

## HIV LIVING & SOCIAL POLICY

# BULLETIN AUGUST 2009: ISSUE 2

*The bulletin offers readers opportunities to explore issues further (through links to websites and more information) and is also a mechanism for engaging with NAPWA's constituency – the diverse HIV positive community. You are encouraged to forward this bulletin through your networks and members. You can read the bulletin as an email or as a PDF document (attached). Bulletins are archived and available through NAPWA by request.*



## NEWS IN BRIEF

*This bulletin contains information pertaining to recent advocacy and activity of the HIV Living unit and includes updates and information on priority activity, collaborations with other NAPWA Networks and a general communications section that includes information on upcoming events and activity.*

*In this issue we take a look at:*

- *Progress on the development of the 6<sup>th</sup> National Strategy.*
- *HIV and Insurance – call for Case Studies*
- *NAPWA Criminalisation Monograph update*
- *Research: Men and women living heterosexually with HIV, The Straightpoz study volume 2.*
- *Futures 6*
- *Welfare and employment*
- *We take a look at a new document “Framework for better living with HIV in England”*
- *The Positive Services Forum – delegates report.*
- *Social Inclusion Agenda – A National Compact.*
- *We also look across other NAPWA Networks and offer information on;*
  - *NAPWA's Submission to the Federal government's National Women's Health Policy.*
- *Finally we provide a number of links to upcoming events and conferences.*



## PRIORITY AREAS

### THE 6<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL STRATEGY

*NAPWA has been invited to nominate members to the 6<sup>th</sup> National Strategy Expert Writing Reference Groups. Membership to the Expert Writing Groups are approved by MACBBVS with each of the reference groups having representation from affected communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and also from young people. The aim is to see at least 2 members under the age of 30 on each of the writing reference groups.*

*There will be five strategies:*

- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health and Blood Borne Viruses*
- *Hepatitis B*
- *Hepatitis C*
- *HIV and*
- *Sexually Transmitted Infections*

*The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Sexual Health and Blood Borne Viruses strategy will also cover each of the disease areas. Each of the strategies will follow a similar structure. The Viral Hepatitis Expert Writing Reference Group will be responsible for both the hepatitis B and hepatitis C strategies.*

*Terms of Reference and a schedule of key dates has been provided to key stakeholders including NAPWA. The schedule for this work is tight, but NAPWA has been assured that there is considerable opportunity for consultation.*

*The first opportunity for feedback is via a call for submissions on the strategies. A response framework has been provided to stakeholders to assist the formation of submissions.*

*Draft strategies which will be circulated on 1 September.*

*A national consultation day will be hosted on 12 September in Brisbane at which there will be an opportunity for members from the Expert Writing Reference Groups and MACBBVS to take oral submissions.*

*NAPWA has submitted nominations to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus and the HIV Writing Groups.*

*Copies of the existing strategies are available at [www.ashm.org.au/nationalstrategies](http://www.ashm.org.au/nationalstrategies).*

## **HIV & INSURANCE:**

*The issue of HIV and insurance has received considerable focus in the past. This interest stems from a number of factors primarily that:*

- *There has been a history of activity arising from the introduction of Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).*
- *There has been enquiries – direct to NAPWA and state PLHIV orgs regarding HIV and insurance.*

- *The issue arises as a result of major life changes for positive people (post HAART) such as people returning to employment, purchasing homes, seeking health and various travel insurances.*
- *The Productivity Commission has also conducted hearings into the issue.*
- *A Swiss study that showed a significant improvement in life expectancy, with some arguing that this warrants a change in policy from the insurance industry toward positive people seeking various insurance cover.*
- *NAPWA has been advised of changes to insurance policy (regarding HIV) in the US and the UK.*
- *There has been considerable support from the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) and the Productivity Commission to advance the issue.*

*At the recent HLTN meeting, members agreed that it would be most useful to gather together a dossier of Case Studies that present a picture of the complications and discriminations facing HIV positive people seeking all manner of insurance cover. In the mean time, if you are aware of any individuals experiencing difficulty with obtaining insurance cover we ask that you encourage them to consider drafting a Case Study and forwarding it to [scott@napwa.org.au](mailto:scott@napwa.org.au). Case Studies will be de-identified to protect the confidentiality of the all parties involved.*

