



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

## Statement on BC's new HIV testing guidelines

May 15, 2014

On Monday, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Perry Kendall announced new guidelines for HIV testing. The expanded guidelines are part of BC's Seek and Treat to Optimize Prevention (STOP) HIV strategy and recommend more frequent testing for BC residents including Aboriginal people.

The guidelines recommend annual testing for populations deemed more vulnerable to HIV and those with higher prevalence of HIV, including Aboriginal people.

*"HIV rates for Aboriginal people in BC are greatly improving recently, but more can be done. Testing early, diagnosing early and treating early improves outcomes. I encourage all Aboriginal people in BC to be tested, not just for you, but to set an example for family members and future generations."*

Dr. Evan Adams, Senior Physician Advisor, FNHA. Deputy Provincial Health Officer, Provincial Health Office

*"An HIV diagnosis is no longer a death sentence. Treatment has improved, and the earlier that we begin treatment the better our chances are. Help is available."* Dr. Shannon Waters, Acting Senior Medical Officer, FNHA

The strategy promotes testing of all British Columbians—not only to determine their status—but to also ensure that those individuals who test positive are informed and counselled, that they are engaged and will benefit from treatment over the long term.

Rates of HIV infection vary amongst Aboriginal peoples depending on risk factors and risk behaviours; the FNHA supports frequent HIV testing for all Aboriginal people in BC.

### Where to get tested

SmartSexResource Clinic Finder: <http://smartsexresource.com/get-tested/clinic-finder>

Northern Region "request the test" locations: <http://hiv101.ca/Resources/TestingLocations.aspx>

Federal list of HIV testing hotlines by province: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/aids-sida/info/4-eng.php#find>

Island Health: [http://www.viha.ca/mho/disease/hiv\\_sti.htm](http://www.viha.ca/mho/disease/hiv_sti.htm)

Fraser Region HIV clinics: [http://www.fraserhealth.ca/find\\_us/services/our\\_services?program\\_id=14254](http://www.fraserhealth.ca/find_us/services/our_services?program_id=14254)

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