



PrEP Clinic download

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Download this document and take it to your sexual health clinic with you if you're asking for support about PrEP use. Remember that some frontline staff in the NHS – such as reception staff – might not be fully aware of PrEP, especially if their clinic currently does not offer PrEP support. Many other NHS staff will know about PrEP, and support it, but might be unaware of what support they are able to offer. If you encounter staff in a clinic that say they do not know about PrEP or that the clinic does not offer PrEP support, **ask to see the lead member of staff or the clinical manager in the clinic.** If the manager is not immediately available ask for their name and contact information.

The chance to talk more about PrEP

If you've turned up at a clinic to ask about starting PrEP, the chances are you've already decided that PrEP might be for you. Most clinics will want to check this out with you and to help to see if there are other options to explore. Now is a good opportunity to talk through with a trained staff member about PrEP.

PrEP is currently NOT available on the NHS, so the clinic staff won't be able to give you PrEP. Some clinics will offer a private prescription but these are expensive. If you've decided that PrEP is right for you, then staff CANNOT prevent you from buying PrEP online.

Concerns about supply and buying online

If staff members raise concerns about self-purchase of PrEP online then let them know that:

- It is legal to buy generic PrEP online if it's for personal use
- I Want PrEP Now (IWPN) and PrEPster have done test purchases on all of the online suppliers featured on IWPN
- Over 350 therapeutic drug-monitoring (TDM) tests have been undertaken by Dean St on people who have bought PrEP online – and not one of those tests indicated fake drug

The tests to ask for

Let the clinic staff know that you are asking for the following regular FREE services:

- An HIV test to check for sure that you don't have HIV
- A full STI screening

Now is also a good time to check that vaccinations for hepatitis A and B are up-to-date. If you're a gay or bisexual man under 45 also ask about HPV vaccination (the warts virus).

In addition, ask for the following tests to check your kidney health:

- A dip-stick urine test to check for proteins in the urine (and then this test every quarter)
- A blood test to check for creatinine and eGFR in the blood (and then this test once a year)

These last two tests are the ONLY additional tests that are required when using PrEP. In some instances, if the kidneys are healthy over a period of time, then health staff might recommend that these tests do not need to be undertaken so frequently. Some clinics might say that they are not funded to provide such tests and therefore cannot provide them (see below).

Therapeutic drug monitoring

Given the available evidence on the quality of PrEP bought from reliable suppliers, TDM tests are NOT recommended as standard tests (although some clinics might want to conduct a TDM).

Health staffs' concerns about providing support about PrEP

Given that it's not usual for people to be buying drugs online, many health professionals have been cautious about offering advice or providing support to people who buy PrEP online. If your clinic raises concerns, then show them the following advice from the General Medical Council that was provided to HIV clinicians in London who have been offering support to PrEP users.

“In our guidance on good practice in prescribing, we use ‘prescribing’ to describe many related activities, including advising patients on the purchase of medicines. The guidance also makes clear that doctors are responsible for their decisions and actions when they supply and administer medicines or authorise or instruct others to do so.

Raising the possibility of obtaining medicines for PrEP online as part of the wider discussion of HIV prevention options for patients with high-risk behaviours would appear to be consistent with our guidance on consent and decision-making. At paragraph 9 we say that doctors should give patients the information they want and need about options for treating and managing their condition, the potential benefits, burdens and risks for each option, and any treatments that they think has greater potential benefit for the patient than they or their organisation can offer. The same principles would apply to discussions about disease prevention and risk management.”

The costs of kidney function tests

As mentioned above, the ONLY additional recommended tests when using PrEP are quarterly urine tests and annual blood tests to check for kidney function. These tests are being offered for free at many PrEP support clinics in the UK. However, there have been some reports of clinics not providing these tests because they say they are not funded to do them. The tests are cheap and we think they should be provided as part of holistic sexual health care.

What to do if you encounter any problems

If you encounter any difficulties accessing PrEP support, or any of the tests above:

- PrEP, and people self-purchasing PrEP online, is new to many people. Some staff might not know what their clinic is able to offer, or might not know about the safeguards that have been put in place about online purchased PrEP. It's a good chance to educate and advocate for PrEP services!
- Take notes and details and names, and explain that you want to follow up to improve PrEP service support. Do this assertively but respectfully
- If you know your local HIV or health advocacy group, get in contact with them and ask if they can advocate on your behalf
- Contact hello@prepster.info if you continue to experience difficulties – we'll be able to offer further assistance or put you in touch with someone else who can

FURTHER INFORMATION

<http://prepster.info/buying-prep-online/>

<http://www.iwantprepnw.co.uk>

<http://i-base.info/uk-guide-to-prep/>

Finally, at PrEPster and IWPN we know that big changes can happen by small actions. We're huge fans of the NHS and the frontline staff who work in a service we're proud of. We've witnessed clinics offering full PrEP support services by just one or two people putting gentle pressure on their local clinic to get it to happen. If you face any obstacles in clinics, remember that staff are working under huge pressure but usually want the very same things as we do.