

ACCESSING HAIR AND BEAUTY IS EVERYONE'S RIGHT

Understanding HIV

A guide for hair and beauty professionals



Supported by



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL





This HIV and Beauty Guide is a collaboration between George House Trust and top beauty industry expert and educator, Sam Marshall. **It is designed to empower hair and beauty professionals to become fully HIV-inclusive businesses.**

It provides up-to-date HIV facts and science with best practice guidelines to support and educate hair and beauty practitioners about HIV and how to eliminate HIV discrimination in hair and beauty settings.

By raising awareness of the facts around HIV, this guide aims to end discrimination within the beauty, hair and barbering industry and to help reduce HIV stigma in wider society.

DARREN KNIGHT CHIEF EXECUTIVE AT GEORGE HOUSE TRUST

"We are proud to partner with Sam Marshall to develop this important guide for the beauty industry. Someone's HIV status must never be a barrier to accessing beauty services.

We want to support the beauty industry to improve understanding around HIV and provide an effective toolkit for the whole industry. We found from our research that 52% of people have been refused a treatment due to their HIV status and this shows there is still unnecessary and unacceptable stigma attached to living with HIV, and a lack of awareness around the advances in treatment and what that means for people living with HIV.

We hope that by launching this HIV and Beauty Guide, we will bring the issue to the forefront, across this sector and beyond."



SAM MARSHALL THE BEAUTY GURU

"I'm delighted to have spearheaded the UK's first HIV Beauty Guide alongside George House Trust. It will help us move towards a more inclusive industry, something I'm extremely passionate about.

I implore all beauty professionals to put the guide into practice, in particular removing the HIV status questionnaire from the consultation process. **Beauty practitioners do not need to know someone's HIV status to undertake beauty, hair, or cosmetic procedures, even those that produce blood or are considered invasive.**

Thanks to effective treatment, people living with HIV cannot pass it on. Additionally, universal hygiene protocols (which should be standard practice in any professional salon) will eliminate the risk of any blood-borne virus being transmitted.

As an inclusive beauty salon, we would never ask clients for their status as it is irrelevant and unnecessary. **Beauty is for everyone** and we believe that everyone who wants to access beauty services should feel comfortable in doing so."



Sam is a leading gender inclusivity expert, professional educator and recognised voice within the beauty industry. She sits on the HABIA advisory board, British Beauty Council DEI Committee, and is an advisor to The Federation of Nail Professionals whilst regularly contributing to national and trade media. Backed by over 25 years' experience, Sam has remained a commercial therapist throughout her career. She is also an HIV-awareness advocate and a member of George House Trust.



→ WHAT IS HIV?

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus.

HIV is a virus which attacks and weakens the human immune system. The immune system is the body's natural defence that protects it against disease and ill health.

Medically, HIV is classed as a long-term manageable health condition because HIV treatment keeps the immune system healthy. Today, people living with HIV can live long, healthy, confident lives thanks to effective treatment.

→ WHY DON'T WE SAY AIDS?

Historically AIDS referred to a group of illnesses that occur when HIV is left untreated. The illnesses are associated with a severely weakened immune system including pneumonia, certain cancers and issues with the brain.

The term AIDS is not used in a clinical setting anymore and now is referred to as late-stage or advanced HIV instead. Now, thanks to modern antiretroviral treatment, very few people in the UK develop advanced HIV-related illnesses.

→ WHAT DOES U=U MEAN?

This means **undetectable = untransmittable**.

HIV treatment effectively reduces the amount of the virus in the body to the point that it can't be detected, and it is unable to replicate. This means people living with HIV stay healthy and can't pass HIV on during sex.

98% of people in the UK who are living with diagnosed HIV are on treatment and have an undetectable viral load.

People who are living with HIV and on effective treatment cannot pass on HIV during sex.

U=U

UNDETECTABLE = UNTRANSMITTABLE



→ HOW IS HIV TRANSMITTED?

HIV needs very specific set of circumstances to transmit. Even if these circumstances are met, it doesn't always happen.

