploring the effect on satellites of so-called “de-orbit sails”. When deployed, the sail increases drag, causing a controlled descent into the Earth’s atmosphere where the satellite will burn up. Dstl is leading co-ordination of the UK element of Daedalus, tasking sensors to collect data to support this experiment. Of particular relevance to the military community is the effect that such high-drag satellites have on current Space Situational Awareness (SSA) sensors and processing.

The funding will also support experiments to look at the science of the ionosphere; Dstl is collaborating with the US on CIRCE (Coordinated Ionospheric Research Cubesat Experiment), which is a small satellite mission due to launch in 2019, which will improve our understanding of how satellite communications are impacted by disturbances in the ionosphere during periods of heightened solar activity. Working with US scientists, the Dstl space team are also partnering with UK companies to keep Britain at the cutting edge of space science for defence.

Recruitment for new members of the space team is underway to support the growing programme. Dstl has recently launched its [annual graduate recruitment activity](#), and the Cyber and Information Systems Division is looking for scientists and engineers to support the future Dstl Space Programme, on topics such as spacecraft design and operations, earth observation and space situational awareness. We are also looking for both graduates and mid-career scientists to support our work on military satellite communications.

Michael O’Callaghan, the lead for space at Dstl, said:

This programme is fantastic news for Dstl and for the UK as a whole. It allows us to invest in research and innovation that supports Defence and Security aspirations, as well as supporting UK prosperity and developing skills in government and the space industry. We are expanding our team with new roles for senior scientists, and graduate roles, to bring in the best talent. This cash will reinvigorate our work.

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## **Press release: Pengwedna poultry farm public consultation now live**

The Environment Agency has received a permit application from Richland Foods who want to operate an egg-laying chicken farm at Pengwedna Poultry Farm, Nancegollan, Helston, Cornwall TR13 0AZ.

The Environment Agency will be holding a public drop-in event at Nancegollan village hall on Wednesday 18 October 2017 from 10am until 8pm. This is an opportunity to find out more about the environmental permit application and to give your views.

The environmental permit relates to the control of emissions from the facility on the environment and on people's health. It does not relate to issues such as the choice of location of the site, traffic movements to/from site, visual impact, operating hours and light pollution. These matters are considered through Cornwall Council's planning application process.

The environmental permit application will consider:

- management – including general management, accident management, energy efficiency, efficient use of raw materials and waste recovery
- operations – including permitted activities and operating techniques (use of poultry feed, housing design and management, slurry spreading and manure management planning)
- emissions – to water, air and land including to groundwater and fugitive emissions, transfers off site, odour, noise (including vehicles and machinery onsite) and vibration, and monitoring

The environmental permit focuses on the assessment of activities and emissions from within the site boundary.

The consultation is an opportunity for local people to give their views on this permit application (reference EPR/QP3835YS/A001). You can view the [permit application and supporting documents](#) and see a paper copy at Sir John Moore House, Victoria Square, Bodmin PL31 1EB.

Send your comments by 1 November 2017 (11:59pm), either online, or by email to [pscpublicresponse@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:pscpublicresponse@environment-agency.gov.uk), or in writing to:

Environment Agency Permitting and Support Centre  
Land Team  
Quadrant 2  
99 Parkway Avenue  
Sheffield  
S9 4WF

[General information about permitting.](#)

### **Notes to editor**

The planning application can be viewed using Cornwall Council's online planning register. Cornwall Council's Local Planning Team can be contacted by telephone on 0300 1234 151 or via email at [planning@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:planning@cornwall.gov.uk).

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## **[News story: Line-side workers near miss, Dutton Viaduct](#)**

Near miss between a train and line-side workers on Dutton Viaduct, between Crewe and Runcorn, Cheshire, 18 September 2017.

At around 16:57 hrs on Monday 18th September 2017, a passenger train travelling at 125 mph (200 km/h), encountered three line-side workers on Dutton Viaduct. The workers managed to move clear of the track less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  second before the train passed them. No injuries were caused to the workers, but the train driver was shaken by the incident.

We have undertaken a [preliminary examination](#) into the circumstances surrounding this incident. Having assessed the evidence which has been gathered to date, we have decided to publish a [safety digest](#).

The safety digest will shortly be made available on our website.