## **CRIMINALISATION MONOGRAPH**

*At the time of production, drafting work continues on the NAPWA Criminalisation Monograph. The Monograph brings together expert opinion on the complex area of HIV, disclosure, confidentiality and the law. The practicalities of drawing together a large group of professionals and opinion to work collaboratively on the monograph has been strategically demanding - hence a delay in the launch of the Monograph in Canberra, until later in 2009.*

## **RESEARCH**

*NAPWA is represented on the National Centre in HIV Social Research Advisory Group for the **Straightpoz Study**, a study of the health and needs of HIV positive heterosexuals. The report from the second stage of that study, **Men and women living heterosexually with HIV, The Straightpoz study volume 2** has now been published.*

*An estimated one in five people with HIV in Australia identify as heterosexual, yet little has been known of their experience of living with HIV. The National Centre in HIV Social Research initiated the Straightpoz Study to address this lack of knowledge.*

### **Some key findings:**

- *Participants had high uptake of HIV treatments;*
- *Participants rated their health as relatively good;*
- *Participants felt able to influence their health despite HIV;*

- *HIV impacts on the health of negative partners;*
- *Nearly all participants used health services in hospitals or sexual health clinics;*
- *Participants reported problems around disclosure to GPs and other health professionals;*
- *Disclosure and knowledge about HIV was general within serodiscordant couples;*
- *Many positive partners were ambivalent on issues around unprotected sex.*

The full report can be downloaded at <http://www.napwa.org.au/papers/2009/men-and-women-living-heterosexually-with-hiv>

## **FRAMEWORK FOR BETTER LIVING WITH HIV IN ENGLAND**

*A new document called "Framework for better living with HIV in England" has been funded by Terrence Higgins Trust and developed by a coalition of HIV organisations including The African HIV Policy Network, Black Health Agency, George House Trust, NAM, NAT (National AIDS Trust), Positively Women, Terrence Higgins Trust and Sigma Research.*

*The over-arching goal of the framework is that all people with diagnosed HIV in England “**are enabled to have the maximum level of health, well-being, quality of life and social integration**”. In its explanation of how this should occur the document presents a road map for social care, support and information provision to people with diagnosed HIV.*

*The framework is one of the first documents of its kind in the world. It highlights the huge range of work needed to support people who have diagnosed HIV in three core areas - individual needs, services needs and societal need. In each of these main areas the document outlines goals that any person with diagnosed HIV has the right to expect to be met.*

*The framework is radical in its aspirations, asserting for example, that no person with diagnosed HIV in England, should live in destitution (Goal 1); in sub-standard accommodation (Goal 2); or struggle to access sufficient nutrition to maintain an active and healthy life (Goal 3). The 17 goals outlined in the framework demonstrate very clearly the immense amount of work necessary to bring the standard of social care, support and information provision currently available in England up towards a high standard of clinical care.*

*The framework document makes for interesting reading and is available to download at <http://www.sigmaresearch.org.uk/go.php/reports/report2009e/>*

## **HIV FUTURES 6**

*A reminder also that you can email [hivfutures@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:hivfutures@latrobe.edu.au) to ensure you receive a copy of the HIV Futures 6 report- being released later in the year. The report will also be available online and from HIV health services and community organisations.*

## **WELFARE & EMPLOYMENT**

*As reported in the previous Bulletin, NAPWA has corresponded with Centrelink requesting information and clarification on Centrelinks commitment to community engagement. NAPWA has since received a response from Centrelink National Manager (Client Business Division) Catherine Rule regarding this correspondence and stating in summary that;*

- *Acknowledgement of receipt of NAPWA correspondence*
- *Acknowledging NAPWA representations at recent Centrelink Same sex Discrimination Community reference Group*
- *Acknowledging NAPWA representative Graham Douglas-Meyer's contribution at the Community Engagement Forum in December 2008 – a consultative meeting hosted by Centrelink to discuss with community sector - about community engagement strategies.*
- *Stating that the final report from the Community Engagement Forum has been circulated and that Centrelink has convened a second Community Engagement Forum (26 June) also attended by NAPWA.*
- *Claiming that Centrelink aims to 'strengthen its Community Engagement with the community sector through this work' and that 'this includes ensuring that all interested parties of the community sector have opportunities to engage with Centrelink and vice versa'.*

