

# HIV Treatment Audit in Ireland and progress towards UNAIDS targets

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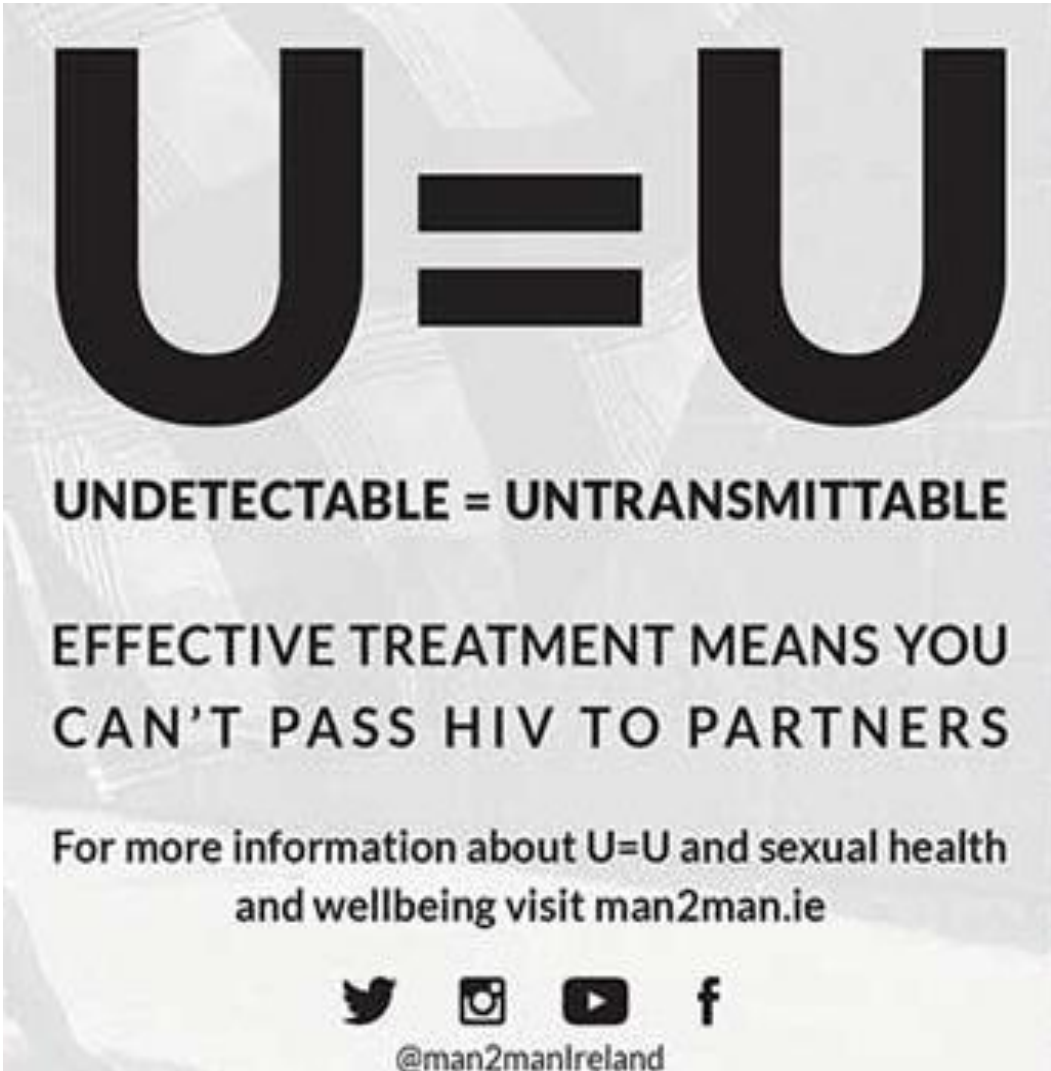
## AIM



A HIV treatment audit was carried out in 2023 to measure progress against the national antiretroviral therapy recommendation and to measure progress towards targets set by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

## BACKGROUND AND METHODS

- HIV treatment is highly effective in improving the health of people living with HIV and reducing transmission of the virus.
- For a person with a suppressed viral load, the risk of transmitting HIV to a sexual partner is almost zero or negligible.
- Antiretroviral therapy in Ireland is free and recommended for everyone living with HIV.
- UNAIDS has set a goal to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 and has published targets to achieve this goal.
- All public HIV services (adult and paediatric) provided anonymous disaggregate data on attendances during 2022.
- Demographics and HIV treatment outcomes were described and estimates of total numbers living with HIV (known and unknown) were modelled.



