

2019 Year in Review

Focus areas for 2018-19

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

Review of Victorian sexual health and service needs

The Victorian Government undertook a review of sexual health needs of people living in Victoria and services available to meet these needs.

The aim of the review was to better understand the effectiveness of the current service system as it faces increasing demand, changing demographics and growing complexity of some sexually transmitted infections.

HSAG contributed to the consultation at the first meeting of 2019, providing feedback in relation to workforce, health promotion, service delivery, prevention and stigma.

The final report was released in October 2019. Contributions from HSAG were included in the recommendations, including the need for a stronger state-wide sexual health system in a 'spoke' and 'hub' model.

HSAG provided feedback on the final report, drawing attention to the lack of detail in some areas, and the considerable delay that will occur for any recommendations to be implemented.



HSAG member David Menadue OAM

I have always been happy to be involved as a consumer on the Alfred Health's HIV Services Advisory Group because I know that the organisation takes consumer representation and our perspectives seriously.

To have senior staff who care for people with HIV in the service involved in this Advisory Group has meant that current issues can be addressed promptly and services improved where necessary.

Focus on patient experience

By looking at various aspects of patient experience, we can understand if patients are receiving care that is respectful and responsive to their individual needs and preferences. This is particularly important for people that may be living with a chronic disease, such as HIV.

Throughout 2019, HSAG has engaged with different areas of Alfred Health, including Melbourne Sexual Health Centre, Outpatient services, Fairfield House and Ward 7 West to better understand the experience of people living with HIV. The membership heard from these areas as they presented patient experience data and the improvement initiatives developed in response to feedback. HSAG provided guidance on ways to engage with patients, including focus groups and making surveys available through websites and social media.

Australian Standards for psychological support for adults with HIV

The Australian Standards for psychological support for adults with HIV sets out standards for psychological support that should be available for all adults with HIV in Australia. The aim is to promote mental health and wellbeing, early detection of psychological difficulties and the provision of appropriate interventions for those who need them.

Alfred Health's HIV Service have embedded the standards in its existing model of care, with expertise from specialist HIV Social Work, Psychology and Mental Health teams. Alfred Health will also support other services in Victoria to meet the standards through secondary consultation and education.

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. The group includes community members and advocacy groups as well as clinical, academic and government representatives.

HSAG 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 Niggli
- Mr Simon Ruth
- Mr Bernie Slagtman

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.

Join HSAG

Alfred Health is seeking applications from healthcare consumers and members of the community to join the Alfred Health HIV Services Advisory Committee.

If you would like to find out more, contact k.lewis2@alfred.org.au



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