Watch Rugby Icon Gareth Thomas and ViiV Healthcare Tackle HIV

Plus: Their stigma-busting initiative gets a shout-out from POZ's Best Celebrity Advocate 2019.

July 2, 2020 By Trent Straube

Welsh rugby hero Gareth Thomas, who disclosed his HIV status to the world last fall, knows firsthand the harmful effects of stigma and ignorance about the virus. But now he's an empowered global spokesperson who has joined forces with ViiV Healthcare to launch the "Tackle HIV" initiative.

The goal, according to the Tackle HIV website, is "to correct misunderstanding, change attitudes and break stigma to ultimately make a difference for people living with HIV and people affected by HIV."

We're so proud to support @gareththomas14 in his campaign to change perceptions of HIV.

In a poll 61% of people said they would or might end a relationship if they found out their partner is living with HIV.

The fight against stigma goes on.

@TackleHIVhttps://t.co/v7SqeKs6fw

— Terrence Higgins Trust (@THTorguk) July 2, 2020

Tackle HIV receives additional support from the Terrence Higgins Trust, National AIDS Trust and the Elton John AIDS Foundation. Though the effort is based in the United Kingdom—England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales—its awareness campaigns, videos and social media posts are accessible and relevant in the United States too.

“I have heard firsthand stories of how deeply stigma and self-stigma affect people living with HIV, and I am determined to change this,” Thomas says in a Tackle HIV video, which you can watch above. “That’s why I have started a Tackle HIV campaign. We need to educate people about HIV. We need to crack the myths that exist around it once and for all. And we need to break the stigma that surrounds HIV.”

The initiative has already garnered some high-profile praise, including from the Duke of Sussex, aka Prince Harry. That should come as no surprise, since the two sat down last year to discuss Thomas’s HIV journey. To read about that, see “‘I Have Absolutely No Fear of Passing HIV to My Husband.’”



View this post on Instagram

An inspring message of support from the Duke of Sussex. Prince Harry is supporting us in our mission to

#TackleHIV and we are honoured to have him on this journey. Visit tacklehiv.org for more info

@viivhealthcare #hiv #viivhealthcare #terrencehigginstrust #stigmabusting #charity #lgbt #lgbtq

#sexualhealth #cantpassiton #yourraceyourvictory

A post shared by Tackle HIV (@tacklehiv) on Jun 26, 2020 at 9:00am PDT

Last year, POZ readers voted Prince Harry the Best Celebrity Advocate (read the full list of POZ Awards 2019 winners here). The royal is no stranger to HIV advocacy; his mom was the trailblazing AIDS activist Princess Diana, who died in 1997 and who, coincidentally, would have turned 59 on July 1. To learn more about her AIDS legacy, check out this POZ article on Princess Diana.

"I hope everyone is inspired by 'Alfie', and will support him and the Tackle HIV campaign to improve understanding of it, and better support people who are living with it." ???? #TackleHIV ViiV Healthcare

Posted by Tackle HIV on Thursday, July 2, 2020

For previous articles in POZ about Thomas, see "Rugby Star Gareth Thomas 'Forced' to Disclose He Has HIV [VIDEO]," "Gareth Thomas Coming Out as HIV Positive Offers Hope" and "Watch Rugby Star Gareth Thomas React to News of U=U."

In related HIV news from the United Kingdom, see the June 9 article "Coronavirus Delays PrEP Rollout in England" and the January 21 story "Why HIV Rates Dropped 71% Among Gay and Bi Men in the U.K. "

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/rugby-icon-gareth-thomas-viiv-healthcare-tackle-hiv-video