

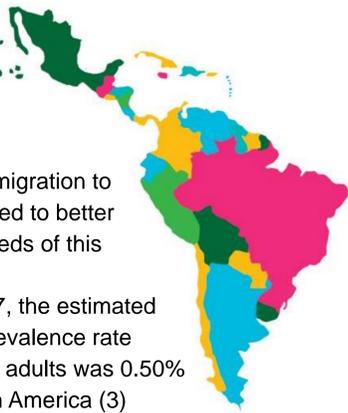
## INTRODUCTION

It has been estimated that in 2013, there were around 250,000 Latin Americans living in the UK, of which around 145,000 were in London (1).

With increasing Latin American migration to the UK, there is a recognised need to better understand the sexual health needs of this group (2).

In 2017, the estimated HIV prevalence rate among adults was 0.50% in Latin America (3) whilst in the UK it was 0.22% (4).

Here we describe the HIV epidemiology of people originating from Latin America and living in the UK.



## METHODS

### Data source

UK national HIV surveillance data held at Public Health England.

We included records with reported country of birth (COB) data for new diagnoses over the 10 year period 2008-2017 and for persons being seen for HIV care in 2017.

### Population of interest

Adults (aged ≥15 years) with a Latin American country of birth reported

Diagnosed with HIV between 2008 and 2017 (n=2,127)

Receiving specialist HIV care in 2017 (n=2,019)

### Analyses performed:

- Time trends
- Demographics
- Reported probable acquisition of HIV in the UK %
- Late diagnoses %
- Linkage to care within 3 months %

### Analyses performed:

- Demographics
- Receiving treatment %
- Viral suppression %
- Retention in care % (using 2016 data)

### DEFINITIONS

**Latin American country:** any country included within the Central America and South America UN geographic regions (5)

**Late diagnosis:** CD4 count <350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> within 3 months

**Viral suppression:** viral load <200 copies/mL

**Linkage to care:** new diagnoses with an HIV outpatient appointment after diagnosis, using CD4 count as a proxy for care entry

**Retention in care:** any attendance at HIV specialist care in two consecutive years

## RESULTS

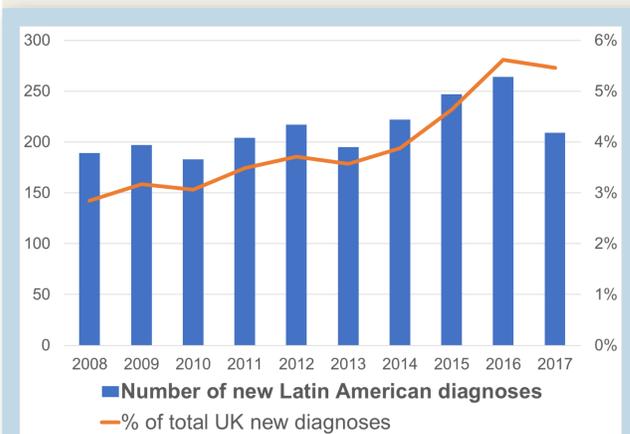


Figure 1. New HIV diagnoses among Latin Americans, and % of total UK diagnoses with COB data, by year (2008-2017)

Latin Americans accounted for **3.8%** (2,127/55,556) of adults diagnosed with HIV in the UK between 2008-2017, with country of birth data reported (93% completion).

The annual number of new HIV diagnoses among Latin Americans (and proportion of UK total) increased from 189 (2.8%) in 2008 to 264 (5.6%) in 2016, before dipping to 209 (5.5%) in 2017 (Figure 1).

Demographic information of new diagnoses is shown in Figure 2.

Among the 2,127 Latin Americans newly diagnosed with HIV in the UK between 2008 and 2017:

- Of those with probable country of infection data (79% completion), **47%** (799/1,689) were reported to have likely acquired HIV in the UK (range by year: 36%-58%).
- The vast majority (**81%**) were living in **London**, where **94%** were men who have sex with men (MSM), accounting for **12%** of all MSM diagnoses in the capital (1,446/11,996). This proportion has increased since 2014; in 2016 and 2017 **more than 1 in 6 (17%)** MSM diagnosed in London were Latin American.
- **33%** were diagnosed late (603/1,840) (range by year: 20%-51%). Late diagnosis rates were higher in heterosexual men: (**60%**; 61/103) and women (**43%**; 53/123) compared to MSM (**30%**; 464/1,532).
- **87%** were linked to care within 3 months of diagnosis, with similar rates across demographic groups.

