

PRACTICE BASED TEMPLATE

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Test Today, Treat Today: A peer-led revolution in STI response

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Background/Purpose:

50% of NZ HIV diagnoses occur late, gonorrhoea among MSM has doubled since 2017, yet many in priority populations avoid testing through conventional pathways due to stigma and self-perceived risk. Building on 17 years of community testing, Body Positive launched Test.n.Treat on 1 December 2025: a comprehensive sexual health model designed to expand access.

Approach:

GeneXpert CT/NG point-of-care testing integrated with HIV, syphilis and HCV rapid testing in a single free drop-in visit, open to all regardless of residency. A nurse seconded from Auckland Sexual Health offers same-session treatment, PrEP, doxyPEP and vaccinations – providing clinical oversight within a peer-led setting. Clients self-select tests without disclosure, a design particularly valued by TGD clients. CT/NG results are delivered within 90 minutes; reactive results trigger immediate treatment linkage.

Outcomes/Impact:

The impact of Test.n.Treat on HIV testing demand was immediate, providing a sustained 80% increase in testing and the highest annual volume in our 18-year testing history. CT/NG testing uptake rose from 20% to 97% of clients. 28% reported they would not have tested elsewhere. 58.8% GBM. 37.5% aged 15-29. 50% of clients had never previously had an HCV test. Positivity rates were clinically significant: Chlamydia 7.4%, Gonorrhoea 4.0%, Syphilis 1.7%, HIV 0.2%. 96.97% of clients rated their experience “Excellent”, and time to treatment was reduced from weeks to under 48 hours.

Innovation and Significance:

Test.n.Treat demonstrates that a community-led model can reach people who avoid conventional care due to stigma. A key finding has been the ‘passive inclusion’ effect: clients attending for CT/NG testing are now routinely receiving BBV screening they would not have sought elsewhere. Free and open to all regardless of residency, the service has not been overburdened by healthcare-ineligible clients. Embedding clinically-supervised nurse care eliminates onward referral and loss to follow-up, offering a replicable community template that requires no standalone clinical infrastructure.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

Body Positive is a community-based organisation operating independently in Auckland, New Zealand. No pharmaceutical grants were received in the development of this service or programme.