## RESULTS – TREATMENT AUDIT



### Just over 7,000 people attended for HIV care in 2022

- Majority male (67%)
- Ageing cohort: Median age 44 years; 31% aged 50+ yrs
- From over 130 different countries; 36% born in Ireland; 28% Sub-Saharan Africa; 13% Latin America & Caribbean
- 42% Heterosexual; 41% gbMSM; 9% People who Inject Drugs (PWID); 2% Vertical transmission
- 15% first-time attendees to a service in Ireland

### Very high levels of antiretroviral treatment coverage and viral suppression for most people

- 98% of those in care are on treatment
- 98% of those on treatment have reached viral suppression
- Lower levels of viral suppression among some groups
  - PWID
  - Region of birth Eastern Europe;
  - First time attendees

## RESULTS - PROGRESS TOWARDS UNAIDS TARGETS

**An estimated 8,000 people were living with HIV in Ireland in 2022** (95% CI: 6,800 to 9,000)

### Ireland has achieved 90-99-99

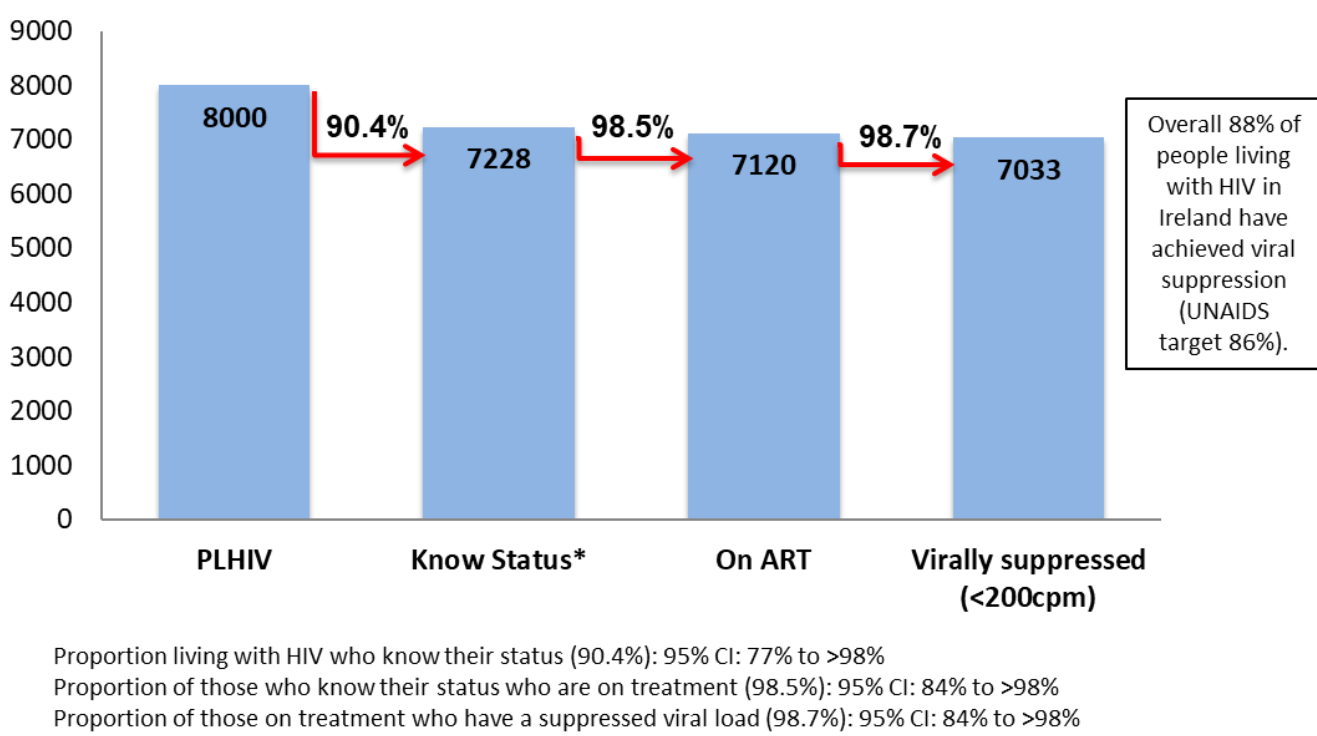
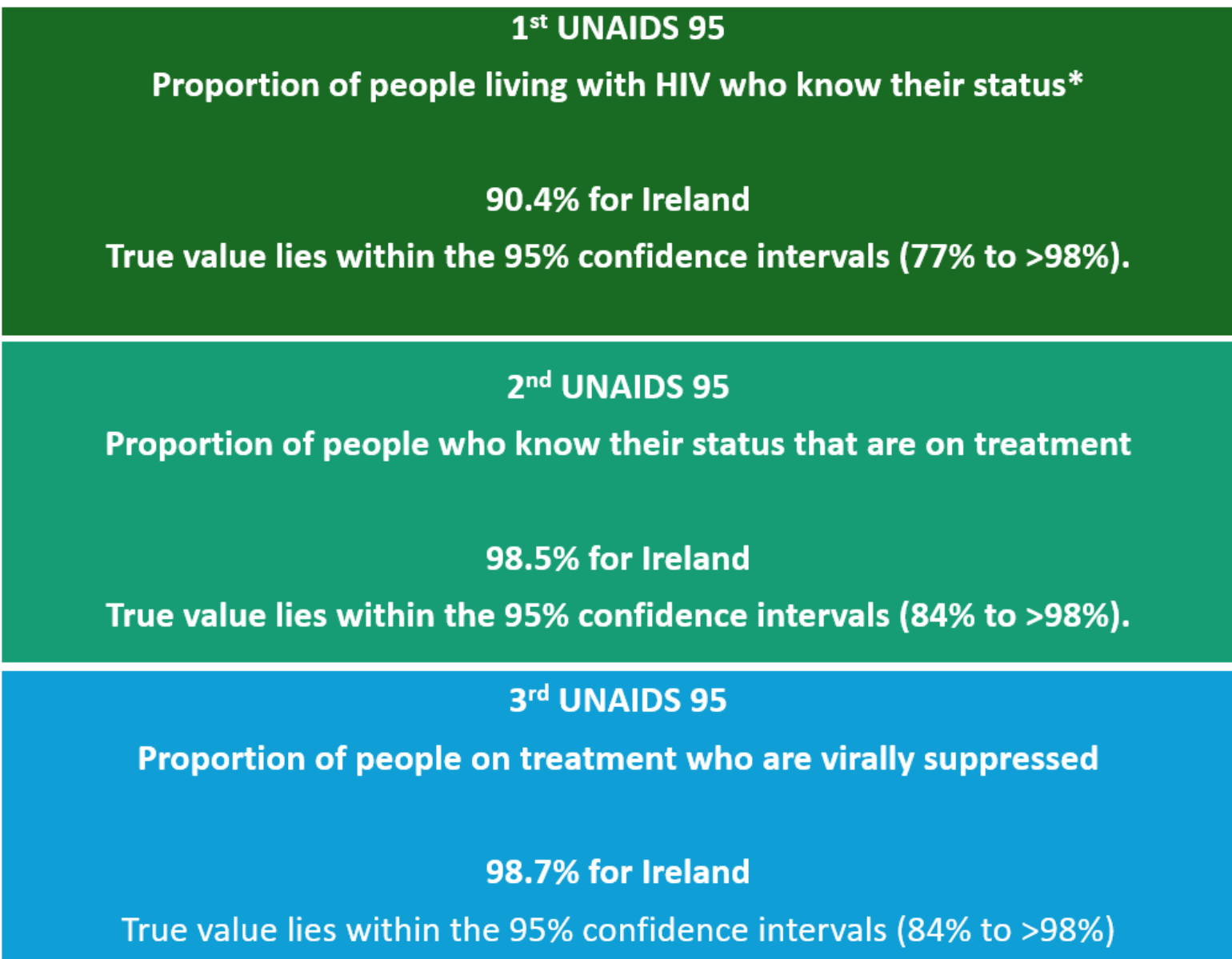
- It should be noted that since “number in care” has been used instead of “number who know their status”, the first “95” is an under-estimate and the second “95” is an over-estimate.

**88% of people living with HIV in Ireland in 2022 had reached viral suppression** (95% CI: 75% to >98%)

- Surpasses the target set by UNAIDS (86%)
- Shows considerable improvement compared to the previous treatment audit carried out in 2018 (76%)

The challenges of uncertainty in the modelling are reflected in the wide confidence intervals around the estimates and it is important to note that the true value lies within the confidence intervals.

\*Note: For Ireland, the “number in care” is used instead of the “number who know their status” and therefore is an under-estimate. This affects our estimate for the first “95”, making it lower than it really is and affects our second “95” making it higher than it really is.



## CONCLUSION

The audit showed very high levels of antiretroviral treatment coverage and viral suppression. While the overall results are very good, some people living with HIV are yet to achieve the full benefits of treatment and viral suppression and further work is required to meet the needs of those people.

Data from the treatment audit allows us to focus our efforts on these groups to afford them the benefits of antiretroviral therapy from an individual and population health perspective and to measure Ireland’s progress against UNAIDS targets and monitor the effectiveness of specific areas of our HIV response.