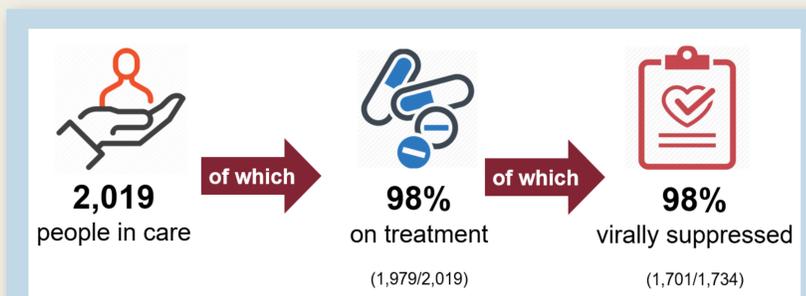


Figure 3. HIV care outcomes among Latin Americans accessing specialist HIV care in the UK, 2017

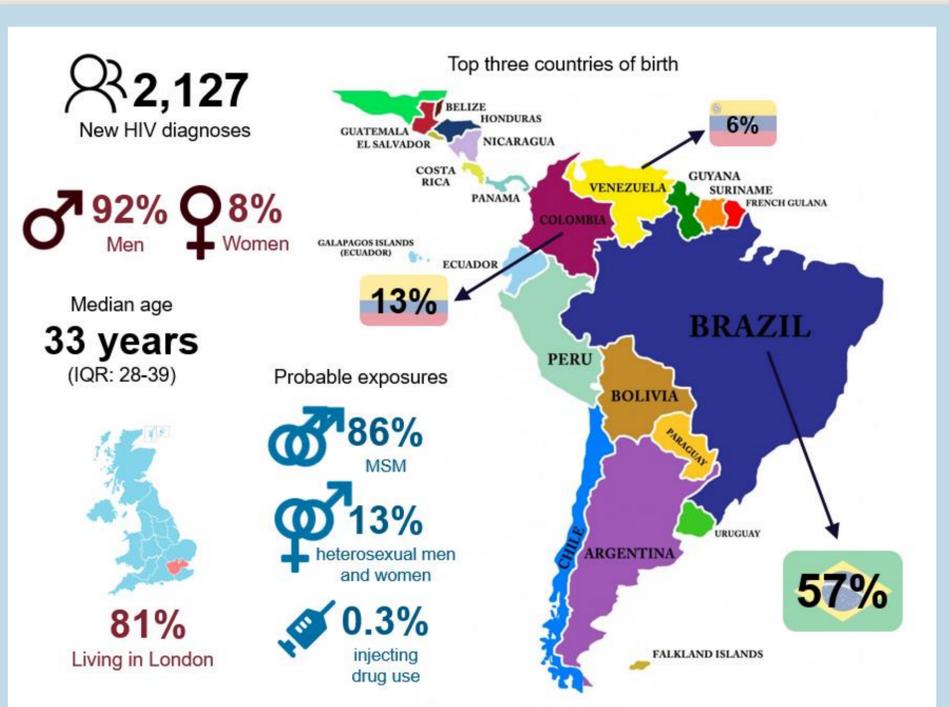


Figure 2. Characteristics of Latin Americans diagnosed with HIV in the UK in 2008-2017

**2,019 (2.5%)** of the 82,057 adults receiving HIV specialist care in the UK in 2017 with country of birth data (88% completion) were Latin American: 1,820 men and 195 women, with a median age of 41 (IQR 35-49).

- **81%** resided in **London**, where they accounted for **9% of MSM in care** (1,332/15,071).
- **91%** (1,733/1,910) of those seen in care in 2016, were also attending for care in 2017.

2017 care outcomes are shown in Figure 3.

## LIMITATIONS

- There are no up-to-date estimates for the size of the Latin American population in the UK, so we are unable to calculate current prevalence rates.
- UK data collection systems do not capture data on Latin American ethnicity and therefore there is no data on second generation Latin Americans.

## DISCUSSION

Whilst Latin American adults make up a relatively small proportion of all new HIV diagnoses in the UK, this proportion has increased since 2008, and is substantive among MSM in London.

With around half reported to have acquired their HIV after arrival in the UK, reducing transmission within this population will be important, especially for London to achieve its aim to end new infections in by 2030 as part of the Fast-Track Cities initiative (6).

Encouragingly, high rates of treatment and viral suppression show good engagement with HIV care among this group.

Continued monitoring will be vital to examine trends in the Latin American population as HIV declines in the UK.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge all contributors to HIV and AIDS surveillance in the UK.

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