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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Reducing the level of undiagnosed HIV in our community is critical in turning around the epidemic in New Zealand

HIV infections in New Zealand are rising but it is possible to turn this trend around.

Latest evidence shows that an HIV positive person who is successfully treated with HIV medication is unable to pass on HIV to their sexual partners. To realize the benefits of this, we need to reduce the number of people living with undiagnosed and untreated HIV infection.

As part of its ongoing Ending HIV programme, the New Zealand AIDS Foundation is launching a new campaign promoting regular testing for gay and bi men, the group most at risk of HIV in New Zealand.

In 2016, 244 people were diagnosed with HIV in New Zealand. This is higher than in 2015 and the highest number since the start of the epidemic in the country. Currently, around 3500 people in New Zealand are estimated to be living with HIV.

Research conducted by Otago University in 2011 measured undiagnosed HIV among Auckland's gay and bisexual men. Of the men who took part and were living with HIV, 1 in 5 (21 per cent), did not know they had it. The study estimated that 1 in 15 (6.5 per cent) of gay and bisexual men in Auckland are living with HIV.

Jason Myers, Executive Director, New Zealand AIDS Foundation, says, "This phase of the Ending HIV campaign is particularly relevant to those gay and bisexual men who are at a high risk of HIV and who may not be consistently using either condoms or PrEP for prevention. I urge guys in this group to get tested for HIV."

>> [Book a HIV test](#)

>> [Real stories of people as they make the decision to test for HIV](#)

### **For further comment please contact:**

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