



# plc

**PROFILE**  
**JULIEN**

**POSITIVE  
LIVING  
CENTRE  
AUTUMN  
NEWSLETTER**

**MARCH TO  
JUNE 2016**

**PROVIDING INTEGRATED  
AND COMPREHENSIVE  
SERVICES FOR ALL PEOPLE  
LIVING WITH HIV**

A PROGRAM OF THE  
VICTORIAN AIDS COUNCIL

VAC 

# POSITIVE LIVING CENTRE

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South Yarra 3141

**P:** (03) 9863 0444

**F:** (03) 9820 3166

**W:** [www.vac.org.au](http://www.vac.org.au)

**E:** [plcfeedback@vac.org.au](mailto:plcfeedback@vac.org.au)

## Tram Stop

No.28 on the 72 Route Camberwell Line

## Bus Stop

No.13 which covers Routes 216, 219, 220

**Note:** We are a short walk from both Prahra and South Yarra railway stations.

## PLC OPENING HOURS

Tuesday 10am – 4pm

Wednesday 10am – 4pm

Thursday 10am – 8pm

Friday 10am – 4pm

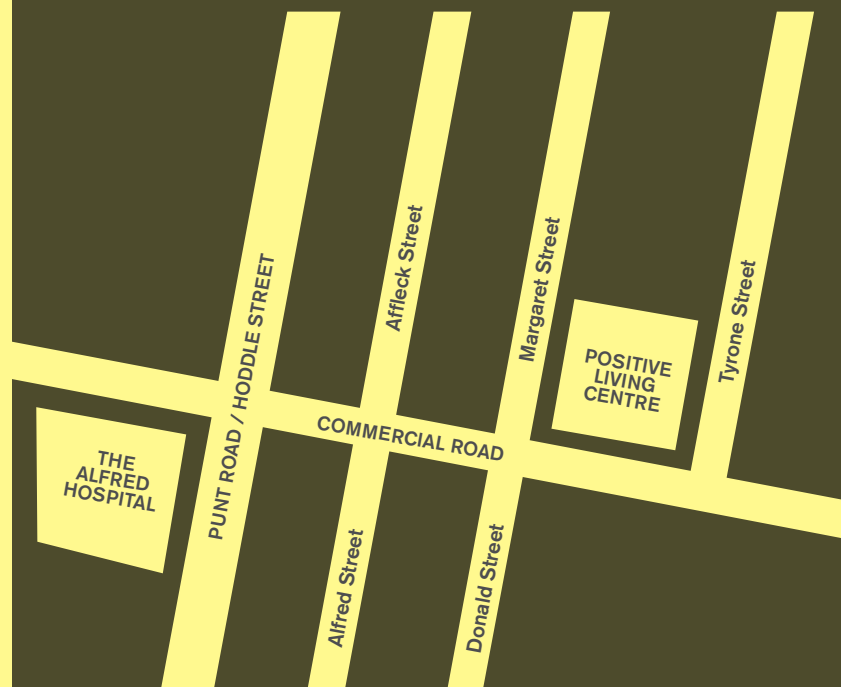
## PLC CLOSURES

Easter

Friday March 25th

Tuesday March 29th

 @VAC.org  VAC.org.au [www.vac.org.au](http://www.vac.org.au)



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March to  
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## WELCOME



WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN EDITION OF THE POSITIVE LIVING CENTRE NEWSLETTER. THERE IS A LOT TO READ AND ENJOY AS WELL AS A GREAT DEAL OF USEFUL INFORMATION IN THIS EDITION.

Our regular newsletters are an easy way to keep up-to-date with new developments and interesting topics in the field. With contributions from a variety of sources, our newsletter contains insightful news pieces, and keeps you informed of all our upcoming events and activities so you never miss out. From all the team at the Positive Living Centre we wish you the best and we look forward to seeing you soon.

**Best Wishes**  
**Alex Nikolovski**

THERE HAVE BEEN POSITIVE OUTCOMES TOO: I REALISED I WAS STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT

# JULIEN FOURNIER

**WHAT DO YOU DO** I am a web developer.

**WHERE DID YOU GROW UP**

I grew up in France, somewhere in the middle of the mainland. I was bored and moved to Paris at the age of 20, then went on, and now I'm here in Melbourne.

**NORTH OR SOUTH** Sorry, I don't mean to offend anyone, but North all the way !! There is no beach on this side though.

**ONE WISH** Can they just invent a super fast plane already ? I'd like to go back to Europe in the weekend! That plane should also be cheap and green.

**CAT OR DOG** Cats ! Cats ! Cats ! They wash themselves, bury their own poo and still give you affection, even though some say it's purely out of interest.

**MODE OF TRANSPORT** I failed my driving licence test three times, and I am a public threat when on a bike. Walking is the best way !

**WHAT DOES PREP MEAN TO YOU**

It's a new tool to fight the HIV pandemic and many studies highlight its efficiency in preventing the spread of the virus. We still have too many infections and we should be happy to have a new tool to reduce them.

**HOW MANY YEARS SINCE YOUR DIAGNOSIS**

I was diagnosed two years and half ago, right before coming to Australia. Very quickly though, I decided I would not let the virus take over my life and so I

came Down Under anyway.

