

A Kind Way to Offer Virtual HIV and LGBTQ Health Services Across Texas

Texas Health Action launches a telehealth program statewide, including judgment-free HIV and STI testing and treatment.

April 28, 2021 By [Trent Straube](#)

Residents anywhere in Texas—including those living in the Lone Star State’s rural outer reaches—now have better access to virtual health services related to [HIV/AIDS](#) and the needs of the [LGBTQ community](#). The nonprofit Texas Health Action (THA) recently launched TeleKind, a statewide [telehealth](#) service that allows Texans 18 and older to make confidential virtual health appointments.

What’s more, in a [press release](#) about the launch of TeleKind, [THA](#) highlights that it offers “comprehensive sexual health services regardless of gender identity, gender expression, race, creed, sexual orientation, immigration status, or ability to pay.”

Hi! Welcome to TeleKind, Texas’ virtual sexual health and gender affirming care clinic where all services offered are 100% free. How can we help you?

???? <https://t.co/uuTjJwlsvp> pic.twitter.com/qnL1R6ZDTv
— TeleKind (@MyTeleKind) [March 18, 2021](#)

“Our approach to health care is radical in its simplicity: We prioritize kindness and innovation to meet our patients where they are,” said THA’s chief executive officer, Christopher Hamilton, in the release. “Some Texans are being left behind from critical sexual health care, like HIV/STI [sexually transmitted infection] prevention and treatment, especially those in areas without clinics that specialize in judgement-free sexual health services.”

TeleKind offers at-home testing for HIV and STIs as well as services for pre-exposure prophylaxis

(PrEP), the daily pill HIV-negative people can take to prevent them from contracting the virus.

Scientists estimate PrEP to be about 99% effective among men who have sex with men and 88% to 90% among heterosexual men and women (though researchers believe the latter number is likely higher). For more details, see “[How Well Do U=U and PrEP Work? The CDC Updates Its Answers.](#)”

In the United States, PrEP is available as the daily tablets Truvada and Descovy; both are manufactured by Gilead Sciences and consist of two meds. A generic version of Truvada became available last fall. To learn more, see “[What’s the Difference Between Truvada and Descovy for PrEP?](#)” and “[Prevention: Generic Truvada.](#)” For more general information, see the [POZ Basics on HIV Prevention](#).

PrEP changed the game when it came to HIV prevention.

Now you can get it mailed directly to your door. Tap the

link to sign up today!<https://t.co/KPR4wa3ViB>

[pic.twitter.com/uOpt9IUg5c](https://t.co/KPR4wa3ViB)

— TeleKind (@MyTeleKind) [March 25, 2021](#)

There’s now a greater need for HIV and STI services because many clinics have been closed the past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the National Institutes of Health [predicted last year](#), the rates of STIs—including syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia—are at their highest levels ever and constitute “a major public health crisis worldwide and in the United States.” The groups most affected include youth ages 15 to 24, gay and bisexual men and pregnant women.

THA also operates the [Kind Clinic](#), which offers sexual health and wellness services in Austin and San Antonio. For more on that, see “[The Lone Star State Gets Two New Clinics](#)”

In related news, see “[Get Tested for HIV and STIs at Home, for Free,](#)” an about new test kits that are available nationwide through TakeMeHome.org.