*The response from Centrelink includes assurances that any proposed new community reference groups prescribed by the engagement strategy will be formed by a membership nomination and selection process and that the details of how such a process will work is still to be determined. Centrelink has said that it will consult with the Minister for Human Services (the Hon Chris Browne MP) prior to its finalisation and that any membership nomination from NAPWA would be welcome.*

## **POSITIVE SERVICES FORUM**

### ***Planning for the long term***

*NAPWA delegates reported that, in June this year HIV sector workers gathered in Sydney to showcase and discuss some of this country's most innovative positive services. The forum placed emphasis on planning for the long-term and forms part of a larger strategy responding to the changing needs of HIV positive Australians.*

*As well as providing a platform for workers to share their successes it was also an opportunity to collect tips and share in the work of others.*

*Peter Thoms from the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation outlined his organisation's **Phoenix Project** – a series of workshops designed to help people living with HIV build their confidence,*

*feel more optimistic about the future and initiate positive change in their lives. While providing clients with new skills and other steps required to return to work or study, the workshops have a profound effect on improving participants' sense of wellbeing and quality of life. A significant component of the project is outreach to different positive populations, including culturally and linguistically diverse communities.*

*This provided a good example of how an established HIV agency can creatively expand. In this case, skilling-up a client base with the support of traditional financial assistance and guidance.*

*NAPWA delegates also reported that there was an excellent session on ageing that examined emerging health and ageing issues for positive people. Although many services for the aged may ostensibly cater to the entire community, people living with HIV are finding these services unprepared and ill equipped to address specific HIV needs. Issues discussed in this session included; improving aged care facilities for people living with HIV, addressing HIV stigma in services and cancer prevalence and responses for people ageing with HIV.*

*A report of the Positive Services Forum is currently being prepared by AFAO staff.*



## WHAT HAPPENING?

### **SOCIAL INCLUSION AGENDA**

*Extract from; <http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>*

*The Australian Government's social inclusion agenda is a whole-of-government approach to provide opportunities for all Australians to participate in their local community and Australian society.*

*Promoting social inclusion requires a new way of governing. Australia must rethink how policy and programs across portfolios and levels of government can work together to combat economic and social disadvantage in Australia and break down the barriers to participation.*

*The agenda recognises the critical role the not-for-profit sector plays in delivering services, advising and developing social policy and advocating on behalf of marginalised groups. A strong relationship between the government and the sector will be crucial to the success of the agenda and related reforms.*

### **A National Compact**

*A new compact, or agreement, is being developed between the Australian Government and the not-for-profit Sector.*

### **What is a National Compact?**

*The Australian Government, as part of its social inclusion agenda, is exploring ways to develop a new and stronger relationship with the non profit sector, based on partnership and respect.*

*The Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, The Hon Jenny Macklin MP, is committed to a robust and creative relationship with the sector that delivers so many important services to people in our community.*

*One way to do this is through a national compact - an agreement between the Australian Government and the non-profit sector, outlining how the two will work together to improve and strengthen their relationship, now and into the future.*

*To read more about the National Compact consultation and development processes go to:  
<http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/compact/Pages/default.aspx>*



## COMMUNICATION

*The HIV Living Unit bulletin is a means by which you can communicate with a broad network of subscribers. The Bulletin is produced and circulated through NAPWA Networks on a quarterly basis. If you would like further information on any of the items in this issue, or you have any information you would like included in the quarterly bulletins please contact Scott Lockhart (NAPWA Networks Coordinator) on (02) 8568 0305 or email [scott@napwa.org.au](mailto:scott@napwa.org.au)*



## OTHER NETWORKS

### **HEALTH PROMOTION EDUCATION NETWORK (HPEN)**

*NAPWA will host a HPEN planning Day September 17 & 18 in Sydney. HPEN meet annually to discuss and prioritise issues and develop an annual work-plan. A key focus for the September meeting this year will see further discussion and planning around the National Stigma & Discrimination campaign – being collaborated with AFAO.*