**WHO DID YOU FIRST TELL** As soon as I came out of the sexual health clinic, back in Paris, I called my best friend in the UK. She was shocked, and I was still processing that thing... The day after, I took a train to see her and over that weekend, I had a few drinks, I laughed, I had a panic attack, I cried... That was all I needed, see my best friend, be a mess for a bit and then get on with it.

**DO YOU THINK OF HIV EVERY DAY**

It's not that I want to, but I have to ! I need to take my medication everyday and so I remember I have this medical condition and that I must take care of myself and of others around me.

**HAS HIV CHANGED YOUR LIFE**

Yes. In both negative and positive ways. The negative way is obviously that I have to take medication everyday. Plus, since I don't have access to Medicare - and the drugs are very expensive - it makes it more difficult. Thankfully, the French system covers me abroad but I still need to pay a bit of money in return. There have been positive outcomes too: I realised I was stronger than I thought. It was crazy to come to a different country and find myself alone here with this new, incurable condition. Looking back, I'm like "phew, did I just do that ?!" The other positive thing is that I got to meet all these people involved in the global fight against HIV and I made really beautiful encounters.

I HAD A FEW DRINKS, I LAUGHED, I HAD A PANIC ATTACK, I CRIED... THAT WAS ALL I NEEDED, SEE MY BEST FRIEND, BE A MESS FOR A BIT AND THEN GET ON WITH IT.





## VAC, AFAO AND THE AUSTRALIAN DRUG FOUNDATION LAUNCH TOUCHBASE, A NATIONAL RESOURCE ON ALCOHOL AND DRUGS FOR LGBTI COMMUNITIES.

The Victorian AIDS Council (VAC), the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) and the Australian Drug Foundation are launching TouchBase, a national website providing information on alcohol and drug use as well as mental health and sexual health for LGBTI communities. From basic information on specific drugs, to education about mental health and sexual health, and personal stories – the website is a comprehensive resource assisting LGBTI people to better manage their own health and wellbeing.

LGBTI people have specific experiences when it comes to alcohol and drug use, mental health and sexual health, and TouchBase acknowledges that not everyone's needs are the same. For example, the website contains information about how specific drugs interact with HIV medication, or for some gender diverse or intersex people, with hormones. TouchBase also looks at the ways drug use can impact mental health for LGBTI people, and the specific roles drug use can play in how LGBTI people have sex.

CEO of VAC Simon Ruth said TouchBase is a unique resource that will provide targeted information on drug use, mental health and sexual health all in one place.

"We've created TouchBase to address gaps in existing information for LGBTI people. It's a unique website, because LGBTI people have different drug-using norms – we use drugs in different patterns, we have different concerns, people have been dealing with different issues throughout their lives," Ruth said.

"Particularly with this website, there's a focus on different interactions you may have with certain medications you might be on, whether that's HIV medications, or whether for some

gender diverse or intersex people that's hormones. There are particular safety issues in both of those cases.

"As far as we know it's the first website to tackle both drug interactions with HIV medications and drug interactions with hormones. There's not a lot of information out there on drug interactions with hormones – it's something that we're working to develop."

AFAO Executive Director Rob Lake said TouchBase would help LGBTI communities put drug use, mental health and sexual health in the same context.

"TouchBase offers important and useful health information for LGBTI communities. The site is especially valuable in making links between alcohol and drug use, mental health and sexual health. AFAO's health promotion efforts have always been grounded in the principle that individual health is influenced by a range of social and contextual factors," Lake said.

"AFAO also believes that communities play an important role in reducing harms associated with substance use as well as supporting mental and physical resilience. TouchBase encapsulates these principles by bringing together detailed information about alcohol and drugs, sexual and mental health and it does so through a platform that is innovative and engaging. It's my hope that the site will be widely used and support better health among LGBTI people."

Australian Drug Foundation CEO John Rogerson said rates of alcohol and drug use were higher in these communities compared with the general population.

"When you know LGBTI communities are a

high-risk group we know they require targeted interventions – so websites like TouchBase play an important role in education," said Mr Rogerson.

"We provided the expertise (support and information) to the Victorian AIDS Council so they could put this website together and we are extremely proud of the product they have produced. "Now people in the LGBTI communities have a place to go if they need any information on the impacts their existing or potential drug use may have on their health."

IT'S A UNIQUE WEBSITE, BECAUSE LGBTI PEOPLE HAVE DIFFERENT DRUG-USING NORMS – WE USE DRUGS IN DIFFERENT PATTERNS, WE HAVE DIFFERENT CONCERNS, PEOPLE HAVE BEEN DEALING WITH DIFFERENT ISSUES THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES.

Bill O'Loughlin, a gay man living with HIV and the President of drug user organisation Harm Reduction Victoria, said TouchBase would help address the harmful stigma attached to drug use.

"Drug use is a part of life for many in our LGBTIQ community and it's great that our organisations are helping us to talk about

it in our own ways. We need to shift from the silence, secrecy, taboos and shame associated with drug use because it is harmful," O'Loughlin said.

