

Testing On Your Terms – The Design of a Free National Online HIV & STI Testing Service in Aotearoa

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Background/Purpose:

Access to HIV and sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing remains inequitable, with barriers including stigma, geography, cost, and limited-service availability contributing to delayed diagnosis and ongoing transmission.

Get Tested NZ is a Health New Zealand funded, digitally enabled self-testing national service, designed to increase equitable access to testing for HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis. The service provides a single online entry point where users can assess eligibility, order free home-based self-testing kits, or be directed to laboratory and a range of clinical services as appropriate. The purpose was to create a user-centred, scalable system that reduces barriers, supports early detection, and integrates self-testing within existing health pathways.

Approach:

A user-centred, equity-focused approach was used to develop the service, prioritising accessibility, privacy and ease of use. The development of the service included hosting reference groups with NGO's including Kaupapa Māori services, laboratories and Health New Zealand to ensure that Get Tested NZ met the needs of a diverse range of stakeholders.

Outcomes/Impact:

The service establishes a National "portal" to testing, enabling access regardless of location. Whilst online availability of self-testing has been available in Aotearoa, this has usually been at a cost. This National service provides access to free testing, , as well as integrating clinical triage to ensure appropriate care pathways. The service also provides information about multiple support providers, that ensure that users can have choice over the services they use.

Innovation and Significance:

GetTestedNZ represents a shift from clinic-based delivery to a hybrid, digitally enabled free self-care model on a national scale. This service demonstrates how HIV and STI self-testing can be safely integrated within a public health system led by a Non-Government Organisation. The design and implementation of GetTestedNZ, from funding through to "go-live" will be explored in this presentation.

Disclosure of Interest Statement

Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa recognises the considerable contribution of Health New Zealand, Burnett Foundation, Body Positive, Toitu te Ao and Awanui Labs in the design and funding of this service. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in publications and presentations.