

Optimising PrEP delivery- where and how people want to get PrEP. Findings from the 2020 PrEP user survey

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INTRODUCTION

- A key objective of the HIV Action Plan for England is to ensure equitable PrEP access, including provision in settings outside of SHS².
- There are currently disparities in PrEP access with more rapid uptake seen in men who have sex with men (MSM) but much lower uptake seen in people of Black African ethnicity¹.



Figure 1. Poster from PrEP user survey 2020

Aim:

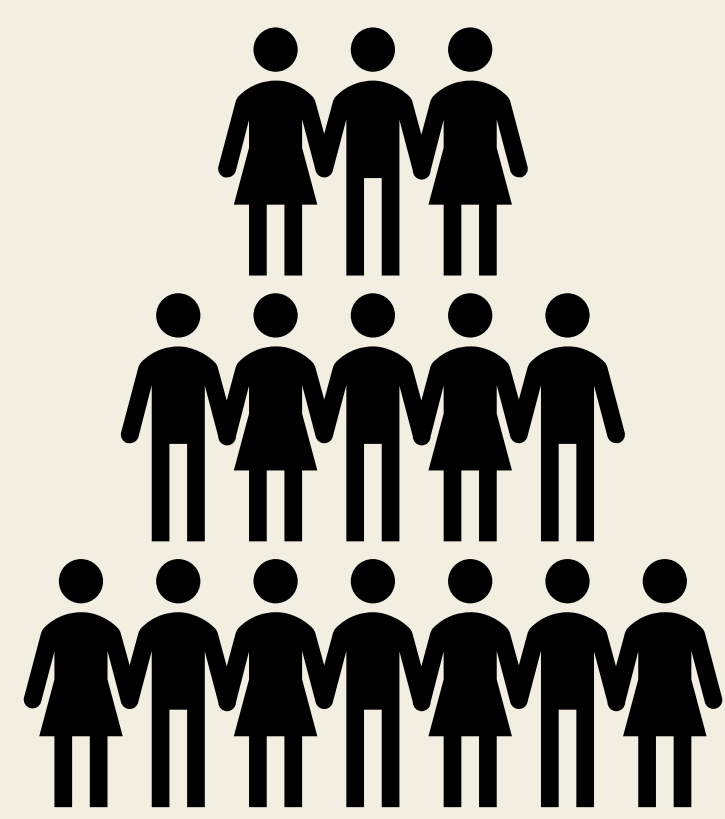
To understand where and how people want to get PrEP to inform and optimise service delivery

METHODS

- The PrEP user survey is an online cross-sectional survey carried out by UKHSA, PrEPster, iwantPrEPnow and HIV Scotland.
- The 2020 survey took place between October-November.
- 1502 people completed the survey in 2020 and were recruited through social media, dating apps, and mailing lists.
- Participants were eligible if they had used or had tried to get PrEP since January 2017 and were living in the UK at the time.
- Data were collected on demographics and PrEP use history.
- A free text question was asked on how respondents experiences of PrEP could be improved.
- The data were categorised thematically and frequency of these results were presented.



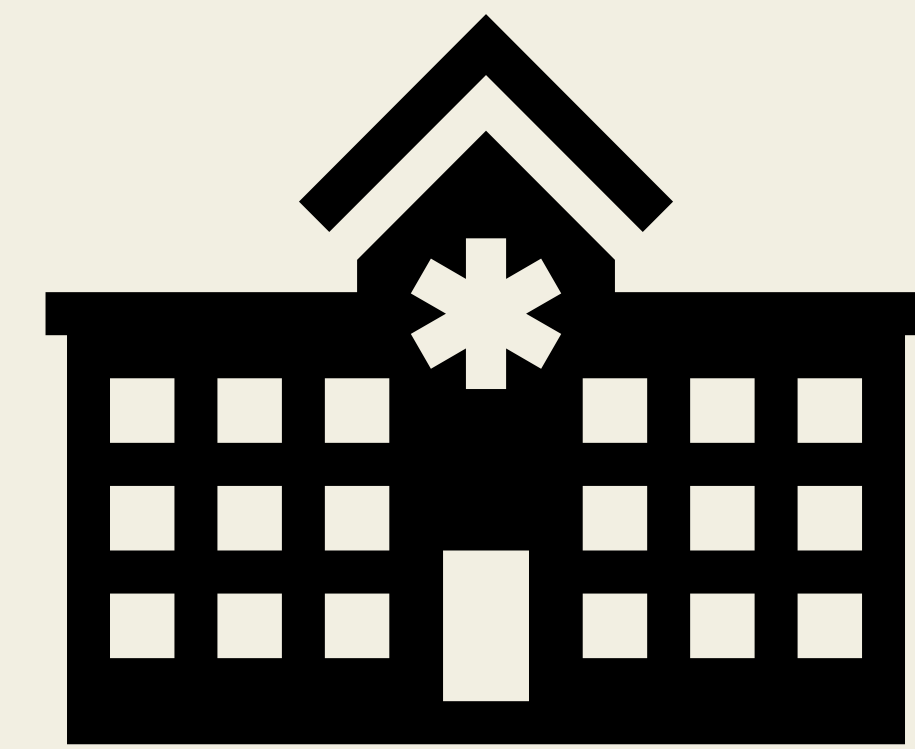
RESULTS



Sample characteristics

- 88% (1316) had used PrEP at some point since 2017
- 92% (1378) were gay men
- 67% (1005) were 35 or over
- 86% (1281) were of White ethnicity
- 89% (1315) lived in England, with 43% (635) living in London

Views on areas for improvement



- Less than 1 in 5 (18%, 228) thought that PrEP services did not need improving.
- 14% (172) asked for reduced barriers to access relating specifically to limited Impact trial places.
- 11% (144) suggested improvements to SHS, including reduced waiting times, more appointments and easier booking systems.
- 4% (56) asked for less discrimination surrounding sexual history and risk.
- 3% (40) wanted fewer face-to-face services.
- 2% (20) wanted better PrEP knowledge among health care staff.

46% (580/1271)
Suggested new access points*



- 25% (321) remote service e.g. online, phone or app
- 14% (181) via pharmacy/over the counter
- 10% (126) via GP
- 1% (17) Other e.g. community settings

*Outside of access options available between 2017-2020

Take home messages

- A minority of people who had tried to access PrEP felt that services did not need improving.
- There was a high demand for alternative service delivery settings of PrEP with remote services and pharmacy/over the counter being the most popular.
- Suggestions for ways to improve accessibility of current and future service delivery were made.
- Piloting and an implementation science evaluation is needed to determine which delivery models will improve uptake in the most underserved groups.

Limitations

- This survey largely captures data from when PrEP was available through the Impact trial. The barriers experienced here may differ to those experienced when attempting to access PrEP now it is routinely available on the NHS.
- The majority of respondents to the survey were White, gay men, with residence in London. Therefore, the experiences relating to PrEP access may not be relevant to everyone who would like to access, or benefit from accessing, PrEP.
- The survey was only available online so did not reach those without, or those who do not like, digital access.

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2. Department of Health and Social Care (2021) Towards Zero- An action plan towards ending HIV transmission, AIDS and HIV-related deaths in England- 2022 to 2025, available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towards-zero-the-hiv-action-plan-for-england-2022-to-2025/towards-zero-an-action-plan-towards-ending-hiv-transmission-aids-and-hiv-related-deaths-in-england-2022-to-2025> (date accessed 30/03/2022)