



# **AIDS Action Europe**

## **Stronger Together**

**Partner Notification and Criminalisation**

**AAE Member Meeting**  
**19.10.2019**



Co-funded by  
the Health Programme  
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# Criminalisation and Partner Notification

- Partner notification in the European context – different backgrounds, different cultures, different history
- Increase of partner notification systems due to 90-90-90 targets and the pressure of identifying HIV infections
- One argument against non-anonymous partner notification is criminalisation (bad practice for instance in the Czech Republic or Belarus)
- **Objective of this session:** To discuss partner notification strategies and its impact on criminalisation at national and international level

# What is partner notification

- Partner notification is also known as active case finding or contact tracing
- Definition: Partner notification (PN) is a process whereby sexual partners of patients given a diagnosis of STI are informed of their exposure to infection and the need to receive treatment.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) recommend that partner notification is done on a voluntary basis within enabling and supportive social and legal environments for disclosure



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# Three forms of partner notification

- **Patient referral** – The index patient takes responsibility for informing their sexual partner(s) of their possible exposure to an STI and for referring them to services. Introduced in the 1970s in response to high levels of gonococcal infection and limited resources, patient referral has since been used for a wide range of STIs.
- **Provider referral** – The provider takes responsibility for informing the sexual partner(s) of the index patient of their possible exposure to an STI. This requires a health professional to obtain the names of sexual partners and other identifying information, from the index patient.
- **Contract referral** – The provider agrees with the index patient i.e. ‘makes a contract’ that the index patient will contact their sexual partners within a certain time period. Provider referral is carried out if the index patient fails to do this.



# Availability of clinical guidelines

**Table 4. Availability of clinical guidelines for partner notification (response from 23 countries)**

Country	HIV	Syphilis	Gonorrhoea	Chlamydia	<i>M.genitalium</i>	Trichom.	Warts	HSV	HBV	HCV
Austria	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine
Belgium	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	Yes	Yes
Bulgaria	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine
Cyprus	No	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	No	No
Denmark	Yes	No	No	No	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
France	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	No	PN not routine
Germany	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Greece	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PN not routine	PN not routine
Hungary	No	No	No	No	PN not routine	PN not routine	No	No	PN not routine	PN not routine
Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PN not routine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Italy	PN not routine	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latvia	Not stated	No	No	No	Not stated	Not stated	PN not routine	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated
Lithuania	Yes	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Yes	Yes	Not stated	Yes	Not stated
Malta	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Netherlands	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PN not routine	Yes	Yes	PN not routine	Yes	PN not routine
Norway	Yes	No	No	No	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	No	No
Portugal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Romania	No	No	No	No	PN not routine	No	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine	PN not routine
Slovakia	No	No	No	No	PN not routine	No	No	PN not routine	No	No
Spain	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PN not routine	PN not routine	Yes	PN not routine	Yes	Yes
UK	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

# Compulsory and routine partner notification by country

Country	Partner notification compulsory	Compulsory for healthcare providers to do partner notification	Compulsory for STI patients to do partner notification	Compulsory testing/treatment for sexual partners	Partner notification routinely carried out for at least one STI
Austria	No	No	No	No	No
Belgium	No	No	No	No	Yes
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Cyprus	No	No	No	No	Yes
Denmark	No	No	No	No	Yes
Estonia	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
France	No	No	No	No	Yes
Germany	No	No	No	No	Yes
Greece	No	No	No	No	Yes
Hungary	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Ireland	No	No	No	No	Yes
Italy	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Latvia	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Lithuania	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Malta	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Netherlands	No	No	No	No	Yes
Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Portugal	No	No	No	No	Yes
Romania	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Slovakia	No	No	No	No	Yes
Spain	No	No	No	No	Yes
Sweden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
UK	No	No	No	No	Yes
<b>Total positive replies</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>22</b>

In seven countries, the legal duty rested with the healthcare provider only (Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta and Romania).

- In three countries, the legal duty rested with both the healthcare provider and the patient (Finland, Norway and Sweden)

- In Lithuania the legal duty rested with the index patient only.

## Developments in Europe

- ICT – supported partner notification replaces more and more the personal notification, e.g. Integrate Joint Action
- Face-to-face notification for an allowance exchange, for instance in Ukraine



E Cards That Warn, 'Get Checked'  
Source: New York Times