"We need to know and talk about how to look after ourselves and others when we use drugs, for example how to use and inject safely, and how to look after those who might get into difficulty."

Nic Holas, Co-Founder of The Institute of Many (TIM), a community group for people living with HIV, said LGBTI communities have long needed something specifically created for them.

"TouchBase is the one-stop website the community has been waiting for. Our community is incredibly resilient and knows how to have a good time but sometimes, the good time goes on a little too long," Holas said.

"Some of us still struggle with acceptance, loneliness, and other things that can create pathways to problematic use of alcohol and other drugs. Which is why TouchBase is so great – it's specifically created for our community, to help our community, without lecturing or judging them."

**TouchBase can be found:**  
[www.touchbase.org.au](http://www.touchbase.org.au)

Has your mental health been feeling a bit shakey?

TouchBase with us.

[TOUCHBASE.ORG.AU](http://TOUCHBASE.ORG.AU)

Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations  
website for LGBTI communities.

Logos for VAC, AFAO, and Australian Drug Foundation.



THOUSANDS OF VICTORIANS AT HIGH RISK OF HIV INFECTION WILL NOW HAVE ACCESS TO THE LATEST PREVENTION TREATMENT, WITH THE ANDREWS LABOR GOVERNMENT EXPANDING ACCESS TO HIV PREVENTION MEDICINE, PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PREP). “THIS IS A HUGE STEP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV, AND BRINGS US ONE STEP CLOSER TO ACHIEVING OUR GOAL OF VIRTUAL ELIMINATION OF NEW HIV INFECTION BY 2020” SAID MINISTER FOR HEALTH JILL HENNESSY.

Bringing Victoria another step closer to achieving the virtual elimination of new HIV infections, the new and expanded trial will see up to 2,600 people access PrEP, through a joint partnership between the Labor Government, Alfred Health, Victorian AIDS Council and the Burnet Institute.

The new study, PrEPX, is expected to reduce new HIV infections in Victoria by up to 30 per cent, with an estimated 77 new HIV infections averted through the study over a 12 month period.

PrEP, the latest biomedical treatment in the fight against HIV, is a way for people who don't have HIV to prevent HIV infection by taking a pill every day. When taken consistently it has been shown to be over 94 per cent effective at preventing HIV infection. The Labor Government is developing an HIV strategy in partnership with the HIV sector to achieve the virtual elimination of new HIV infections by 2020, and access to PrEP will play a critical role in meeting this target.

Although PrEP has been licensed for use in the United States since 2012, the Federal Liberal Government is dragging its feet and PrEP still needs to be approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration for use in Australia, and then listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. “While the Federal Liberal Government continues to stall, we're taking action to ensure thousands

of Victorians can access PrEP safely and when they need it” Ms Hennessy said. With this not expected to occur until the end of 2017, the Labor Government has taken action to ensure those high risk Victorians can access PrEP free of stigma or discrimination, when they need it.

The Labor Government knows stigma and discrimination can be a huge barrier to people seeking important prevention, treatment, support and care services, and will continue to work to promote diversity and tackle stigma and discrimination wherever it exists. “We will continue to work hard to reduce stigma and discrimination, and promote diversity so Victorians can access the HIV prevention, treatment and care services they need” Ms Hennessy said.

The expanded study also aims to ensure we have the best model in place to provide ongoing access to PrEP, so high risk Victorians are getting the right treatment and support, at the right time and the right place.

As Australia's first Fast-Track City, we are also committed to meeting the Joint United Nation goal of 90-90-90 by 2022 – where 90 per cent of people who are HIV positive know their status and are on treatment, and that 90 per cent of people on treatment have an undetectable viral load.

Source: Networking Health Victoria

## ADVISORY GROUP

VAC LAUNCHES GP SERVICES, ADVISORY GROUP TO SUPPORT VICTORIA'S TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

The Victorian AIDS Council (VAC) has welcomed on board Dr Pauline Cundill to provide GP services to the trans and gender diverse community from the organisation's Fitzroy site, where VAC's PRONTO! rapid HIV testing service is currently based. From 22 February this new, bulk-billing service will be operating on Mondays and Thursdays, with appointments available between 9AM–3.30PM.

Dr Cundill has over 10 years experience working with trans and gender diverse patients. She has worked previously at both Northside Clinic and Prahran Market Clinic, she provides training for rural GP registrars in LGBTI health, and works closely with the Royal Children's Hospital Gender Clinic. “A trans and gender diverse health and wellbeing clinic is long overdue in Melbourne. Having worked in this area over the past 10 years I've seen the need for a community space and improved health services for the trans community,” said Dr Cundill.

“I'm excited that this clinic will be in partnership with the trans and gender diverse community to ensure that we meet community needs and expectations. My role is to provide high quality medical care in an affirming, friendly and safe space.”

Jeremy Wiggins, VAC Project Lead, Trans Health said: “This is a new era for trans health in Victoria and it's very exciting to have so much community support behind this new service.”

Appointments for the trans and gender diverse health service can currently be booked via the PRONTO! website, [pronto.org.au](http://pronto.org.au).

Alongside the new GP service, VAC has launched its first Trans and Gender Diverse Advisory Group, which will provide advice to the organisation on supporting and promoting the health and wellbeing of Victoria's sexually and gender diverse communities.

