



World AIDS Day – 2025 Media brief

On 1st December 2025, the world will commemorate the 37th World AIDS Day (WAD) under the global theme “Overcoming Disruption, Transforming the AIDS Response.” This theme reflects the collective commitment to strengthen resilience, address ongoing challenges, and stand in solidarity with people at risk of or affected by HIV.

To mark World AIDS Day, the National STD/AIDS Control Programme (NSACP) of the Ministry of Health will implement a series of island-wide activities aimed at raising awareness, promoting prevention, and reinforcing collaboration with communities. These initiatives will highlight the shared responsibility of ending AIDS as a public health threat and ensuring equitable access to HIV services for all.

World AIDS Day 2025 activities

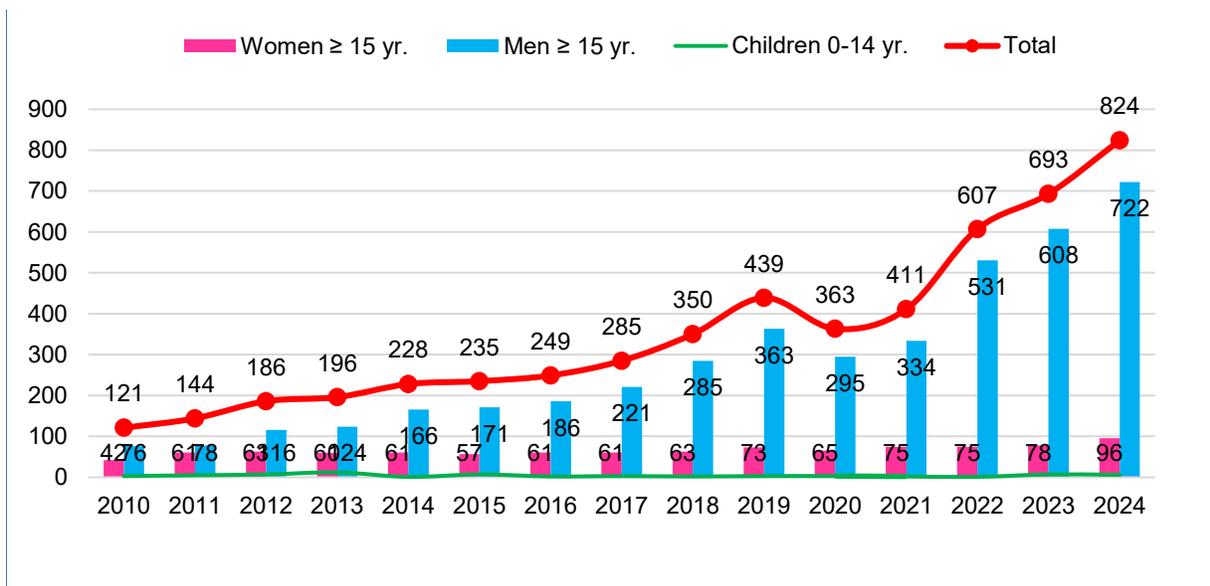
1. **The AIDS Day walk** (main event) on the 1st of December 2025 starts from Galle Face Green, Colombo at 7.30 am. The walk will go through Kollupitiya, Liberty Junction, Dharmapala Mawatha, Viharamahadevi Park up to National STD/AIDS Control Programme, Ministry of Health to raise public awareness. There will be around 1,000 participants representing health staff, tri-forces, youth councils, People affected by HIV, key population communities, NGO and CBOs. This event is organized by NSACP with the collaboration of all stakeholders for the AIDS response in Sri Lanka.
2. **HIV testing targeting programmes** will be initiated at different hotspots in Colombo and suburbs from 21st November 2025 to 1st of December 2025.
3. **A media conference** will be held to introduce AIDS Day activities and the current trend of the HIV epidemic at the Health Promotion Bureau (HPB) on Wednesday 26th November 2025 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.
4. **Development and distribution of banners and leaflets** will be conducted islandwide to promote HIV testing and care services and support achieving the Ending AIDS by 2030 goal. This initiative aims to raise awareness on HIV testing, treatment, and prevention in partnership with district STD clinics nationwide.
5. **A social media campaign** will be conducted from 28th November to 31st December through know4sure.lk platforms (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter) to promote HIV testing, prevention strategies, care, and treatment services. HIV self-testing will be promoted through this event. The campaign will be implemented in partnership with the Global Fund and the Family Planning Association, aiming to increase public awareness and engagement on HIV prevention and testing across multiple digital channels.