- HIV cannot be passed on through everyday contact or through treatments like massages, pedicures, manicures.
- The HIV virus is fragile and does not survive outside the body long.
- HIV can only be transmitted through vaginal or anal sex, breastfeeding and chestfeeding, and sharing injecting equipment.
- There has never been a HIV transmission from piercings, tattoos or any other cosmetic beauty treatment*.
- It is possible to transmit HIV and other blood-borne viruses via needlestick injuries, however this is extremely rare when following universal basic hygiene procedures. **There have been no confirmed cases of HIV infections from needle stick injuries in the UK since 1999.**

*<https://www.bhiva.org/joint-statement-regarding-cosmetic-treatments-and-tattooing>



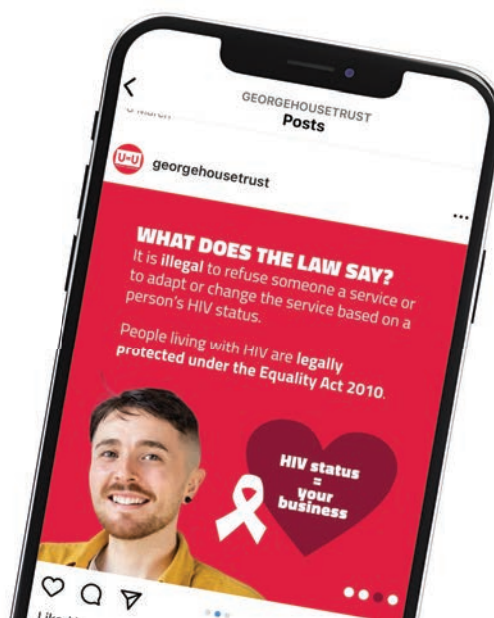
WHAT THE LAW SAYS:

- HIV is covered by the **2010 Equality Act** under the protected characteristic of 'disability'.
- Collecting information about HIV status must be justifiable (as per **General Data Protection Regulation 2018**).
- People living with HIV are legally protected under the Equality Act 2010 from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society (such as in hair and beauty settings).
- It is illegal to refuse someone a hair or beauty service or treat someone differently based on a person's HIV status. Treating someone differently could be asking someone living with HIV to come in at the start or end of the day for their appointment, double-gloving, using separate materials or charging more for a service.

It is therefore unnecessary to ask about person's HIV status in the context of tattooing, piercing and cosmetic or routine beauty treatments, whether this is in-person, over the phone or on a paper or digital form.

This is because:

- It is illegal to refuse people living with HIV a hair or beauty service or treat someone living with HIV differently.
- Hair and beauty professionals should use universal precautions with everyone, regardless of HIV status.
- People living with HIV and on effective treatment cannot pass it on. This is known as Undetectable Equals Untransmissible or U=U.



