

## More ineligible for Medicare

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There are a growing number of positive people legally living in Australia who do not have access to Medicare, including subsidised [antiretrovirals](#) [1]A medication or other substance which is active against retroviruses such as HIV. through the [Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme](#) [2][Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme] The federal government program which subsidises medication costs in Australia. Anti-HIV drugs are part of a special part of the PBS called Section 100 (S100) which is used for expensive, highly specialised drugs. (PBS).

Many of those ineligible for Medicare have been diagnosed during health screenings while living in Australia. Health care workers and clinicians are struggling with the moral demands of providing care and treatment to these patients without any support in the current health system arrangements.

For many without a Medicare card, the cost of antiretrovirals is prohibitive, forcing them to import lower-cost generic drugs. For others, treatment simply becomes too hard to access or continue.

The public health implications of this are also significant. In 2005, a national meeting of state and territory health ministers agreed to support a scoping study of the issues relating to Medicare ineligibility for people with HIV in Australia.

This report was finalised in 2008 but since then little progress has been made. An in-depth report on the current situation is being prepared by NAPWA for further Commonwealth discussion next month.

- [Culturally and linguistically diverse communities](#)
- [Medicare ineligibles](#)
- [Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme](#)

### Links:

[1] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/122>

[2] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/121>