VAC sought expressions of interest in late 2015, and the advisory group convened for its first meeting on Wednesday evening. Co-chaired by Jeremy Wiggins, the group's members represent a breadth of expertise and lived experience in sexually and gender diverse communities.

The scope of the advisory group's activities will include: general medical services, sexual health services, alcohol and drugs, HIV services, mental health, health promotion, policy, diversity and inclusion.

“Establishing the trans and gender diverse advisory group is a really important step to ensure the trans work we do at VAC is relevant to the community and led by the community,” said Wiggins.

VAC CEO Simon Ruth said the work of the advisory group will have a tangible impact on the work of the organisation.

“It's important that these are community-led initiatives—trans and gender diverse people are identifying gaps in the services and support available in Victoria, and coming to us to tell us what needs to be done,” Ruth said.

“We want the work we do as an organisation to better support trans and gender diverse Victorians, and we're proud to work with these communities to make that happen.”



**I DON'T  
REGRET THE  
THINGS I'VE  
DONE, I  
REGRET THE  
THINGS I  
DIDN'T DO  
WHEN I HAD  
THE CHANCE.**

**- UNKNOWN**

## CHARLIE SHEEN

### CHARLIE SHEEN'S HIV DISCLOSURE HAD BIG ONLINE IMPACT: STUDY

Actor Charlie Sheen was called a lot of things during his bad-boy days. Until now, public health promoter wasn't one of them.

Sheen's revelation that he's infected with the AIDS virus prompted the greatest number of HIV-related Google searches recorded in the United States since 2004, and more than 1 million of them involved public health-related information. That's according to a new study from San Diego State University research professor John Ayers and colleagues, who examined the impact of the announcement Nov. 17 by the former star of TV's "Two and a Half Men."

"While no one should be forced to reveal HIV status, Sheen's disclosure may benefit public health by helping many people learn more about HIV infection and prevention," the researchers wrote in a report published Monday in JAMA Internal Medicine.

They analyzed Google trends data along with news trends from a Bloomberg LP terminal system from 2004 through three weeks after Sheen's announcement. Given historic trends, there were almost 3 million more searches about HIV on Nov. 17 than expected, and more than 1 million were related to important public health messages because they included search terms for condoms, HIV symptoms or HIV testing. The study doesn't list the total number of HIV-related searches that day on Google.

The researchers also found there were more than 6,500 HIV-related news stories — not counting duplicates from the same news source — on Google News alone on Nov. 17, reversing a decade-long decline in news reporting about the virus. Sheen's tumultuous professional and personal life has made news before — for public outbursts, drug and alcohol use and prostitution. The study didn't look at the online impact of those headlines.

The researchers noted that former NBA star Magic Johnson sparked increased HIV awareness when he disclosed his own infection, in 1991, before the Internet was so ubiquitous. They said public health authorities could leverage the "Charlie Sheen effect" to keep the spotlight on HIV awareness, and that Sheen's disclosure could potentially have a greater impact because of how connected people are to information.

About 1 million people in the USA are HIV-infected but government estimates say about 150,000 of them don't know it — emphasizing the importance of better awareness, Ayers said.

A journal editorial says public health authorities face a challenge when blockbuster celebrity health news surfaces, and need to make sure useful health information is easily accessible to consumers at such moments.

Source: Yahoo news

# TELLING A FAMILY MEMBER

IF YOU HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH HIV YOU MAY BE THINKING ABOUT TELLING FAMILY MEMBERS, BUT YOUR DECISION WILL DEPEND ON THE RELATIONSHIP YOU ALREADY HAVE WITH THEM.

## HOW SHOULD I CHOOSE A FAMILY MEMBER TO TELL ABOUT MY HIV STATUS?

It may be helpful to ask yourself if the person you want to tell:

- has been helpful when you talked about problems in the past
- accepts and loves you
- respects your privacy
- is a good listener
- is practical, sensible and reliable.

Family members may have incorrect information about HIV and treat you differently or unkindly. If you think your family might react like this it may be easier to get some support from an HIV organisation or a support group for people living with HIV.

If you do decide to tell someone in your family, it might be useful to have some leaflets you can show them. People may have exaggerated worries about HIV and having something to read may be reassuring.

## WILL A DOCTOR OR NURSE TELL MY FAMILY ABOUT MY HIV STATUS?

Some people worry that if they become unwell and have to be admitted to hospital, the medical staff might disclose their HIV status to their relatives against their will.

Generally doctors wouldn't disclose someone's HIV status. They might explain that the person has

a condition like pneumonia, for example, without mentioning their HIV infection.

In some situations medical staff might encourage people to disclose their HIV status so they can get support from their family, but they will not force them to do so.

## WHAT REACTION SHOULD I EXPECT FROM MY FAMILY?

Often people don't understand the ways HIV can be passed on, or they may feel worried and upset about your health.

They will be reassured to know that you're getting good care from your HIV clinic and that you know where to get support and how to take care of yourself.

