

# POSITIVE HEALTH, DIGNITY AND PREVENTION

What does it mean for me?



## **About the Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+)**

GNP+ is the global network for and by people living with HIV. We work to improve the quality of life of all people living with HIV. This means we advocate for, and support fair and equal access to treatment, care and support services for people living with HIV around the world.

## **Acknowledgments**

Writing and editing: Aditi Sharma and Laura Davies

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# WHO IS THIS BOOKLET FOR?

This booklet explains what Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention means for people living with HIV and their communities.

It is one of a series of materials that aims to improve the understanding of Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention. We hope these will be used by networks of people living with HIV and other groups to promote the meaningful engagement of people living with HIV in decisions that affect their lives.

The Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention framework was developed for and by people living with HIV. It is a living idea that continues to evolve and can be used to support our lives today.







So it's a new HIV programme?

No, it's not a programme, it's a way of looking at our lives.

It's about how HIV affects our lives. And it is about staying healthy and preventing HIV.

That sounds like 'positive prevention'.

We used to think so too, until we went to a PHDP training last month.

Yes, we learnt how PHDP is not the same as 'positive prevention' or 'positive living'.

# HOW IS PHDP DIFFERENT?

‘Positive prevention’ often focuses on people living with HIV preventing HIV transmission to others.

‘Positive living’ supports people living with HIV to stay healthy through taking their treatment regularly, getting good nutrition and exercise, as well as practicing safer sex.

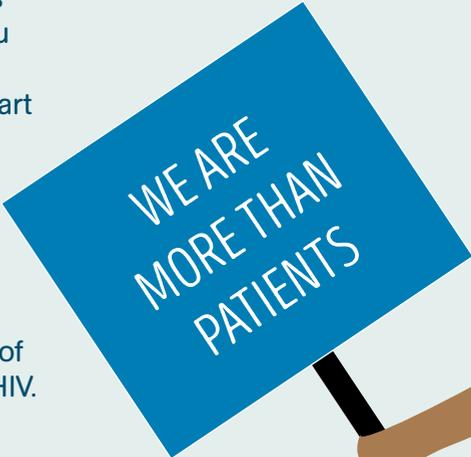
Unlike previous programmes, ‘Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention’ encourages everyone to share responsibility for preventing HIV. It is about more than physical, mental and sexual health. It focuses on the rights, dignity and complete wellbeing of people living with HIV.



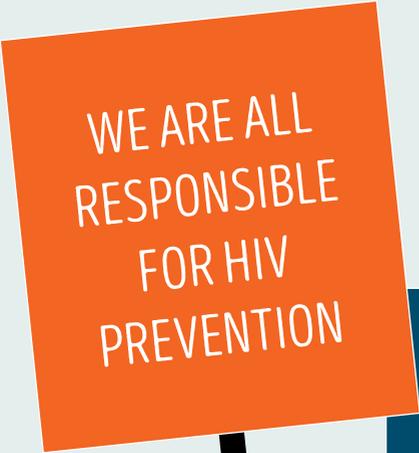
Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention is about us – people living with HIV like you and me and our families. We have the right to make our own choices and be part of decisions that affect our lives. PHDP empowers us to lead and guide efforts to stop HIV, instead of seeing us as the problem.

It is about sharing responsibility for preventing HIV in our communities – all of us, not just men and women living with HIV.

PHDP is not just about HIV, it's about all our needs and desires. Finding a way to live full and content lives with dignity – free from stigma.



WE ARE  
MORE THAN  
PATIENTS



WE ARE ALL  
RESPONSIBLE  
FOR HIV  
PREVENTION



WE WILL NOT BE  
TREATED AS A  
RISK TO  
OTHERS



WE HAVE  
NEEDS AND  
DESIRES TO BE  
FULFILLED



But will it make a difference ... can I use it to make my family's life better?

That's a good question. We need to know how to use PHDP to change our lives.



I like PHDP because it helps me understand what I have the right to expect from other people.



People like our families, our preacher, our doctor and even our government.



PHDP gives a set of standards to guide their behaviour towards people living with HIV.

