

Individual programmatic elements will inevitably differ from setting to setting, as local needs and resources dictate, but should empower people living with HIV by:

- Increasing access to, and understanding of, evidence-informed programmes that suit individual needs and that provide support by giving people choices on how to live healthy lives.
- Scaling up and supporting existing testing, care, support, treatment and prevention programmes that are community owned and led.
- Expanding comprehensive health services for people living with HIV, including screening of and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of opportunistic infections, including tuberculosis and viral hepatitis, and provision of harm reduction and other services.
- Scaling up and supporting health, treatment and prevention literacy.
- Improving food security for those in need and facilitating income generation activities.
- Providing 'know your legal and human rights and legal responsibilities' information.



UNAIDS and the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+) are collaborating with relevant partners, including the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC) and the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW), to accelerate agreement on the programmatic components of 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention'.

Vuyiseka Dubula, the General Secretary of the Treatment Action Campaign, has underscored that "there is an urgent need to ensure that the goals of 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention' are achieved and get the same attention as access to treatment. The right to health and human rights needs to be upheld in an environment that has seen an expansion of laws violating human rights, increasing stigma, discrimination and homophobia and with implications for HIV funding cuts."

Moving forward with 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention'

GNP+ and the UNAIDS Secretariat will work in partnership with networks of people living with HIV, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, government agencies, international development agencies, UNAIDS Cosponsors, donor agencies and other partners to achieve the following outputs of the strategy:

- GNP+ is developing an international framework for 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention' through a consultative process with networks of people living with HIV and other key partners. The framework highlights the rationale of such an approach, documents examples of good and bad practice, discusses the opportunities and threats to implementation and further develops the outcomes sought from operationalizing the concept.

- GNP+ will ensure that networks of people living with HIV are engaged in using the framework for programming and advocacy, including developing operational guidelines.
- UNAIDS will advocate for the endorsement, adoption and implementation of 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention' by key stakeholders and will integrate the concept into the UNAIDS Partnership Strategy and into regional and country-level missions.
- UNAIDS plans to build capacity to support the implementation of 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention' across the Joint Programme and by organizations and networks of people living with HIV through regional skills-building workshops and focused support for key organizations of people living with HIV and by mobilizing funding and technical support facilities to support civil society capacity-building.
- UNAIDS and GNP+ will develop monitoring and evaluation indicators for 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention' and will build the capacity of monitoring and evaluation advisers to work with organizations and networks of people living with HIV on the monitoring and evaluation of 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention' interventions at the country level.
- UNAIDS will ensure coordination with other initiatives, such as the roll-out of the Agenda for accelerated country action for women, girls, gender equality and HIV.



Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention

What is 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention'?

'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention' focuses on improving and maintaining the health and well-being of people living with HIV, which, in turn, contributes to the health and well-being of partners, families and communities. This is in direct contrast to previous approaches to 'positive prevention', which could be construed as treating people living with HIV as vectors of transmission. By focusing on the journey experienced by people living with HIV from testing to support, care and treatment, 'Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention' positions the health and social needs and experiences of people living with HIV within a human rights framework.



“‘Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention’ challenges our thinking on HIV prevention with people living with HIV” notes Dr Kevin Moody, the International Coordinator and CEO of the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+). “It highlights the importance of placing the person living with HIV at the centre of managing their health and well-being, within the sociocultural and legal context in which they live. It also stresses the importance of addressing prevention and treatment simultaneously and holistically and emphasizes the leadership of people living with HIV in responding to policy and legal barriers and in driving the agenda forward.”

History

People living with HIV have always been powerful and passionate advocates for HIV prevention. Until recently, the understanding of HIV prevention as it relates to people living with HIV has been inconsistent or ill-defined. In addition, policies and programmes aimed at people living with HIV have been designed, for the most part, without the meaningful involvement of people living with HIV.



In April 2009 a technical consultation involving international participants representing networks of people living with HIV, civil society, government agencies, UNAIDS Cosponsors, international donors and development agencies took place in Tunisia. At the consultation, participants moved away from the potentially stigmatizing term ‘positive prevention’, agreeing that the focus of ‘positive prevention’ was too narrow and should be replaced by a broader, more holistic approach. As part of the shift away from the idea that the burden of responsibility for HIV transmission should be placed solely on HIV-positive people aware of their status, the term ‘Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention’ was introduced. Subsequent regional consultations have broadly agreed on this new concept. However, just as the programmatic elements of ‘Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention’ will change according to the setting and context, the term itself may need to be adapted when translated into local languages.

According to Michel Sidibé, UNAIDS Executive Director, “UNAIDS is committed to standing by people living with and affected by HIV and promotes the concept of ‘Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention’. With an approach that is informed by evidence and grounded in human rights, we must all support countries to achieve their universal access goals towards HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.”

Values and principles

The following principles of ‘Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention’ should be incorporated into all policies and programmes aimed at people living with HIV:

- People living with HIV have a great deal of knowledge, experience and insight and are not just patients. As such, people living with HIV must be leaders in the choice, design, programming, implementation, research, monitoring and evaluation of all programmes and policies affecting them.

- People living with HIV are not vectors of transmission. Their human and civil rights must be protected, which is why a human rights approach is the foundation of ‘Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention’.
- People living with HIV have dignity and should not be treated as scapegoats to be blamed when HIV transmission occurs.
- Like everyone else, people living with HIV have needs and desires, which is why sexual and reproductive health and rights, in particular for women and girls, must be recognized and exercised by everyone, regardless of HIV status.
- Preventing HIV transmission is a shared responsibility of all individuals, irrespective of HIV status.

‘Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention’ entails the following key aspects:

- It requires working towards a supportive and protective legal and policy environment that aims for a world free of HIV-related stigma and discrimination.



- It should promote holistic health and wellness, including universal access to voluntary HIV testing, care and support and timely access to voluntary treatment and monitoring.
- It focuses on improving and maintaining the health and well-being of people living with HIV, which, in turn, contributes to the health and well-being of their partners, families and communities.
- It should include addressing psychosocial, economic, educational and sociocultural vulnerabilities and issues related to gender and sexuality.
- It should be responsive to the needs of key populations and should respect and be tailored to specific contexts and the diversity among people living with HIV.
- It should be responsive to the particular and specific needs relating to gender, including the needs of women and girls.

Programmatic components

The ‘Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention’ concept involves mainstreaming HIV issues, with special emphasis on:

- Health promotion and access.
- Sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Prevention of transmission.
- Human rights, in particular economic, social and cultural rights, including stigma and discrimination reduction.
- HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.
- HIV testing and counselling.
- Gender equality.
- Social and economic support.
- Empowerment.
- Measuring impact.