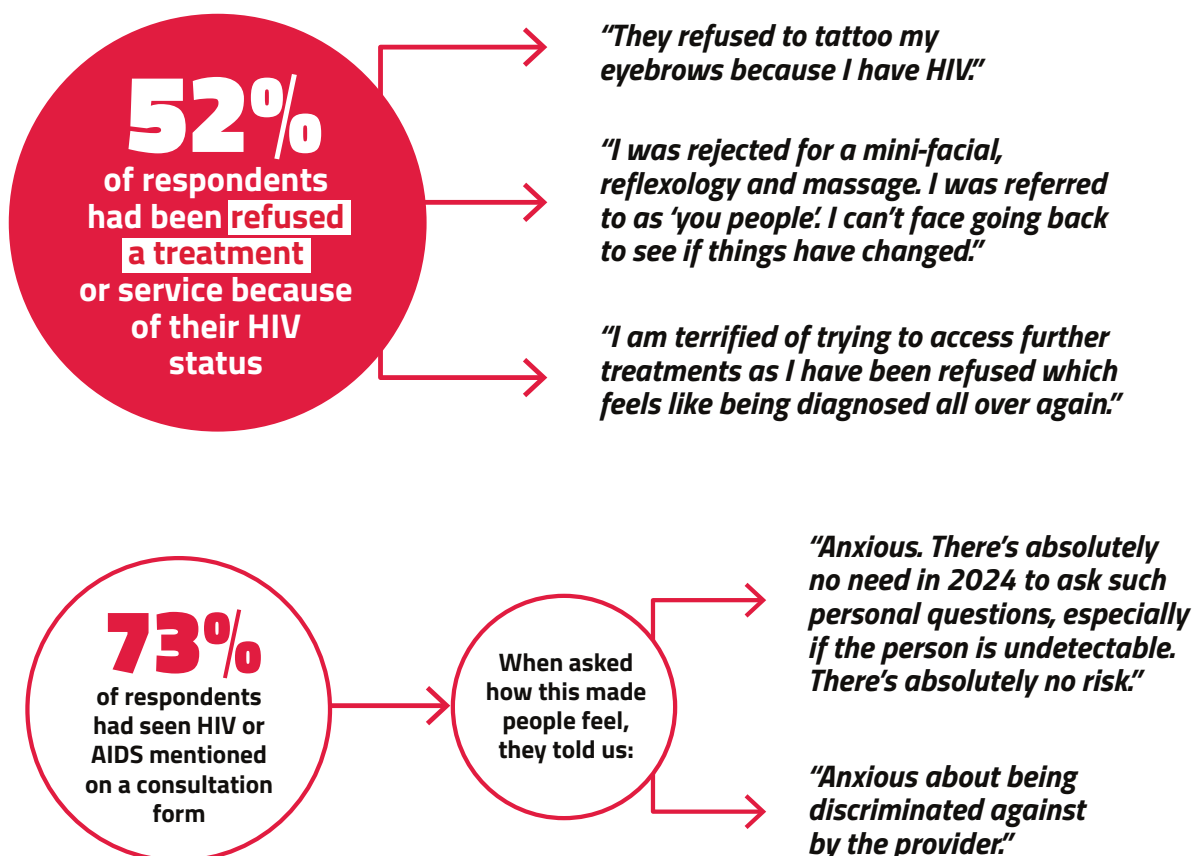


We asked people living with HIV about their experiences when accessing hair, beauty and barbering services.

Over 400 people completed the survey from across the UK. We also gathered more insight from respondents through a series of focus groups.



→ WHAT WE FOUND



79%

of people said that they had been asked about their HIV status when accessing hair, beauty and barbering services:



40%

had been asked in-person or on the phone



42%

had been asked on the consultation form



14%

had been asked on the business' website



4%

had been asked in another way

73%

of these people found these conversations positive

27%

of these people found these conversations positive

"I found the question irrelevant as all equipment or procedures should be handled with same care regardless of HIV status."

"I was told that there should be a separate wax pot used for people who have HIV."

"I was asked if I had a pre-existing health condition and what medication I was on for it. The team never asked any follow up questions about my HIV status, which was a huge positive for me!"



PERSONAL CARE SERVICES

We asked people where they had been asked about their HIV status:



ALTERNATIVE OR HOLISTIC THERAPIES

28%
Reflexology

27%
Reiki

26%
Sports Massage

8%
Colon Hydrotherapy



SPA TREATMENTS

29%
Body treatments
(e.g. scrubs and wraps)

44%
Massage
(e.g. body, shoulder, Swedish,
lymphatic drainage)

14%
Using a spa
(steam room, sauna)



HAIR REMOVAL

36%
Wet shave

31%
Electrolysis

15%
Laser/IPL

8%
Waxing/sugaring



HANDS AND FEET

34%
Manicure

35%
Pedicure

14%
Nail extensions



INJECTABLES

100%
Aesthetic injectables (Botox, lip fillers, facial fillers)



SKIN TREATMENTS

24%
Facials
(relaxation)

35%
Facials
(e.g. microneedling)

21%
Microdermabrasion

11%
Skin peels

5%
Electric
facials



EYE TREATMENTS

20%
Eyebrow
shaping

28%
Eyebrow/eyelash
tinting

14%
Eyelash perming
and/or lash lift

6%
False eyelashes
or extensions



OTHER

13%
Sunbeds

20%
Ear and
body
piercings

18%
Spray
tanning

15%
Make-up

10%
Semi-permanent
make-up and
microblading

11%
Tattoos

HIV MYTHS AND FACTS

HIV MYTHS ✗

- People living with HIV heal slower
- HIV medication makes the skin more sensitive
- You can catch HIV from a blood droplet
- Only gay men are affected by HIV



HIV FACTS ✓

- People living with HIV heal the same as people who aren't living with HIV
- HIV medication does not affect skin sensitivity*
- HIV only be passed through certain body fluids AND where there is a route of transmission (sex, breastfeeding, sharing needles)
- HIV can affect anyone. In Greater Manchester, the route of transmission of 49% of new diagnoses in 2022 was sex between men and women, compared with men who have sex with men (46.2%)

“

This guide is so good! It's clear and informative. I used it to highlight that the question about HIV should be removed on my wedding hair and make-up consultation form. It was really helpful to be able to provide written information, as well as just talking about it with my stylist.”

