

Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
Secretary of State
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
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Date: 2nd February 2021
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Dear Mr Hancock,

Brighton and Hove has been the chosen home for many people living with HIV since the outbreak of the epidemic in the UK. We are proud to be the host of some of the best HIV support, treatment, and prevention services in the country: The Sussex Beacon, The Martin Fisher Foundation, Lunch Positive and local Terrence Higgins Trust outreach services.

We have closely followed the work of the HIV Commission, founded in 2019 by Terrence Higgins Trust, National AIDS Trust and the Elton John AIDS Foundation. We were proud to convene one of their evidence sessions and support the recommendations it set out on World AIDS Day 2020 as a blueprint to zero HIV by 2030. You will know how important each of its 20 actions are.

We have worked hard to increase testing in the city. We have some of the best online testing services in the country, have pioneered the HIV test vending machines (with the support from the HIV Prevention England Innovation Fund) and supported a number of community testing initiatives – including National HIV Testing Week. It is time to take this to the next level.

To bring the HIV Commission to life and find those undiagnosed in our community, HIV testing must be available when people present at A&E, register for a new GP and in local pharmacies. We are sure your department and NHS England are looking at what new advice, programmes and funding needs to be in place to make this happen. With some of the new funds that we are sure you will make available, Brighton and Hove would like to put itself forward as an early implementer for the national aspiration of normalising HIV testing across health services – we are eager to get this underway and would be honoured to be the first to make it happen.

We are the perfect place to make this happen. The council, its MPs and the key services share the vision of ending new cases of HIV and will work across the system to normalise HIV testing and fight HIV-related stigma. In 2017 Brighton & Hove became the first UK city to have 'HIV Fast Track City,' status, recognising our commitment to achieve zero new HIV infections and zero AIDS-related deaths.

We know DHSC is working on a HIV Action Plan, but action on this cannot wait. A local pilot is the perfect way to kick this off, trial the systems needs and learn for a national pilot.

With 5,700 people undiagnosed in England, and such a stubbornly high rate of late diagnoses, we all need to pull together. Brighton and Hove is keen to pull our weight and be the NHS' pioneer.

Thanks in advance for your consideration. We look forward to hearing from you and creating a working group to make this happen.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Phélim Mac Cafferty
Leader of the Council
Green Party Councillor for Brunswick and Adelaide, Brighton and Hove City Council



Caroline Lucas MP, Brighton Pavilion



Lloyd Russell Moyle MP, Brighton Kemptown



Peter Kyle MP, Hove and Portslade