

# INFORMATION ON IMPROVEMENTS TO YOUR SERVICE

We are always looking at ways of improving the service we offer you, in a way that is financially astute and adheres to recommended guidelines, such as monitoring and delivery of care. We would like to inform you about the following changes:

## Blood Tests

- You may find that there are some blood tests we will not do as regularly, for example CD4 counts for people who are stable on treatment. This is because there is strong evidence that such regular monitoring is of no benefit.
- If your CD4 count is over 200 and you have been undetectable for over a year, we will only measure this once per year. The frequency of blood test requests will be decided by your doctor based on your current health, so please discuss this with them if you wish.

# Clinic Appointments

## Remote Clinics

- We are very aware that patients have busy lives and may be trying to juggle work, study, children and so on. As a service we are sensitive to this and have therefore increased the number of Remote Clinics we offer, as well as offering different days/times (including an evening).
- These are telephone appointments that avoid the need for you to attend clinic in person. There are specific criteria for patients wishing to use this service, such as having blood tests 2 weeks before a booked, timed telephone call appointment.
- If you haven't tried Remote Clinics yet but would like to, please discuss with your Doctor to see if they will be suitable for you.

## Annual Health Check Clinic

- There are certain screening tests that guidelines advise in

order to monitor and maintain your health. This can be difficult to achieve as many patients don't have to attend clinic as frequently as they used to.

- The Annual Health Check Clinic aims to cover these screening tests, as well as ensure you have the appropriate blood tests around 2 weeks prior to your Doctor appointment. Members of the multidisciplinary team (dietitian, occupational therapist, health adviser, sexual health nurse) will carry out the screening.
- The results of tests will be assessed at your Doctor appointment and if all is well, it will support continued 6 monthly Clinic/Remote appointments. We have increased the number of AHC clinics and an improved system will see you moving through the clinic more swiftly. We very much hope this will assist and encourage you to attend.

## Provision of Sexual Health Services

- Provision of sexual health services has changed significantly in Birmingham over the last year. At

Heartlands Hospital in Hawthorn House there is now a service called Umbrella. You are very welcome to use the Umbrella sexual health service but should be aware that it is no longer linked to our HIV service. This means we will not have access to your patient records or any control over the Umbrella service appointment or waiting times.

- We know how important the sexual health of our patients is, and so have invested in a new sexual health team, specifically for the HIV service. This includes a sexual health nurse specialist, health advisers, and support staff. This means that your sexual health needs can be met in this service developed for you.
- You will be able have a sexual health screen (whether you have any symptoms or not), discuss contraception, and have cervical smears (just ask any member of staff when you are in the clinic). Should you need to see a sexual health nurse or a health adviser you can contact us on 0121 424 2847.
- Please note that this new bespoke sexual health service is not open to the general public, but only for patients under the care of Birmingham Heartlands HIV service. If you have any questions or queries please ask the staff in clinic.

## Pharmacy Service

- On days when there are more than 2 doctors in clinic, we will endeavour to provide 2 Pharmacists to screen prescriptions. This should improve your pathway through clinic.

If you would like to discuss any of these changes, or have any comments/suggestions about the service, please feel free to speak to a member of staff / write to us / comment on our website (you do not need to use your correct name to do so if you prefer to be anonymous)

**[www.HIVBirmingham.nhs.uk](http://www.HIVBirmingham.nhs.uk)**

We will always welcome constructive feedback.


### *Useful websites*

[www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)  
[www.i-base.info](http://www.i-base.info)  
[www.tht.org.uk/myhiv](http://www.tht.org.uk/myhiv)  
[www.blgbt.org](http://www.blgbt.org)  
[www.abplus.org.uk](http://www.abplus.org.uk)  
[www.positivelyuk.org](http://www.positivelyuk.org)  
[www.chiva.org.uk](http://www.chiva.org.uk)  
[www.hiv-druginteractions.org](http://www.hiv-druginteractions.org)  
[www.hep-druginteractions.org](http://www.hep-druginteractions.org)  
[www.freshwinds.org.uk](http://www.freshwinds.org.uk)  
[www.umbrellahealth.co.uk](http://www.umbrellahealth.co.uk)

Official charity partner

**SAVING  
LIVES**

**[www.savinglivesuk.com](http://www.savinglivesuk.com)**

 **@savinglivesuk**

# BIRMINGHAM HEARTLANDS **HIV SERVICE**

## **0121 424 2847**

Important Contacts for you:

- If you need to cancel your appointment please contact:  
ID Outpatients reception on **0121 424 3359** or **0121 424 2847**
- If you need to speak to an **HIV Clinical Nurse Specialist**  
Call: **0121 424 0361** between 9-5pm  
or email: **bhs-tr.HIVCNS@nhs.net**
- If you have a problem with your HIV medication or have questions about HIV drug-interactions you can contact our **HIV Pharmacy Hotline**  
Call: **0121 424 0865** between 9-5pm  
or email: **bhs-tr.HIVPharmacists@nhs.net**  
for information on HIV drug interactions please use:  
**[www.HIVdruginteractions.org](http://www.HIVdruginteractions.org)**
- To arrange a sexual health check up, a cervical smear, discuss contraception or to speak to **Health Advisers** or **Sexual Health** specialist:  
Call: - **0121 424 2847**  
or email: **bhs-tr.HIVsexualhealth@nhs.net**
- For information on the HIV Paediatric/Family/Adolescent services:  
Please call – **0121 424 2834/0361**

If you would like to get your partner/s HIV tested, the HIV Sexual Health Team can organise this for you.

Alternatively they can request a free HIV postal testing kit from

# [www.HIVTESTUK.com](http://www.HIVTESTUK.com)