

# FIFTY OVER 50 MISSION STATEMENT



2021 marks 40 years since the formal designation of AIDS.<sup>1</sup> Since then, the progress achieved in the fight against HIV is incredible. Now, the focus has shifted towards the goal of eliminating HIV transmission in the UK within the next decade.<sup>2</sup>

While we work towards eliminating HIV transmissions by 2030,<sup>2</sup> we also need to ensure that people living with HIV are able to live well, in every decade of their life. However, only by listening to people who have lived experience of ageing with HIV can we understand what their needs are today, and how they may change over time.

With an early diagnosis and appropriate treatment somebody with HIV can expect to have a normal life expectancy.<sup>3,4</sup> With nearly all people diagnosed with HIV receiving effective treatment,<sup>2</sup> the number of older people living with HIV in the UK is growing.<sup>4</sup>

In the absence of a cure, HIV has evolved into a lifelong chronic condition.<sup>4</sup> But, as people live longer with HIV, their needs change. People living with HIV may be more likely to develop additional health problems as they age. They are more vulnerable to 'multimorbidity' and frailty earlier than the rest of the population.<sup>5</sup> The prevalence of high cholesterol, hypertension, diabetes and heart conditions is projected to increase significantly in the older HIV population over the next decade.<sup>5</sup>

People who are ageing with HIV also face a number of additional complex needs including social isolation, financial stress and stigma, all of which can impact on their wellbeing.<sup>6,7</sup>

*Fifty Over 50* is a unique listening project. We are setting out on a journey to hear from fifty people aged 50 plus, all of whom are living with HIV in the UK, about their experiences of growing older with HIV in the UK today. This project aims to shine a light on the changes that are needed to ensure that people living with HIV are supported to live well throughout their life, whatever their age.

The Whole Person Care Partnership is a collaboration between MSD and several HIV advocacy, education and scientific organisations. The partnership has come together to promote and support the needs of people living with HIV in the UK. MSD are the originators and funders of the partnership.

People who are living and ageing with HIV have needs in common, but many differences too. Only by working together can we hope to hear from different people with different experiences and to build an accurate picture of life with HIV as we age.

*The Fifty Over 50 project is organised and fully funded by MSD and coordinated by communications agency M&F Health on behalf of MSD. The contents of this material are the result of collaboration and discussion between MSD, the Whole Person Care Partners, and other HIV community groups, with content agreed on an equal basis between all those involved.*



## References

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