

**For Immediate Release  
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**Thursday November**

# **60 SECONDS VERSUS YOUR LIFE**

People in Oldham can find out how sparing just one minute of their time could potentially save their life.

With one in three HIV positive people in the UK, and around 1500 in the northwest alone, living with undetected HIV, the importance of having a HIV test will take the centre stage at a local event. The 'instant' HIV test involves a simple 'pin-prick' to the finger is free and takes only 60 seconds to produce a result

Access to having a HIV test is also improving. Until recently HIV testing has largely only been available in hospitals. Now however, it is being expanded and offered in a wider range of community-based settings.

Highlights of the event, which is run in partnership between Oldham Community Health Services (OCHS part of NHS Oldham) and local HIV charity Body Positive Northwest (BPNW), include the appearance of a double-decker bus in Oldham town centre, VIP guest speakers and the chance to win some prizes.

The bus will form a central hub of activity during the event on December 1, which will celebrate the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of World AIDS Day and will promote the launch of a year-long campaign to increase the uptake of HIV testing. The go4it! campaign, which is run by BPNW, will emphasise how valuable HIV testing is and how life after diagnosis can be healthy and positive.

Colin Avery, sexual health training and development officer from OCHS said:  
"This event is a great way for people to learn about the serious business of HIV and AIDS in a fun and interesting way. We are delighted to be working in partnership with BPNW. This event and the launch of the go4it! campaign is a fitting tribute to the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of World AIDS day."

Robert Fieldhouse from Body Positive North West added: "BPNW offers free instant HIV testing from its centre in Whalley Range, Manchester and has recently opened a clinic at Spirit Bar on Canal Street in the heart of Manchester's gay village. We hope go4it! will encourage people who may have been at risk to test and be confident of living positively with the result."

On the day, the bus, known as the chill-in mobile unit, will be manned by staff from BPNW, who will promote the campaign, share their experiences of living and working with HIV, hand out goody bags and answer any questions. The bus is fully kitted out with computers, chairs and comfy areas for discussion.

It will offer a wealth of information about the disease and most importantly how and where to get tested.

The event will kick-off with a presentation session, outside the doors of the bus. It will be compered by northwest based comedian Jonathon Mayor, who is famous for his regular appearances on the Manchester stand-up comedy circuit and particularly for his flamboyant style. He has been described as “one of the finest comperes in the country, capable of settling even the rowdiest crowds with savage wit and a high-octane stage presence.”

Other highlights of this session include VIP guest speakers, Shoab Akhtar, mayor of Oldham, and Phil Greenham, chief executive of Body Positive North West and a one-minute silence, in remembrance of those who have died or who are living with HIV and AIDS - followed by a co-ordinated group release of helium balloons.

People will be encouraged to take part in a HIV and sexual health quiz, distributed by students from The Oldham College and staff from BPNW, to be in with a chance of winning a prize. In recognition of the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary 21 lucky winners, who will be announced on the day, will received a high street vouchers worth £5.

To further promote the go4It! campaign on a local level, BPNW have teamed up with Oldham Athletic Football Club, to specifically promote HIV testing to young people. The team wore green ribbon t-shirts during the warm up to their match against Walsall on November 25. A green ribbon is being used symbolise this specific campaign and aims to encourage people to think ‘have I been at risk?’ It will be used alongside and will not replace the red ribbon, which is the universal symbol for HIV and AIDS.

Dale Newton, Oldham Athletic Community Trust Health and Disability Coordinator, said: “Oldham Athletic fully support the go4it! campaign and World AIDS Day. By supporting this campaign we hope to have a positive effect on the uptake of young people getting tested.”

People can find out where to get tested locally on the day, however BPNW has developed a website to help people to find clinics across the northwest that can offer instant HIV testing. It is available at [www.bpnw.org.uk/go4it](http://www.bpnw.org.uk/go4it)

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