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National PrEP programme and the NHS Funding Bill

Further to my letter of 18 March 2019 to which I regret nearly a year later I never received a response, I write once again to urge your Department to provide greatly needed funding to local authorities and health partners to ensure that the HIV preventative drug, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is made widely available as part of a national PrEP programme. The NHS Funding Bill, which today goes to Committee stage in the House of Commons, represents an ideal opportunity to not only make a funding commitment to all local authorities and health partners but to put this on a legislative footing.

PrEP is nearly 100% effective when taken as prescribed, and is a vital part of effective HIV prevention. The very basis of our National Health Service is that such life-changing treatments should be widely accessible, not just available to those who can afford to pay. This undertaking is also vital if the Government is serious about meeting its pledge to get to zero new HIV transmissions by 2030. Regional and local authorities in London are already being ambitious with this 2030 target, with the Mayor of London signing up to Fast-Track Cities – ending new infections, HIV related stigma and discrimination once and for all.

As you are aware, in April 2019 London local authorities agreed to increase trial places by 60%, representing well over 4,000 additional places in London for the IMPACT PrEP trial. This means that there are now approximately 12,000 places in London, but these places are fast being filled and look set to be at capacity before the end of the trial in September this year. We cannot afford for the provision of such vital treatment to become a 'postcode lottery' nor is it reasonable for local authorities, whose public health and overall budgets have suffered drastic cuts in funding over the past decade, to bear the costs for this treatment, which should be funded centrally to ensure universal provision – free at the point of use and available to all – in line with the fundamental tenets of the National Health Service.



In Hackney we are committed to tackling HIV prevalence, and we recognise that to do this it is vital that we expand the availability of treatment. We recognise that PrEP has the potential to transform many of our residents' lives and, as the NHS Funding Bill reaches Committee stage, we would urge you to put a commitment to fully fund a national PrEP programme into law.

I would welcome an early meeting to discuss the funding and availability of this life-changing treatment with you and I would be grateful if you could ask your office to contact mine on the details above to make the necessary arrangements.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Glanville', written in a cursive style.

Philip Glanville
Mayor of Hackney