

**Project name:** Gay Men's Sexual Health Survey 2022

**Organisations involved:** University College London (who is engaging Department of Health and Social Care, UK Health Security Agency, Healthy London Partnership) and Gilead Sciences

**Project Overview:**

Since 1996, the Gay Men's Sexual Health Survey has captured the sexual behaviour of Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM) using self-completion questionnaires. Since 2011 the survey included an anonymous salivary testing for HIV in association with the behavioural questionnaires. Saliva testing has the advantage that it can be collected by the participants themselves without discomfort and is safe to use in non-clinical settings. PHE (now UKHSA) has used saliva testing successfully in previous surveys conducted since 1999 (Wayal et al., 2008). Participants are provided an information sheet which has a step-by-step pictorial guide on how to collect a saliva specimen. Since 2005 the survey has been conducted in London.

**Project Objectives:**

To measure the HIV prevalence amongst a community based sample of MSM in London and explore the association between HIV status and HIV testing and prevention behaviours, and awareness, uptake and source of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). The study will also assess the accuracy of self-reported HIV status.

**Expected project outcomes:**

- To measure the prevalence of HIV (diagnosed and undiagnosed) amongst MSM attending community social venues;
- To compare the rates of HIV infection in men who report that they attend sexual health clinics and non-sexual health clinic attenders who may utilise other services (e.g. internet, self-testing or self-sampling services);
- To examine the association between HIV status and key sexual behaviour data;
- To examine the association between HIV and STI testing, sexual behaviour and use of PrEP;
- To measure the accuracy of self-assumed HIV status;
- To examine HIV testing and STI testing behaviours;
- To examine self-reported sexual health service use and use of STI/HIV prevention measures;
- To assess the proportion of participants reporting a monkeypox diagnosis/vaccination offer and uptake;
- Examination of self-reported PrEP use (longitudinal comparison of 2016, 2019, 2022).

**Expected project benefits include: Benefits for the population**

- To support estimations of undiagnosed HIV cases
- To support HIV pathway redesign (if needed)
- To update data on key population not being captured by other epidemiological surveillance systems
- To inform dedicated sexual health services tailored to the community.

**Benefits for UCL**

- To lead the main sexual health attitude survey on HIV and key populations.
- To provide academic HIV data to researchers, policy makers and the public.
- To examine and publish evidence on HIV & STI prevention behaviours & attitudes.

**Benefits for public health systems (DHSC, UKHSA, Health London Partnership)**

- To measure the prevalence of HIV (diagnosed and undiagnosed) amongst MSM

- To examine the association between HIV testing, sexual behaviour and use of PrEP;
- To compare the rates of HIV infection in attenders of sexual health clinics vs non-sexual health clinic

**Benefits for Gilead Sciences**

- To explore knowledge and attitudes towards new technologies for treatment and prevention
- This project will allow Gilead a greater insight in to what is important to patients with respect to their treatment journey and how they may wish to be managed in the future.

**Duration of the project**

Project is aiming to be completed by Spring 2023

For more information please contact:

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