Situation of the HIV epidemic in Sri Lanka

1. According to the latest estimates, around 5,700 (4,900 to 6,500) individuals were living with HIV (PLHIV) in Sri Lanka., HIV prevalence among the general adult population remains below 0.1%,
2. According to UNAIDS, globally 40% reduction of new HIV infections in 2024 compared to 2010. However, varying rates of decline are seen across regions in the world. An increasing trend of estimated new HIV infections (48%) seen in Sri Lanka for the same time period, indicating a rising HIV transmission.
3. An increase in trend HIV infections diagnosed and reported annually until the end of 2024. A total of 824 new HIV cases were reported in 2024.

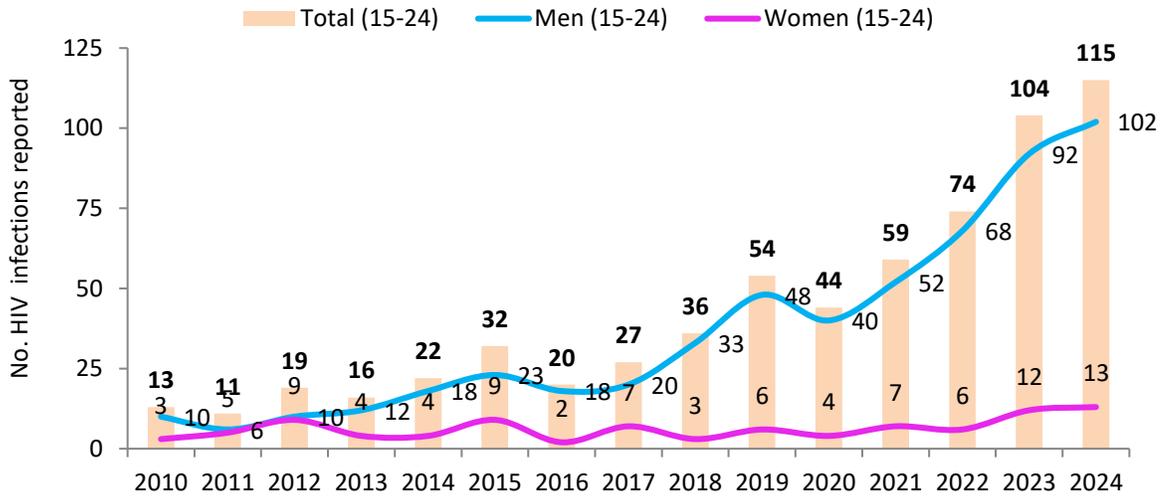
Trend of annually reported HIV cases from 2010-2024



4. From 2010 to 2024, the total number of reported HIV cases has shown a steady and substantial increase, rising from 121 cases in 2010 to 824 cases in 2024.
5. The majority of cases were consistently reported among men over 15 years of age, increasing more than ninefold from 76 in 2010 to 722 in 2024.
6. Between 2010 and 2024, reported HIV cases among individuals aged 15–24 years increased markedly, with total cases rising from 13 in 2010 to 115 in 2024. The most significant growth was seen among males aged 20–24 years, with cases increasing from 10 in 2010 to 91 in 2024.
7. The disproportionate number of HIV infections among men indicates that the main mode of transmission in Sri Lanka, similar to many other countries, is through sexual contact between men.

