

A National Approach to Drive HCV Elimination in English Drug Services and Prisons

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Background

- NHS England (NHSE) aims to achieve elimination of Hepatitis C (HCV) by 2025.
- In England, people in prison and people who have injected drugs have higher HCV prevalence in comparison to the general population.¹
- Gilead Sciences has created a first of kind national programme to define, drive and measure HCV elimination in incarcerated and injecting drug use populations, in partnership with the NHS, 23 liver networks, 160 drug services and 83 prisons reaching 240,000 at-risk individuals.^{2*}

*Numbers accurate as of August 2024

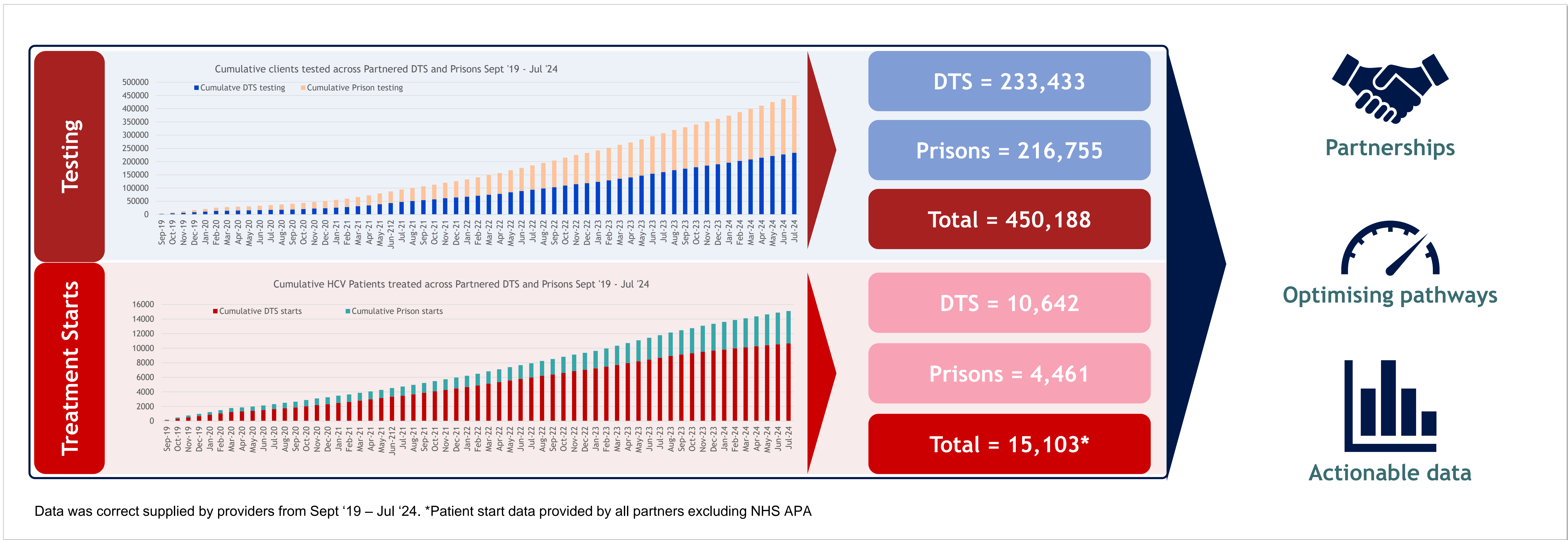
Objective

- To improve HCV testing and treatment pathways in English prisons and community-based drug and alcohol services by collaborating with the country's largest third sector providers for prison healthcare and drug and alcohol services
- To create standardised staff training programmes
- To create standardised testing and treatment pathways
- To create national systems of defining and measuring microelimination in local settings

Methods

- As NHS England is unable to directly commission social care services funded by local councils, Gilead played an intermediary role to close the gap between health and social care by contracting approximately 85% of England's prison healthcare providers and drug services to increase HCV testing and treatment under NHSE's largest ever pharmaceutical procurement programme, the HCV Elimination Tender.
- These contracts included key performance measures on HCV education, testing, treatment and strategy and pathway development as well as funding for dedicated national and regional HCV coordinator roles.
- These roles in drug and alcohol services and prisons are supported by Gilead non-promotional HCV teams at national and local levels to collaborate with local stakeholders create and implement national strategies, develop and monitor performance, conduct national testing campaigns, deliver training, improve local care pathways and collect and share HCV activity data.
- Gilead created working groups to support the prison and drug and alcohol sectors to create microelimination definitions, criteria, standards and toolkits, best practice sharing materials and a multi-stakeholder HCV database to track live progress to elimination for partnered services

Results



- This partnership has contributed to delivery of 450,118 HCV tests, 15,103 HCV treatment starts, and a consistent sector-wide approach to deliver elimination locally in individual prisons and drug services.
- This work has received national recognition from awards bodies, including “Best Partnership with the NHS” in 2019 and “Best Healthcare Analytics Project for the NHS” in 2023 from the Health Service Journal.^{3, 4}
- There have been national, sector-wide changes to prioritise HCV, with effective tools to support elimination. This includes systems to define and track elimination in drug services and prisons, a national forum to create microelimination definitions, criteria, standards and toolkits, best practice sharing materials and a multi-stakeholder HCV database to track live progress to elimination for partnered services.

Conclusions

- A national framework grounded in collaboration between governments, health systems, social care and industry can close gaps in health and social care provision and drive testing and treatment to support HCV elimination.
- Next steps include expansion to support additional at-risk populations, non-partnered providers and other countries with HCV elimination ambitions.

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2 “NHS Strikes World Leading Deal to Help Eliminate Hepatitis C.”NHS England. Available at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2019/04/nhs-england-strikes-world-leading-deal-to-help-eliminate-hepatitis-c/> 3. “HSJ Partnership Awards 2019: HSJ Partnership of the Year.” Health Service Journal. Available at <https://awards.hsj.co.uk/hsj-partnership-year-0> 4. “HSJ Partnership Awards 2023: Best Healthcare Analytics Project for the NHS”. Health Service Journal. Available at: <https://www.hsj.co.uk/partnership-awards/hsj-partnership-awards-2023-best-healthcare-analytics-project-for-the-nhs/7034370.article>