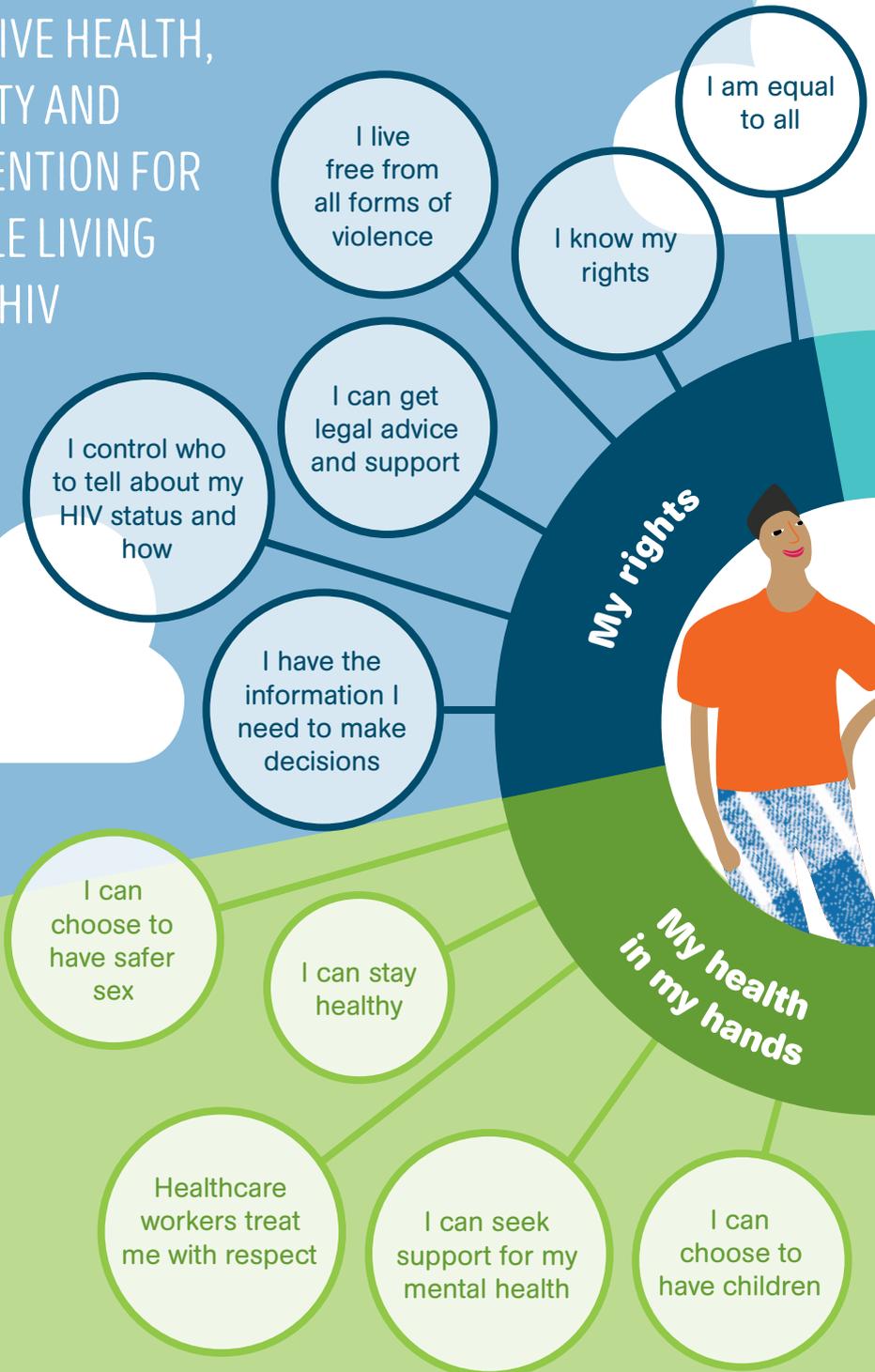
Yes, we can use PHDP to demand that they all treat us fairly.

Tell me more!

Well, it can feel like a lot to take in, so let's see if the picture on the next page helps.



# POSITIVE HEALTH, DIGNITY AND PREVENTION FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV







That drawing is like a picture of my whole life! Where do we begin?



## TALKING ABOUT RIGHTS

Firstly, Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention means that as people living with HIV we can feel confident in all aspects of our lives. Some of us may help lead the response to HIV in our communities. We all want to make sure our families get respectful care from nurses and doctors. The police should treat us fairly, just like everyone else.

To be able to feel confident we need to:



We are all equal.