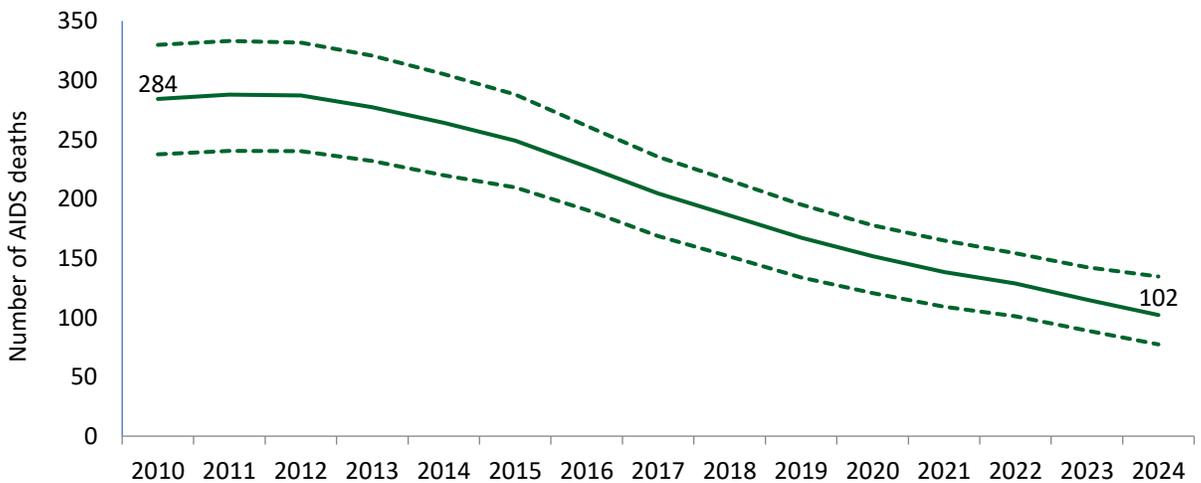


Number of reported HIV infections among youth, 2010-2024



- Deaths among people diagnosed with HIV remain a significant area of concern. According to UNAIDS, fewer than 200 deaths have been estimated among people living with HIV in Sri Lanka in 2024. A decline in deaths due to AIDS is due to improving antiretroviral treatment programme.

Estimated AIDS deaths in Sri Lanka 2010-2024



Scale up HIV testing services.

HIV testing is the first key to achieve the goal of ending AIDS by 2030 and UNAIDS recommend achieving 95-95-95 targets by 2025. This means 95% of the people living with HIV should know their HIV status and 95% of the people who know they are HIV to be on lifelong ART and 95% of people on ART being virally suppressed. Therefore, getting high risk population tested for HIV is essential and the National program has taken extra effort to make HIV tests available to wider



population using many different innovative and user-friendly methods. Blood tests to detect HIV are **performed free of charge while maintaining confidentiality at STI clinics** throughout the country. These tests can now detect the infection at an early stage and making it possible for people living with HIV to receive antiviral drugs and lead a normal life. Both health staff work together with NGOs and CBOs to make tests available for key population groups and work hard to overcome the barriers.

HIV self-testing is also available through island wide STD clinics, NGOs and also online. This enables people to have an HIV test using oral fluid without any invasive procedure and get the test results within few minutes by themselves at home by following simple instructions. Further NSACP introduced a online App “**Know4Sure.lk**” though which a person can book an appointment at the nearest STD clinic, for correct information and facts related to HIV and also to **order HIV self-test kit online for a home delivery**. NSACP adopted the current WHO recommendation to adopt the three test algorithm for HIV diagnosis using three rapid tests so that delays in diagnosis and ART initiation will be minimized. There by trying to reach 95-95-95 target of UNAIDS by 2025.

HIV treatment services

Antiretroviral treatment (ART) if available for all diagnosed patients free of charge through all STD clinics covering 25 districts. The current recommendation is to start ART on the same day or within first week of diagnosis and try to minimize unnecessary delays. Further studies have shown that adherence to antiretroviral treatment can suppress the viral load to undetectable levels, making onward sexual transmission negligible a concept known as U=U (Undetectable = Untransmutable). Further community support helps people living with HIV to retain in care with maximum adherence which is the key to control the disease and prevent onward transmission. It is important to take necessary measures to prevent stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV (PLHIV) in all settings, in order to protect and uphold their rights.

HIV Prevention Strategies

Effective HIV prevention requires a combination of safe behaviours, medical interventions, and consistent access to care. Key strategies include:

- **Practising safer sex:** Delay sexual activity until you are ready, and choose to have sex with one mutually faithful, uninfected partner.
- **Condom use:** Use condoms correctly and consistently during every sexual encounter to significantly reduce the risk of HIV and other STIs.
- **Treatment as Prevention (U=U):** People living with HIV who take antiretroviral therapy (ART) and maintain an undetectable viral load do not transmit HIV sexually.
- **Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP):** PrEP is recommended for individuals at higher risk, including key populations, to prevent HIV before exposure.



- **Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP):** PEP should be taken as soon as possible (within 72 hours) after potential high-risk sexual or occupational exposure to HIV.

These strategies work best when combined with regular HIV testing, open communication, and access to supportive health services.

Further information.

1. www.aidscontrol.gov.lk website
2. Twitter - <https://twitter.com/know4surelk>
3. Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/know4sure.lk/>
4. Facebook - <https://web.facebook.com/know4surelk>
5. YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/@Know4Surelk>
6. TikTok-<https://www.tiktok.com/know4sure.lk>