

Annual Epidemiological Report

November 2018

Antenatal HIV Screening in Ireland, 2017

Key Facts

- The national reported uptake of HIV antenatal screening (from 18 of 19 maternity hospitals/units) in 2017 was almost 100%.
- Eighty two women tested HIV positive at their antenatal screen in 2017, giving a HIV prevalence rate of 0.13%, similar to the rate in previous years.
- Eleven women were newly diagnosed with HIV at their antenatal screen (i.e. HIV infection was not previously known). The prevalence of newly diagnosed HIV infection was 0.02%, similar to previous years.
- The prevalence of HIV infection among pregnant women varied by hospital, ranging from 0.00% to 0.26% and the prevalence of new diagnoses ranged from 0.00% to 0.08%

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Background

This report describes data from the HIV antenatal screening programme in Ireland in 2017. Further information on the screening programme and a copy of the HIV antenatal data collection form can be found at <http://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/hivstis/hivandaids/antenatalhivtesting/>.

Results

Table 1 describes the results of the HIV antenatal screening programme from 2011 to 2017 with data provided by 18 of the 19 maternity hospitals/units in Ireland in 2017. Data were not provided for one hospital and data on private patients were not provided for seven hospitals (see appendix 1 for details).

In 2017, 62,720 women were offered a HIV antenatal test and 62,715 accepted, giving a national uptake rate of almost 100%. The uptake by hospital ranged from 99.8% to 100.0%. There were 62,053 registered births in Ireland in 2017 but it is important to note that the antenatal screening data are based on date of antenatal screen rather than birth date.

Eighty two women tested HIV positive at their antenatal screen in 2017, giving a HIV prevalence rate among pregnant women of 0.13%. This varied by individual hospital and ranged from 0.00% to 0.26%

Of the 82 cases, 11 were newly diagnosed at their antenatal screen (i.e. HIV infection was not previously known), giving a prevalence of newly diagnosed HIV infection of 0.02%. This varied by individual hospital and ranged from 0.00% to 0.08%.

Figure 1 shows the trend in HIV prevalence and prevalence of new diagnoses among pregnant women from 2003 to 2017. Following a decline between 2003 and 2013, the prevalence has remained stable since 2013 (0.13% to 0.15%). The prevalence of new diagnoses has followed a similar pattern with a stable rate between 2013 and 2017 (0.01% to 0.02%).

The results are summarised by hospital group in Table 2 and by HSE area in Table 3.

Table 1. Results of the HIV antenatal screening programme in Ireland, 2011 to 2017

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of hospitals/units	20/20	18/20	16/19	17/20	18/19	16/19	18/19
Number of live births per year (from CSO)	74,650	72,225	68,930	67,462	65,909	63,897	62,053
Number of women booked	68,111	64,803	57,638	63,538	63,217	56,865	62,720
Number of women offered test	67,849	64,803	57,638	63,532	63,217	56,865	62,720
Number of women tested	67,135	64,781	57,618	63,532	63,214	56,747	62,715
Uptake of HIV antenatal test (%)	98.6	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.8	99.9
Number HIV positive	109	105	83	93	84	83	82
Prevalence (%)	0.16	0.16	0.14	0.15	0.13	0.15	0.13
Number newly diagnosed HIV positive	17	22	14	11	9	10	11
Prevalence of new diagnoses (%)	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02

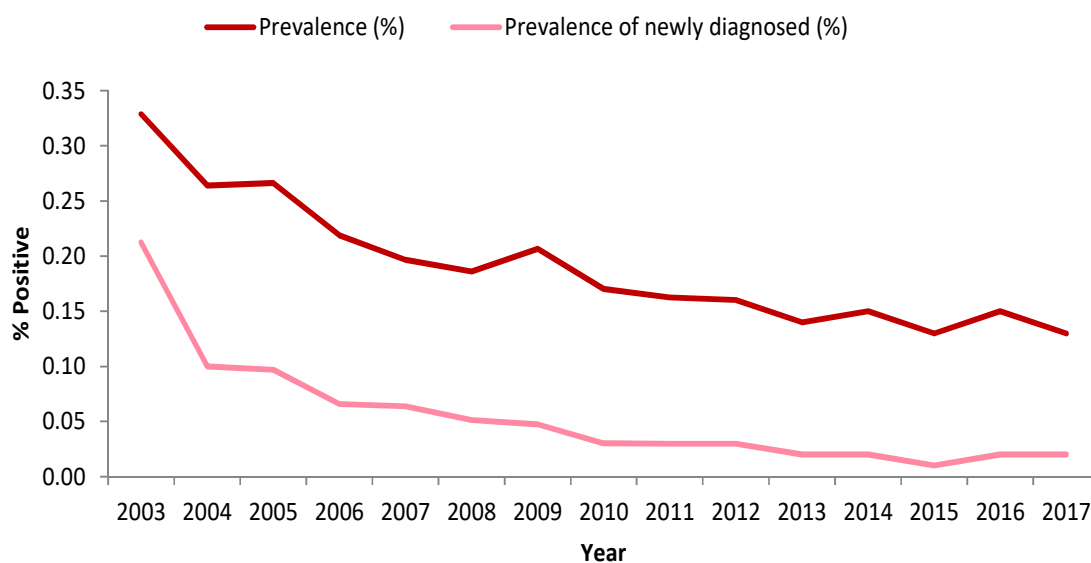
Figure 1. Prevalence of HIV among pregnant women and prevalence of new diagnoses among pregnant women in Ireland, 2003 to 2017