## SHOULD I TELL MY CHILDREN ABOUT MY HIV STATUS?

If you are a parent you may be thinking about telling your children that either you or they have HIV. They may be shocked or upset by the news or may not be able to keep it to themselves, and this could cause problems for all of you.

It is a good idea to get some support from a family support worker or an HIV organisation that works with families with children before telling your children.

This is where the staff at the



OFTEN PEOPLE DON'T UNDERSTAND THE WAYS HIV CAN BE PASSED ON, OR THEY MAY FEEL WORRIED AND UPSET ABOUT YOUR HEALTH.

Positive Living Centre can play a role, a very worthwhile function by giving people the opportunity to talk about their concerns in a supported and confidential way. Talking to staff may be a vehicle for people to explore their feelings about these kinds of situations. It may be about your need to state what you think, how you feel, what you can do

about your own situation and what coping strategies work for you. It may be about exploring what being HIV positive actually means to you. It may be about encouraging you to consider professional counselling, which the VAC can offer, and that can be a very effective tool, empowering you and allowing you to take action.



# CELEBRATE AGEING

A SENSE OF PLACE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF ALL OF OUR LIVES. IT'S NOT SO MUCH ABOUT GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION AS IT IS ABOUT BELONGING AND CONNECTION.

There is an important link to be made between a world in which older people feel valued and respected - and older people's sense of place. In this project we explore what Place means to older people. We invite older people to share a portrait photo and a story (up to 200 words) about what gives them a Sense Of Place.

Over the next year we would particularly like to explore what Place means to a diverse range of older Australians. We are currently seeking opportunities to work with people who have been displaced or marginalised.

## How to participate:

Older people are invited to share a photo of themselves. Include up to 200 words about what Place (a sense of place) mean to you. Post us your photo and words, or email a scanned copy. Please include your first name and your age with your story.

Website:

[www.celebrateageing.com](http://www.celebrateageing.com)

Contact:

[celebrateageing@gmail.com](mailto:celebrateageing@gmail.com)

WE ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN DISPLACED OR MARGINALISED.

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Lizzie, 68: I love food. I love cooking, I think its something you can put your heart and soul into. I love cooking for the grandkids. My family give me a sense of place. We mutually need each other. We share a sense of humour and genes. They are always there. They give me a reason to be in the world, knowing that I count. I have a really lovely friend and she gives me life long companionship. She helps and empowers me. We have a like mindedness. She understands me. I talk to her about things. We share ideas about how to survive on a pension. I have a strong sense of self but getting old its important to have good friends. I love to dance because it transports me to another place through music, especially at a gay event because I feel like I belong. Coming to work is a sense of place. It gives me an area where I am passionate about to make a difference. It feels good to make a difference to the world. I give the clients my wisdom from all my years of living about how to move through stuff when times are tough.

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# WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

VAC AND ACON ARE PROUD TO BRING YOU THIS ONE DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOCUSING ON THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND QUEER WOMEN.

This conference will explore best practice and available research in working with LBG women around mental health, sexual health, alcohol and other drug use, and broader women's health issues. There will be a range of workshops and presentations from industry experts, health and human service providers, and community members. Keynote speakers include:

Victoria's first Gender and Sexuality Commissioner, [Rowena Allen](#)

Bec Johnson the Co-founder of [IndigiLez Leadership and Support Group](#), a community group that encourages and supports the health and well being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lesbians and same sex attracted women.

IndigiLez was co-founded with Tanya Quakawoot .

Welcome address from VAC CEO Simon Ruth and ACON CEO Nicolas Parkhill

The event will be MC'd by Green Room Performing Arts award winner and LBG Women's advocate, [Yana Alana](#).

## Lesbian, Bisexual & Queer Women's Health Conference

connections - creativity - care

27th of May, 2016

The Jasper Hotel,  
489 Elizabeth St, Melbourne.



# MINDFULNESS

## MINDFULNESS IMPROVES HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN PEOPLE WITH HIV



Nowadays, in Western countries, the needs of people living with HIV are different from those at the early days of the epidemic. People diagnosed many years ago faced challenges that threatened their ability to age successfully: they frequently suffered from physical and emotional fatigue after years of infection, side effects of the treatments and, in many cases, other

chronic infections such as hepatitis and/or diseases typical in aging.

In fact, people with HIV may suffer from premature aging because their immune system is permanently activated to combat the effects of the virus, causing widespread inflammation that may have harmful effects on the body. Health problems related to aging,

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such as cardiovascular disease, certain cancers or cognitive impairment may appear more often and at a younger age than in the general population. Since the HIV infection has become chronic and people are aging with HIV, a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach including medical, psychological and social aspects is required more than ever.

Moreover, as shown in some studies, high levels of stress and depressive symptoms have a direct impact on the quality of life of people and on their immune status. It seems clear that a good emotional status has a positive effect on the immunological situation, becoming a key aspect to fight against the disease.

In this context, *AIDS & Behaviour* journal published in its latest issue the results of a study that assessed the positive effects of a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy program in the quality of life, emotional status and immune status of people diagnosed with HIV infection before 1996 (that is before the advent of highly effective antiretroviral drugs) and who had been on antiretroviral therapy for at least five years. Forty people took part in the study: half of them followed the program and the others, named as the control group, continued with the routine follow-up.

