

Our Ref: JF 16-0603.3

Specialised Commissioning
Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

Medical Research Council
Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London WC2B 6NH

Sent by email to s.mccormack@ucl.ac.uk

3 June 2016

Dear Members of the Medical Research Council

Thank you for your letter to Simon Stevens concerning the commissioning and provision of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for the prevention of HIV. I am replying on his behalf.

As you will be aware, a statement was placed on the NHS England website in March 2016 explaining that PrEP could not be considered for the specialised services annual prioritisation process. In the light of representations from stakeholder groups NHS England agreed to reconsider this decision. This took place on 31 May 2016 by our Specialised Services Commissioning Committee. In summary, the Committee

considered and accepted NHS England's external legal advice that NHS England does not have the legal power to commission PrEP;

confirmed that NHS England remains committed to working with other commissioners to explore the possible provision of prep. This includes working in partnership with Public Health England to run a number of early implementer test sites, backed with up to £2m investment over the next two years, to research how PrEP could be commissioned in the most clinically and cost effective way.

A full copy of the paper and legal advice considered by the Specialised Services Commissioning Committee can be viewed on our website <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2016/05/prep-provision/>

I very much welcome your offer to work in partnership to reduce HIV infections and improve the sexual health of local communities and have shared your letter with Public Health England who will be convening the group to develop the early implementer test sites.

As part of the overall considerations for the test sites will be consideration of any ongoing needs of PROUD participants. We have already held initial discussions with Gilead on this matter. Furthermore, we will continue to work with you and Public Health England to explore all avenues for how PrEP might be made available in the most clinically and cost effective way.

NHS England remains committed to working with stakeholders to ensure that together we can plan to best meet the needs of local people in respect of HIV and sexual health.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Fielden', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Jonathan Fielden FRCP FRCA FICM MFMLM
Director of Specialised Commissioning
Deputy National Medical Director
NHS England