Our laws, policies and communities should treat us as equals. Women and men, boys and girls, in all our diversity. No matter what faith we follow, what work we do or who we choose to love. It should not matter if we were born in a different country to the one we now live in.

No one should be criminalised for living with HIV, being a sex worker, being gay or transgender, or using drugs.

As women, we need to be able to enjoy all our rights and live free from violence.

We should all be able to live safely and openly in our communities without stigma and discrimination.

We should be able to follow our dreams!



# OUR HEALTH

What makes Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention different is the importance of shared responsibility for preventing new HIV infections. As a person living with HIV, my health is my responsibility and I want to do all I can to prevent HIV transmission to my sexual partner, children or others. But others in my community also have a responsibility to learn more and use the best methods available to protect themselves from HIV.



Science has shown that the sooner we start HIV treatment, the better our health in the long-run.

Science has also shown that people living with HIV who take their treatment regularly and have an undetectable viral load\* are unlikely to transmit to others.

\* The amount of HIV in your blood is called the viral load. When you have an undetectable viral load, the level of HIV in your blood is very low and your immune system is able to fight HIV.

It is important we have supportive laws and policies to help us find out, disclose and discuss our HIV status openly and safely.

Everyone in our communities should feel able to go for an HIV test, knowing they can live a full, healthy life if the result is positive.



As a young person, I need to be supported not judged so that I can look after my own health.

It's not just about ARVs for HIV. All our health needs are important – TB, hepatitis, STIs, cancer, malaria.

We should be able to access specific services if we need them, such as clean needles and family planning services.

We have needs and desires like anyone else. We should be able to choose to have safer, pleasurable sex.

We should be able to decide if we want children or not and how many.

Our mental health and emotional wellbeing are equally important.

# WHAT OTHER SUPPORT DO WE NEED?

Our dignity and wellbeing do not just depend on our physical, sexual and mental health. It is important for us and our families to enjoy all our basic rights. These include:

Adequate food and clean water every day

A safe place to live

Access to education and training

Opportunities to work and earn an income to support our families

Financial support for those of us who are ill, caring for others living with HIV, disabled, or from poor or marginalised communities





Who else should know about and support PHDP?



### **Networks of people living with HIV including networks representing women, young people and key populations**

These networks are best placed to reach our communities, help explain PHDP and make sure we have the latest information on HIV. They can also mobilise us and empower us to speak out for our rights and advocate for change.



### **Healthcare workers**

As people living with HIV, we depend on nurses and doctors for treatment and care. PHDP helps guide them and us on what respectful and dignified care should look like.



### **Ministry of Health and other government departments**

Our government is responsible for laws and policies that guide our society. It can help put PHDP into practice. The first step is to involve people living with HIV and our networks in HIV programmes and plans.



**Others** who need to support PHDP include teachers, employers, donors, police, social workers, lawyers and prison officers. Community leaders such as traditional, faith

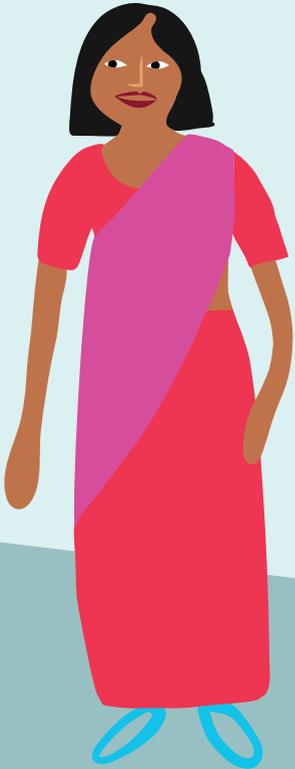
leaders and local politicians and community-based or faith-based organisations are also important.



So, Positive Health, Dignity and Prevention starts from us as people living with HIV.

PHDP is about responding to all our needs and desires not just about preventing HIV or staying healthy. It is about improving the quality of our lives so that each of us can live with dignity.

PHDP matters because it provides a framework of what to expect from people and institutions in our lives. It gives us standards that we can use to make sure we are treated fairly.



Now that I understand PHDP I can use it as I live my life.

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Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+)

Eerste Helmersstraat 17B3  
1054 CX Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

Phone: +31 20 423 4114

E-mail: [infognp@gnpplus.net](mailto:infognp@gnpplus.net)

[www.gnpplus.net](http://www.gnpplus.net)