THE STUDY SHOWED THAT QUALITY OF LIFE, PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE GROUP FOLLOWING THE MINDFULNESS PROGRAM COMPARED TO THE CONTROL GROUP.

Mindfulness is the ability to be present in each moment, experiencing everyday life, consciously connected with the present. Many times, our mind tends to operate in a mode that we might call “autopilot,” ignoring the experiences. With a discipline or practice similar to meditation we try to switch from “autopilot” mode to

mindfulness mode. In this second mode of mental functioning, unlike the first, we can learn to embrace emotions, thoughts and feelings that arise from our experience without judgment, being more compassionate with others and especially with ourselves, creating a certain inner peace.

The intervention applied in the study was always supervised by a psychologist with experience in the application of mindfulness-based techniques and consisted of eight weekly classes of 2.5 hours. In addition, participants were given CDs that included instructions for meditation sessions, yoga and cognitive exercises to practice at home.

The study showed that quality of life, psychological stress and symptoms of depression and anxiety improved significantly in the group following the mindfulness program compared to the control group. During the follow-up, the participants included in the mindfulness program also had a significant increase in their CD4 cells, which are fundamental in the evolution of HIV infection.

Given the limitations of the study, such as the lack of information regarding long-term benefits, the positive results showed in the study suggest that a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy program can help to promote successful aging in people with HIV infection as well as in the general population. In collaboration with the Alfred Health and Swinburne we hope to pilot a Mindfulness program soon at the Centre. We are working with Dr. Michelle Earle. Please stay tuned to hear more about this exciting new service.

# DANCING AT THE CENTRE

EVERYONE CAN BENEFIT FROM SOME FORM OF EXERCISE.



Exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle as it gives you the strength, flexibility and endurance needed for daily activities. Exercise is beneficial to the immune system and has been shown to improve physical and emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Exercise can also boost self-esteem, reduce your risk of stress and depression and it produces the naturally occurring 'feel good' chemicals, called endorphins. Exercise doesn't fight HIV, but it can have important benefits for people with HIV, in addition to all those listed above.

Many people with HIV have increased levels of blood sugars and fats, such as cholesterol, which can increase the risk of some serious long-term health problems. Exercise can lower levels of these fats and sugars, reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes.

People with HIV-related weight loss often have low levels of a type of cholesterol called HDL; sometimes referred to as the 'good'

cholesterol. Exercise can increase levels of this good cholesterol. Resistance training can also help people with HIV-related weight loss by increasing lean body mass. Exercise can reduce the risk of osteoporosis and help, once it is diagnosed, by encouraging new bone to grow.

Regular exercise has been shown to reduce fat accumulation in people living with HIV who have lipodystrophy (changes in body fat), whilst helping to build muscle in the areas where fat has been lost.

As an addition to our exercise program at the Centre the PLC is planning to introduce a new group activity.

We have been offered the opportunity to start up a Dance Class after dinner on a Thursday evening from about 7pm -8pm.

It's partner dancing, such as: Waltz, Cha Cha, Tango, Rumba, Foxtrot, Samba, Jive and more.

Yes, come as a group, couple or single person. We will be changing partners regularly throughout the class so no-one is left out. Lessons will be based on beginner standard, so there's no expectation of prior knowledge. Half the fun is a constant change of partner so be prepared to meet new friends.

Stay tuned for some promotional material with planned dates soon.

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# ART THERAPY WORKSHOPS AT THE PLC

**Starts Friday 8th April  
11am until 1pm.**

**'Relaxation and letting go of outside world'**

- Art Therapy helps individuals relax
- Provides a sense of control
- Reduces anxiety and depression
- Encourages playfulness and a sense of humour
- Increases self esteem
- Nurturing of self and reduces boredom
- Improves communication with others

Please book at reception



## VAC COMMUNITY SUPPORT COMES TO BENDIGO

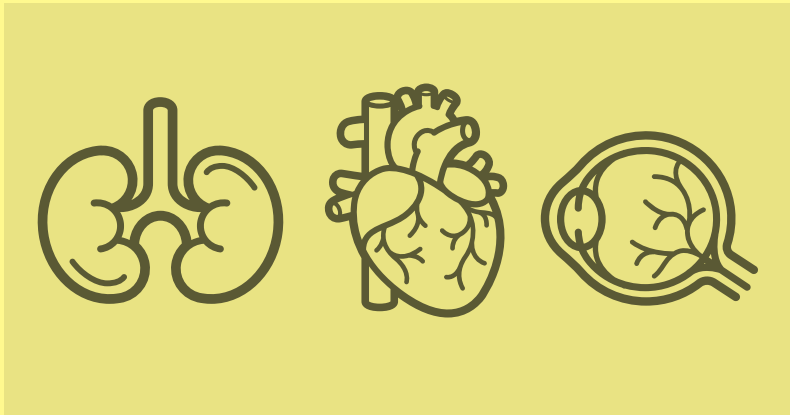
FOLLOWING THE CHANGES AT THE COUNTRY AWARENESS NETWORK, VAC COMMUNITY SUPPORT IS ESTABLISHING SUPPORT IN BENDIGO FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV.