Table 2. Results of the antenatal screening programme by hospital group in Ireland, 2017¹

Hospital group	Uptake of test (%)	Prevalence (%)	Prevalence of new diagnoses (%)
Dublin Midlands (TCD)	100.0	0.22	0.00
Dublin Northeast (RCSI)	100.0	0.24	0.05
Ireland East (UCD)	100.0	0.03	0.02
Midwest (UL)	100.0	0.06	0.00
South/Southwest (UCC)	100.0	0.13	0.02
West/North West (Saolta UHC; NUIG)	99.9	0.04	0.00
Total for Ireland	99.9	0.13	0.02

Table 3. Results of the antenatal screening programme by HSE Area in Ireland, 2017²

HSE area	Uptake of test (%)	Prevalence (%)	Prevalence of new diagnoses (%)
East	100.0	0.17	0.02
Midlands	100.0	0.09	0.00
Midwest	100.0	0.06	0.00
Northeast	100.0	0.18	0.00
Northwest	99.9	0.00	0.00
South	100.0	0.13	0.01
Southeast	100.0	0.11	0.05
West	99.9	0.07	0.00
Total for Ireland	99.9	0.13	0.02

Discussion

Data on the HIV antenatal screening programme for 2017 show a very high uptake of HIV screening among pregnant women in Ireland. It also shows a stable rate of HIV prevalence and prevalence of new HIV infections among pregnant women in Ireland. HIV antenatal screening is a vital means of identifying women who would otherwise be unaware of their HIV infection, thereby allowing treatment which is of direct clinical benefit to the individual and can also prevent mother to child transmission and onward transmission to sexual partners.

Limitations of the data collected include the fact that information on private patients is not available in all hospitals.

¹ See Appendix 1 for hospital groups and corresponding hospitals

² See Appendix 1 for HSE areas and corresponding hospitals

Technical Notes:

- Percent uptake is calculated as the number of women tested divided by the number of women booked, multiplied by 100.
- Prevalence of HIV infection (%) is calculated as the number of women testing positive divided by the number of women tested, multiplied by 100.
- Prevalence of new diagnoses (%) is calculated as the number of women testing newly HIV positive divided by the number of women tested, multiplied by 100.

Acknowledgments

We would sincerely like to thank the staff in the maternity hospitals and maternity units for their ongoing support and for providing antenatal screening data for 2017.

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Appendix 1: Hospitals by Hospital Group and HSE area

Hospital	Type of data	Hospital Group	HSE Area
Coombe Women's Hospital	Public and Private	Dublin Midlands (TCD)	East
Regional Hospital, Portlaoise	Public and Private	Dublin Midlands (TCD)	Midlands
Rotunda Hospital	Public and Private	Dublin Northeast (RCSI)	East
Cavan and Monaghan Hospital	Public only	Dublin Northeast (RCSI)	Northeast
Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda	Public only	Dublin Northeast (RCSI)	Northeast
National Maternity Hospital, Holles St	Public and Private	Ireland East (UCD)	East
Regional Hospital, Mullingar	Public and Private	Ireland East (UCD)	Midlands
St Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny	Public only	Ireland East (UCD)	Southeast
University Maternity Hospital Limerick	Public and Private	Midwest (UL)	Midwest
Cork University Maternity Hospital	Public only	South/Southwest UCC	South
University Hospital Kerry	Public and Private	South/Southwest UCC	South
South Tipperary Hospital, Clonmel	Not Available	South/Southwest UCC	Southeast
University Hospital Waterford	Public only	South/Southwest UCC	Southeast
Wexford General Hospital	Public only	South/Southwest UCC	Southeast
Sligo University Hospital	Public and Private	West/North West (Saolta UHC; NUIG)	Northwest
Mayo University Hospital	Public and Private	West/North West (Saolta UHC; NUIG)	West
Portiuncula University Hospital	Public and Private	West/North West (Saolta UHC; NUIG)	West
University Hospital Galway	Public only	West/North West (Saolta UHC; NUIG)	West
Letterkenny University Hospital	Public and Private	West/North West (Saolta UHC; NUIG)	Northwest