

# **HIV and TB support services –**

## **Your views and experiences**

Birmingham City Council would like your views on HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and TB (Tuberculosis) support services.

We are interested in your views and experiences even if you do not currently use these services.

## **Introduction**

HIV and TB are serious conditions which can cause people to become very ill and even die if not diagnosed and treated. Although HIV and TB are two different illnesses, both need prolonged treatment. Both are more common in vulnerable people such as the homeless or people who have newly arrived in this country. And both HIV and TB can cause alarm and stigma in some communities.

For people with HIV, and people who have TB, medication is very important to help them get better or feel well, and stay healthy. The treatment for both HIV and TB needs to be taken every day, for a long time. In the case of HIV, treatment needs to be taken for life.

There is a lot of fear and shame about HIV and TB, so people may be afraid to get tested to see if they have it, or get treatment if they do.

Some people with HIV or TB need additional support, as well as medical treatment, to help them manage their condition. At the moment there are specialist support services for people with HIV, but not for people with TB. In addition local authorities provide general support services such as social work and help with housing for those who are eligible for support..

Birmingham City Council wants to find out:

- what people think about the existing HIV support services;
- how HIV support services might be improved in the future; and
- what support services are needed by people with TB.

## **HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus**

HIV is a medical condition which can make people very ill by stopping their body fighting infections and disease.

HIV is usually caught by having sex; but using a condom reduces the risk. HIV can be passed on in other ways too:

- By sharing needles
- During pregnancy, or through breast-feeding if the mother is HIV positive

Some people are more at risk of HIV:

- Men who have sex with men
- People from Black African communities
- People from countries where HIV is more common

HIV can't be cured, but people can be treated with prescribed medicines. Confidential treatment is available from special HIV services and is free for everyone in the UK. Medical treatment means most people with HIV can live a long and healthy life, but it is really important to get treatment as soon as possible. If untreated HIV, leads to a serious and life-threatening condition called AIDS.

## **TB - Tuberculosis**

TB most often affects people's lungs, but it can also affect other parts of the body. TB is usually passed on by close, long-term contact with someone who already has it, often someone in the same household. Coughing and sneezing can spread TB.

Before antibiotics were introduced, TB was a major health problem in the UK. Nowadays, the condition is much less common. However, in the last 20 years TB cases have gradually increased, particularly among those in ethnic minority communities from places where TB is more common.

Many healthy people are able to fight off TB infection. However, some people are more vulnerable, including:

- Homeless people
- Drug users
- People from countries where TB is more common.

TB can usually be completely cured with antibiotics. Most people will need to take the medicine for at least six months or even as long as a year and a half. Sometimes people need more than one type of medicine.

A vaccination (injection) is available to prevent the illness for people most at risk.

## **Support services**

Birmingham City Council funds some voluntary organisations to offer support services to people with HIV to help them manage their condition. These organisations include:

- Freshwinds;
- AB Plus;
- Terrence Higgins Trust; and
- Sofali.

Birmingham City Council also has a team of HIV Social Workers, funded by University Hospitals Birmingham HIV Treatment Service, to offer support.

We want to find out what people think about these HIV support services and how they might be improved to help us plan future support services.

We are also interested in finding out what TB support services people need.

We are interested in your views of HIV and TB support services. We are not looking at experiences of medical care.

Please help us by completing the questionnaire. Some of the questions may feel very personal but you do not have to answer any that you do not want to. All answers and comments will be kept completely confidential. The more information you are able to give us, the better we can understand if services are meeting needs.

## Your experience of HIV support services and TB

### HIV

1. **Are you HIV positive?** please tick one box only

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

2. **Do you support someone who is HIV positive?** please tick one box only

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

3. **Did you know there are support services for people with HIV?**

Please note that we are not asking about medical or treatment services

Yes ☐ No ☐

4. **How would you rate the quality of HIV support services provided by the following organisations?** Please tick 'not used' if you haven't used the service

	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Not Used
Freshwinds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
AB Plus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Terrence Higgins Trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sofali	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If 'Other', please give name of organisation:

If you used HIV support services was it:

2 years ago or less? ☐ 2-5 years ago? ☐ More than 5 years ago? ☐

5. **How do you think HIV support services could be improved?**

## TB

6. Do you have, or have you had TB? please tick one box only

Yes ☐

No ☐

Don't know ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

7. Do you support someone who has TB or has had TB? please tick one box only

Yes ☐

No ☐

Don't know ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

8. What support do you think people with TB need?

## Additional comments

9. Anything else you would like to tell us that would help with planning HIV or TB support services for the future?

We would like you to tell us something about you. You don't have to tell us but if you do it will help us to plan this service.

## **Data Protection Act 1998**

The personal information on this form will be kept safe and is protected by law. You can see more information about data protection on our website at:

<http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/privacy>

**What best describes your interest in this survey?** please tick one box only

- A member of the public ☐
- Someone who has used support services for HIV ☐
- A family member or carer of someone who has used support services for HIV ☐
- A family member or carer of someone who has HIV, but not used support services ☐
- Someone who has a professional interest in HIV support services, for example Social Worker, Health Professional etc. ☐
- Someone with TB or who has had TB in the past ☐
- A family member or carer of someone with TB ☐
- Someone who has a professional interest in TB services, for example Social Worker, Health Professional etc. ☐
- Other please give details ☐



**How old are you? My age group is:** please tick one box only

19 or under <input type="checkbox"/>	20-24 <input type="checkbox"/>	25-29 <input type="checkbox"/>
30-34 <input type="checkbox"/>	35-39 <input type="checkbox"/>	40-44 <input type="checkbox"/>
45-49 <input type="checkbox"/>	50-54 <input type="checkbox"/>	55-59 <input type="checkbox"/>
60-64 <input type="checkbox"/>	65-69 <input type="checkbox"/>	70-74 <input type="checkbox"/>
75-79 <input type="checkbox"/>	80-84 <input type="checkbox"/>	85 and over <input type="checkbox"/>

**What gender are you?** please tick one box only

Male ☐ Female ☐ Trans person ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

**What is your ethnic group?** please tick one box only

White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British ☐

Any other white background please specify below ☐

Mixed / multiple ethnic groups ☐

Asian / Asian British ☐

Black African / Caribbean / Black British ☐

Indian Sikh ☐

Jewish ☐

Other ethnic group please specify below ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

**What is your sexual orientation?** please tick one box only

Heterosexual or Straight ☐

Gay or Lesbian ☐

Bisexual ☐

Other please specify below ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

**What is your postcode?** first part of the postcode only please

**What is your religion or belief?** please tick one box only

No religion ☐

Christian including Church of England, Catholic,  
Protestant and all other Christian denominations ☐

Buddhist ☐

Hindu ☐

Jewish ☐

Muslim ☐

Sikh ☐

Any other religion please specify below ☐

Prefer not to say ☐

**Your email address**

Please **only** give us your email address if you are happy for us to contact you in the future when we consult about commissioning HIV and TB support services

**Please return this questionnaire in the FREEPOST envelope provided by  
20 February 2015**

or email it to:

**Birminghamsexualhealth@birmingham.gov.uk**

Or you can complete the questionnaire online at the Birmingham Be Heard website:  
**[www.birminghambeheard.org.uk](http://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk)**

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**