We are starting with a coffee morning on Thursday, April 7. This will be followed by monthly activities aimed at people who would like to be more socially connected.

**If you are interested in being involved, please call Community Support on (03) 9863 0426 or email [support@vac.org.au](mailto:support@vac.org.au)**

# THE FIRST HIV-POSITIVE ORGAN TRANSPLANTS ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN IN THE US

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE HAS RECEIVED APPROVAL TO TRANSPLANT HIV-POSITIVE LIVERS AND KIDNEYS INTO OTHER HIV-POSITIVE PATIENTS, AND HAS ANNOUNCED THAT IT'S READY TO GET STARTED AS SOON AS IT HAS RECIPIENTS AND DONORS LOCKED IN.



This will be the first time that HIV-positive organs will be transplanted in the US, and it could save the lives of more than 1,000 people each year, thanks to the estimated 600 HIV-positive patients who have wanted to donate their organs but couldn't in the past due to legislation.

"That'd be the greatest increase in organ transplantation that we've seen in the past decade," Johns Hopkins surgeon Dorry Segev told The New York Times.

The new approval comes after the passing of the 2013 HOPE Act - a bill that was co-written by Segev

and signed by President Obama, which made it possible for people with HIV to donate their organs.

Now, after more than two years of paperwork, Johns Hopkins has finally received approval from the United Network for Organ Sharing to become the first hospital in the US to perform a kidney transplant between HIV-positive patients, and it will also become the first anywhere in the world to perform a HIV-positive liver transplant.

"This is an unbelievably exciting day for our hospital and our team, but more importantly for patients

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living with HIV and end-stage organ disease," said Segev. "For these individuals, this means a new chance at life."

HIV-positive transplants were first outlawed back in 1988 because of the short lifespan associated with the virus at the time. But since the introduction of antiretrovirals, HIV-positive patients are living longer than ever, and with the right medications, can live just as long as their peers. Which means there's more need than ever before for them to have access to transplants.

"We're seeing now kidney failure, liver failure and the need for transplantation in these patients," Segev told NPR, explaining his motivation for writing the 2013 HOPE Act bill. "The waiting list has about 120,000 people on it, so that's kind of a depressing line to wait in ... At the same time it occurred to me that we were throwing away organs that were infected with HIV."

"Organ transplantation is actually even more important for patients with HIV, since they die on the waiting list even faster than their HIV-negative counterparts," he added.

In South Africa, HIV-positive-to-HIV-positive kidney transplants have already been performed successfully, proving that the technique can save lives.

The first transplant in the US hasn't been scheduled as yet, but is ready to take place as soon as a suitable organ becomes available and a recipient is identified and prepared, Johns Hopkins has announced. The biggest risk for patients is what's known as superinfection - the chance that recipients could

receive organs from donors that have a more aggressive strain of HIV than they have, and potentially become infected by it.

This is something the Johns Hopkins doctors will try to avoid by carefully matching recipients and donors based on their HIV strain, as well as the medications they've used to successfully manage the virus.

"If you have a pretty unaggressive strain of HIV and we know that the donor you're getting the organ from was also controlled on the same meds that you're taking, then you will probably remain controlled when you get that organ," Segev told NPR.

But because of this risk - as well as the lack of research into the safety of a patient with HIV giving up a kidney - the rate of HIV-positive transplants will be slow at first, and the hospital will initially only focussing on organs from deceased donors.

But once the right procedures and systems have been tested, Segev believes the rate will increase rapidly, and will hopefully become a common procedure in the US. In addition to being a life-saving surgery for recipients of the organ, the move also gives HIV patients the chance to do what many of us take for granted - give something back to the world.

"People want to leave a living legacy; they want to help," Segev told The New York Times. "And to be stigmatised and told, 'You can't help because you're HIV-positive' can be devastating. This removes yet another stigma associated with HIV."

Source: [www.sciencealert.com](http://www.sciencealert.com)

IN SOUTH AFRICA, HIV-POSITIVE-TO-HIV-POSITIVE KIDNEY TRANSPLANTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY, PROVING THAT THE TECHNIQUE CAN SAVE LIVES.

# PLC SERVICES

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THE PANTRY SERVICE IS AVAILABLE FORTNIGHTLY AND ALLOWS CLIENTS ON A HEALTH CARE CARD TO CHOOSE FROM A LARGE VARIETY OF GROCERY ITEMS, FRUIT, VEGETABLES AND SOME REFRIGERATED ITEMS.

## NUTRITIONAL SERVICES AT THE PLC



### MEALS

Nutritious and delicious meals are served at the centre with your choice of a meat or vegetarian main meal and dessert or soup as an entree. Soft Drinks, fruit juices, coffee and tea are also available. Ram has now been with us for a number of years and feedback about the quality and variety of the food he and his volunteers have prepared has been exceptional. Please come to the PLC and enjoy a great meal and chat to others.

- **Cost is \$3 for clients and \$5 for guests**
- **TUESDAY LUNCH 12.30pm – 2pm**
- **THURSDAY DINNER 6.00pm – 7.30pm**

### PANTRY

The pantry service is available fortnightly and allows clients on a Health Care Card to choose from a large variety of grocery items, fruit, vegetables and some refrigerated items.