Dr Yasmin Walters
Specialty Registrar in HIV and Sexual Health,
Chelsea and Westminster NHS Foundation Trust

”

“

In my opinion as a clinical pharmacist, antiretroviral medication used for HIV therapy does not commonly cause skin reactions and has no relation to skin sensitivity or healing rates.

Katy Ghavami-Kia
Mpharm PGDip

”



PRACTICAL STEPS YOUR BUSINESS CAN TAKE

1. Remove questions relating to HIV/AIDS from all consultations and questionnaires.

It is illegal under the 2010 Equality Act to refuse someone a hair or beauty service or treat someone differently based on a person's HIV status.

HIV and HIV treatment are not contraindications to these procedures, including procedures that produce blood or are considered invasive. This is due to universal hygiene protocols and effective HIV treatment, which means people living with HIV cannot pass HIV on.

There has **never** been a HIV transmission from piercings, tattoos or any other cosmetic beauty treatment in the UK*.

2. Continue to follow universal hygiene protocols, as endorsed by HABIA and in accordance with licensing and health and safety requirements. Universal hygiene protocols should be standard practice in any professional salon and will eliminate the risk of any blood-borne virus (not just HIV) being transmitted.

Universal hygiene protocols should be standard practice in any professional salon and will eliminate the risk of any blood-borne virus (not just HIV) being transmitted.

If you do experience a needlestick injury, seek medical advice. There is post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) that should ideally be taken within 24 hours but can be taken up to 72 hours after the incident.

Remember, there have been no confirmed cases of HIV infections from needle stick injuries in the UK since 1999.

3. Every client should be asked about medical conditions and medication to check for contraindications between these and the treatment you are providing. A great question to ask every client before invasive procedures is "how do you heal?"

4. If a client chooses to share their HIV status with you, assure them that the information is held in confidence.

There is no need to record this information or ask them further questions. If they need any support, you can signpost them to George House Trust www.ght.org.uk.



*<https://www.bhiva.org/joint-statement-regarding-cosmetic-treatments-and-tattooing>

HIV LANGUAGE GUIDE

HIV is a long term, manageable medical condition like many others but some of the words used about HIV, and people living with HIV, can have stigmatising connotations.

Language is powerful and can affect the way we view or treat people and how people view themselves.

This guide offers alternatives to some commonly used words and phrases about HIV.

✗ TRY TO AVOID

✓ BETTER TO USE

✗ HIV positive person

✓ Person living with HIV
Put the person before the diagnosis

✗ Person infected with HIV

✓ Person living with HIV
Avoid use of the words 'infected' or 'infection'

✗ HIV virus

✓ HIV
Human Immunodeficiency Virus

✗ Became infected with HIV

✓ Contracted or acquired HIV
Avoid use of the word 'infected'

✗ Catch / caught HIV

✓ Acquire / acquired HIV

✗ HIV / AIDS

✓ Use either HIV or AIDS
HIV and AIDS are not the same thing. HIV is a virus, AIDS is a clinical syndrome

✗ AIDS

✓ Essentially a historical term standing for 'Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome' – meaning a collection of illnesses which might occur as a result of a severely weakened immune system. As more and more people have access to effective HIV medication which keeps the immune system strong, the term is not now in regular use. Some clinicians may use the term 'advanced HIV' in situations where someone has not benefitted from anti-retroviral medication

✗ AIDS test

✓ HIV test
AIDS is a clinical syndrome and therefore there is no 'test' for it

✗ Victim / sufferer

✓ Person living with HIV
Words like 'victim' or 'sufferer' can have extremely negative connotations

✗ Disclose / disclosure

✓ Tell, talk about, share
The word 'disclose' has negative and secretive connotations which can magnify feelings of shame and self-stigma

✗ Clean - as in 'are you clean?'

✓ Do you know your HIV status?
Using the word 'clean' can be highly offensive and implies that people living with HIV are 'dirty'



GET IN TOUCH

George House Trust
75-77 Ardwick Green North
Manchester M12 6FX

T 0161 274 4499
W ght.org.uk
E talk@ght.org.uk

CONNECT WITH US

   @georgehousetrust  @georgehousetrst

George House Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales (No. 1143138) and a Registered Company Limited by guarantee in England and Wales (No. 07575379) Registered Office: 75-77 Ardwick Green North Manchester M12 6FX

Photography: Harmeet Singh / IG @harrygraphs_
Design: 27eleven.co.uk

Supported by



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL