Rise together to End HIV Stigma.

World AIDS Day 2026

5 ways to challenge stigma.

Waverley care

1

Challenge your assumptions

Reflect on your own beliefs and biases about HIV. Remember that HIV can affect anyone, and never make assumptions about someone's lifestyle, relationships or circumstances based on their HIV status.

2

Use stigma-free language

Words matter. Use respectful, person-centred language such as "person living with HIV" rather than labels that define someone by their HIV status. Avoid judgemental language and challenge misconceptions when you hear them.

3

Protect privacy and confidentiality

HIV status is confidential personal health information. Only share it when there is a lawful and appropriate reason to do so, and follow confidentiality and data protection procedures. Never disclose someone's status without proper authorisation.

4

Provide care based on facts, not fear

Keep your HIV knowledge up to date and follow evidence-based infection prevention guidance. HIV is not transmitted through everyday contact, and people on effective treatment who maintain an undetectable viral load cannot pass HIV on through sex (U=U). HIV status alone should never be a reason to provide different or poorer care.

5

Speak up and put people first

Challenge discriminatory comments, practices and policies when you encounter them. Listen to people's experiences, respect their choices and involve them in decisions about their care. Small actions can make a big difference to someone's experience of health and social care.

Let’s rise together to end HIV stigma.

Tackling HIV stigma starts with the everyday actions we take, the language we use and the care we provide.

Every health and social care professional has a role to play in creating an environment where people living with HIV feel safe, respected and supported.

What is one thing you can do differently in your role to help end HIV stigma?