

Tales from The network

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With a background as a psych nurse, **Jae Condon** also has a good handle on the emotional issues many of us encounter along the way.

Chris came to see him shortly after moving to Sydney.

Only recently diagnosed and new to a big city, Chris was feeling anxious and depressed. He was also drinking heavily. Chris talked to Jae about how much he feared HIV treatments, particularly their side effects and how sick they would make him.

Jae reassured him that most treatment regimens these days have little to no impact on day-to-day life. He lined him up with a compatible HIV doctor and together they encouraged him to seek support for his drinking.

Sober for several months, Chris has now made new friends in Sydney. He has lined up some casual work and feels optimistic about his health and his future. He also remains engaged with ACON's counselling service and has [enrolled](#) [1]The act of signing up participants into a study. Generally this process involves evaluating a participant with respect to the eligibility criteria of the study and going through the informed consent process. in their next Genesis workshop for recently diagnosed gay men.

Carol is another one of Jae's clients. Unlike Chris, Carol's HIV had been diagnosed late, and only because she had started to manifest some serious health problems.

When she and Jae first met, Carol had already lost a lot of weight. She was having problems with her memory and was feeling depressed, particularly about her relationship with one of her adult children.

With Jae's support, Carol found a female HIV doctor with whom she could talk openly about the specific issues that impact on women with HIV. She was prescribed medication for depression and anxiety and now receives regular counselling as well as ongoing support through the ACON Women's and Families Affected by HIV project.

She also saw a dietician and has started taking dietary supplements.

Jae also helped Carol find temporary accommodation with an HIV-specific housing service and linked her up with the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF) who are helping her look for training that will lead to paid work.

The last time she saw Jae, Carol said that she was feeling fantastic.

Jae Condon is the Treatments and Client Support Officer at ACON in Sydney. Among other things, he helps people access HIV-friendly and affordable dental care, maintains a vitamin and supplement service and writes news items on developments in HIV for the ACON website.

Jae works out of the Positive Living Centre in Surry Hills. If you have any questions about the services they offer or you'd like to arrange an appointment, call 02 9699 8756.

Read [more stories from the Network](#). [2]

Links:

[1] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/489>

[2] <http://www.napwa.org.au/pl/2010/03/tales-from-the-network>