

2017 Year in Review

Focus areas for 2016-17

The HIV Services Advisory Group (HSAG) has continued to advocate for the care of Victorians living with HIV, in its third year of operation.

PrEPX

The PrEPX trial, which provides PrEP to individuals at high risk of acquiring HIV infection, continued in 2017 and HSAG received regular reports on its progress. Members welcomed access to PrEP for regional and rural Victorians and the expansion of the trial into both South Australia and Tasmania.

The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) announced in February 2018 that PrEP will be subsidised through the Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme (PBS). HSAG will continue to receive reports as the trial comes to an end in 2018 and participants transition to receiving PrEP through the PBS.

Horizon Place transition

A new model of care - HIV Assist - has been developed to replace the services provided through Horizon Place. The service will support people living with HIV with complex care needs. The aim is to maintain independent living and reduce hospital admissions, along with reducing social isolation for people living with HIV in aged care services. The service will also support people from rural and regional Victoria stay in Melbourne when they need to access HIV specialist care. Members of HSAG contributed to the formal consultation of this new service and have influenced the way that HIV Assist was communicated to health professionals and the wider community.



A/Prof Edwina Wright Infectious Diseases Physician

"This year we've welcomed the long awaited announcement that PrEP will be available on the PBS. This is a significant win for people in our community at risk of acquiring HIV.

"To know that all Victorians will soon have unrestricted access to this life-changing medication will be liberating for so many people.

"As the statewide service for HIV, we will continue to lead the way in research and clinical care, with a strong focus on preventing new HIV transmissions."

HIV Services Advisory Group

Victorian HIV Strategy 2017-2020

HSAG welcomed the launch of the first new strategy in 10 years. A key target of the strategy is to have 95 per cent of people with HIV diagnosed, accessing treatment and achieving undetectable viral loads by 2030. The strategy also seeks to eliminate HIV-related discrimination and stigma.

Members of HSAG contributed to the development of this strategy. It was recognised as an opportunity for greater collaboration and coordination across the state. The more targeted approach outlined in this strategy will help define the focus of HSAG over coming years.

Advanced training and education

HSAG acknowledged and welcomed the increased uptake in GPs attending HIV advanced training and education sessions during 2017. This has resulted from the establishment of the Victorian HIV Clinical Care network, which links clinicians from across the sector, allowing them to raise emerging issues and be provided support. This group aims to establish quality of care indicators.

Psychological support standards

The Australian Standards for psychological support for adults with HIV was introduced in 2017 and presented to HSAG. The aim of these standards is to promote mental health and wellbeing, ensure early detection of psychological difficulties and provide appropriate interventions for those who need them. Alfred Health will undertake a review to assess how well the organisation is meeting each of these standards. HSAG members will advise on mechanisms to engage with community and service users to understand if psychological needs are being met.

What is HSAG?

Alfred Health's HIV Services Advisory Group (HSAG) has been helping Alfred Health plan for future services and identify community needs and future trends in HIV care for over three years. It includes community members and advocacy groups as well as clinical, academic and government representatives.

The group meets every two months at the Positive Living Centre in Prahran and is chaired by Professor Andrew Way, Chief Executive, Alfred Health.

HSAG Membership

Community and Advocacy Group members

- Mr Philip Elphinstone
- Mr David Menadue
- Mr Max Niggel
- Mr Simon Ruth
- Mr Bernie Slagtman
- Ms Jacqui Saunders

Other representatives

- Prof Christopher (Kit) Fairley, Director, Melbourne Sexual Health Centre/Professor of Public Health, Central Clinical School, Monash University
- Prof Jenny Hoy, Director HIV Medicine, Alfred Health
- Prof Mark Stooze, Burnet Institute
- Prof Andrew Way (Chair), Chief Executive, Alfred Health
- Katrina Lewis, Lead for Patient Experience and Consumer Participation, Alfred Health
- The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is also represented at this meeting.



Prof Andrew Way
CEO Alfred Health
Chair Alfred HIV Services Advisory Group