### **POSITIVE ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER NETWORK (PATSIN)**

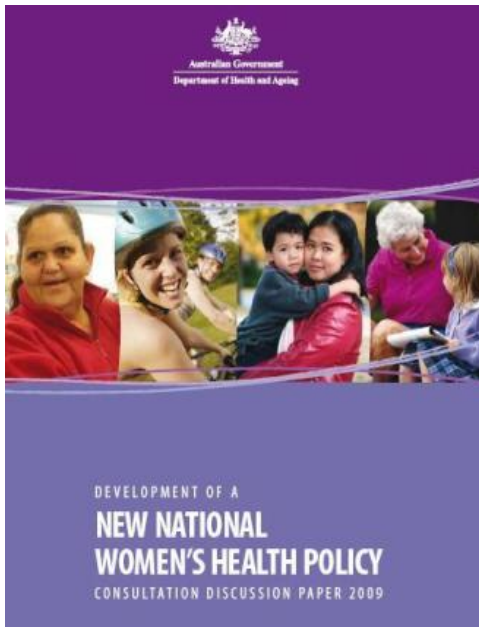
*NAPWA will host a PATSIN planning meeting in October in Sydney. PATSIN members meet approximately 3 times a year to discuss issues and prioritise work plan activity. Recently PATSIN has developed and circulated a network newsletter that provides information to the community about the membership and role of the Network. The newsletter contained personal stories, reports on recent advocacy and peer support and feedback from international conference attendances.*

*PATSIN is currently attempting to recruit members from across Australia to enhance its advocacy work. Further information, and Expressions of Interest invitation can be viewed in the PATSIN Newsletter at; [www.napwa.org.au](http://www.napwa.org.au)*

## POSITIVE WOMEN

*NAWPA will host a Positive Women's face-to-face planning meeting 15 & 16 September in Sydney. This will be the second meeting NAPWA will have with the Network this year and will see the women focus sharply on the 5 key priorities identified at the earlier February face-to-face; stigma & discrimination, disclosure, membership skills audit and female condoms. The membership will also use the meeting as an opportunity 'link in' with the discussions and planning around the National Stigma & Discrimination campaign being collaborated with AFAO.*

## *Federal government's proposed National Women's Health Policy*



*Kate Demaere (NAPWA HIV Living Unit) has recently compiled and authored NAPWA's submission to the National Women's Health Policy - in consultation with the women's network. The Public Health Association of Australia's (PHAA) provided guidance in structuring the submission with the key issues discussed in the NAPWA submission being; HIV stigma & positive women, reproductive services for positive women and sero-discordant couples, services for women in the HIV sector, positive women as carers, HIV testing of older women, regressive criminalisation of HIV and documenting the experience of HIV positive women. The Commonwealth has advised this is not the final opportunity to engage with the development of the National Policy and consultations will take place in*

*each state and territory during the second half of 2009, dates have not been confirmed.*

*NAPWA has been included in the list of stakeholders.*

*To see a copy of NAPWA's Submission to the National Women's Health Policy go to:*

<http://www.napwa.org.au>



## ALERTS

### THE 6<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL STRATEGY – ORAL SUBMISSIONS

*A national consultation day will be hosted on 12 September in Brisbane at which there will be an opportunity for members from the Expert Writing Reference Groups and MACBBVS to take oral submissions. Individuals or groups wanting to make an oral submission should complete the EOI form at:*

<http://www.ashm.org.au/images/pdfs/national%20strategies/attachment%205%20-%20eoi%20oral%20submission.doc>



## CONFERENCES

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*The 9th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (9th ICAAP) Bali, Indonesia, august 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 2009. [WWW.icaap9.org](http://www.icaap9.org)*

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*Australasian Sexual Health Conference – Brisbane, 07 – 09 August 2009*

*Australasian HIV/AIDS Conference 2009 (21st Annual Conference for the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine) to be held from 9-12 September at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, Brisbane, Queensland – go to <http://www.hivaidconference.com.au/> . The Australasian HIV/AIDS Conference 2009 was previously called the ASHM Conference. This new name reflects how the conference is now a strong National and Regional meeting.*

*The ASHM Conference brings together the range of disciplines involved in HIV Management including Basic Science, Clinical Medicine, Community Programs, Education, Epidemiology, Nursing and Allied Health, Policy, Prevention, Primary Care, Public Health and Social Research.*

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