EuroTEST
Working together for integrated testing and earlier care

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Using participatory knowledge translation to develop an integrated HIV, STI and hepatitis B & C strategic framework for Belgium

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Why an integrated approach for HIV, STI, Hepatitis B&C?

Interacting epidemics Overlapping populations, transmission routes, determinants and service settings	**Common ambitions** Coordinated prevention, testing, care and progress towards international targets

The policy challenge

How can countries translate this into an integrated policy response?

Strategic planning · Governance · Stakeholder alignment

From HIV Planning to an Integrated Action Plan

- Building on Belgium's experience with successive national HIV plans.
- The current HIV Plan expires at the end of 2026, creating the need for a follow-up.
- Belgian health authorities recognized the **need for an integrated action plan** on HIV, STIs and hepatitis B and C.
- **Sciensano (*Belgium Public Health Institute)*** was mandated to coordinate the development of the new national plan.



Developing a Strategic Framework for Action

- **Sciensano initiated the preparatory phase** for Belgium's future integrated action plan.

- Given the lack of dedicated STI and hepatitis plans and the complexity of Belgium's health governance, Sciensano requested **scientific and technical support from ECDC**.

- **Objective**: To develop a validated, stakeholder-informed **strategic framework** to guide the development of the integrated national action plan on HIV, STIs and hepatitis B and C.

Combining National Ownership with European Expertise

- Sciensano: national coordination
- ECDC: funding, coordination and technical advice
- EACS/CHIP and consultant team: technical and operational support
- Belgian experts and multisectoral stakeholders: technical input, feedback and validation

A Participatory Knowledge Translation Process



1. Evidence synthesis

Desk review of epidemiology, policies and theory of change; national stakeholder survey to identify gaps



2. Stakeholder engagement

Expert interviews and multisectoral face-to-face consultation



3. Framework development

Iterative drafting, validation and refinement through stakeholder feedback

Five strategic Pillars for an Integrated Response

Prevention & sexual health promotion	• Prevent transmission through person-centred prevention, vaccination, harm reduction and sexual health promotion
Testing, screening & early diagnosis	• Expand appropriate, high-quality testing to enable early diagnosis and timely linkage to care and prevention.
Treatment & care	• Ensure timely, equitable, integrated care to improve health outcomes and continuity of care
Access, wellbeing	• Remove barriers, protect rights and promote dignity, well-being, inclusion and freedom from stigma
Surveillance, monitoring & preparedness	• Strengthen public health intelligence to guide timely action, adaptive policy & preparedness for emerging threats

From Strategy to Impact: The Logic of Change



Beyond the Framework: Building Alignment for Action

- **A consensus-based, person-centred and equity-oriented** framework grounded in evidence and stakeholder input
- Enhanced **stakeholder ownership** and alignment across Belgium's complex health governance structure
- **ECDC's added value** in convening stakeholders and providing technical expertise to support national strategic planning
- **A strategic foundation** to inform Belgium's future national integrated action plan on HIV, STIs and hepatitis B & C

A Transferable Approach for Europe



Engage

Early and continuous involvement of diverse stakeholders



Co-create

Combine evidence, technical expertise and lived experiences



Validate

Use external technical facilitation and iterative feedback



Participatory knowledge translation
Connecting evidence, people and policy
To develop integrated strategies for interacting epidemics

Acknowledgments: Group of Experts

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