### TUESDAY:

**11.30am to 3.30pm**

### WEDNESDAY:

**11.30am to 3.30pm**

### THURSDAY:

**11.30am to 7.30pm**

### FRIDAY:

**11.30am to 3.30pm**

Please note that this service will close while lunch and dinner are being served. Please check the Calender insert for dates. We encourage you to do your bit for the Environment and bring Recycle Bags to use at Pantry.

Cost is \$2 for clients with Health Care Card

### AFTERNOON TEA

Afternoon Tea is offered during the "off-pantry" week on Wednesdays. 2.30pm-3.30pm.

Come along and enjoy cakes, pastries and coffee. It's Free and it's Delicious!

# A FOCUS ON NUTRITION

## MONICA KLEIN

I AM A NEW GRADUATE ACCREDITED PRACTISING DIETICIAN, HAVING COMPLETED MY BACHELOR OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS LAST YEAR AT MONASH UNIVERSITY.

The course takes four years to complete and I was lucky to have the opportunity to gain diverse practical experience working in hospitals, food service and at a community health centre. I am currently working as a Health Promotion Officer at Cardinia Shire council (in the South East growth corridor). My role involves delivering food system related projects to improve the health and wellbeing of the community. I am very passionate about prevention of lifestyle related illnesses and working to change the food system so that healthy food is the easiest and cheapest option for Australians.

What you can do to decrease levels of fat in the blood, promote strong bones and a healthy immune system.

1. Decrease the levels of “saturated” and “trans” fats in your diet and replace these with “unsaturated” fats (ie: replace butter with avocado, olive oil)
2. Increase the fibre content in your diet, ideally Australian adults should be consuming 30g of fibre per day. Fibre is found in wholegrains, fruit, vegetables and legumes. For example, 30g is equivalent to the combination of a ¾ cup breakfast cereal, 2

slices of wholemeal bread, 1 apple and 1 orange, 2 cups of vegetables and ¼ cup of baked beans.

3. Maintain a waist circumference of less than 94cm for men and 80cm for women (and a normal BMI (20 - 25 for people under the age of 70)
4. Exercise for at least 30 minutes, at least 5 days per week
5. Decrease the amount of salt you eat (try to eat less processed foods – ie canned food, pre-made sauces as these tend to be high in salt. If you do eat processed

The following recipe can be modified according to taste:

- You can substitute pasta for basmati or brown rice, buckwheat, quinoa, barley, cous cous, polenta etc
- You can choose to include the vegetables you enjoy- other ideas include corn, baby corn, peas, beans, green capsicum, eggplant, pumpkin, sundried tomato
- You can substitute chicken for another meat, or feta for a different cheese. Alternatively, as a protein source you could use beans, tofu, lentils, fish etc.
- You can also choose to add nuts, use different herbs and spices, garnish with spinach etc.



## MEDITERRANEAN PASTA

### (SERVES 4-5)

#### Ingredients

- 375g Pasta (any style you like)
- 1 onion, 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 carrots
- 2 tomatoes
- 1 celery stick
- 1 red capsicum
- 2 zucchini
- 6 mushrooms
- 1-2 tb extra virgin olive oil
- Fresh parsley
- 2 chicken Thai fillets OR 100g feta cheese
- Small bunch spinach
- Spices to taste (can use basil, oregano, pepper etc)

#### Method

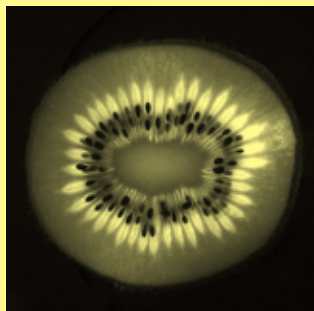
1. Cook onion and garlic in olive oil until soft
2. Add chicken (if using chicken)
3. Add tomatoes and celery, cook until tomatoes are like a paste
4. Add carrots, capsicum, mushrooms and spinach
5. When almost cooked, add zucchini last (and feta if you are using feta)

# ACTIVITIES AT THE PLC

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## NATURO PATHY & VITAMART

Naturopathy is the practice of complementary medicine drawing on the disciplines of herbal medicine and nutrition.

**Our Naturopath is available by appointment each Thursday 5pm - 9pm**

The Vitamart service provides subsidised vitamins for HIV+ individuals as prescribed by your health practitioner.  
**Vitamart: Tuesday to Friday Cost: As per vitamin price list.**

## ART CLASSES

**Wednesday 10am - 12.30pm Cost: Free**

Have you ever wanted to learn to draw or paint? Come and join our small and intimate art class. Liz, our resident art teacher, can help you discover your hidden artistic flair. Beginners welcome.

## COMPUTER & INTERNET SERVICES

The Cyber Room is one of the most popular services offered at the PLC. It is open every day and is available to all clients. Every computer is connected to the internet and also has word processing and MS Office software installed. PLC clients must comply with the law and PLC policy when using the Cyber Room computers.

## MUSCLES AND CURVES

**Wednesday 1:30pm - 2.15pm Cost: Free**

Get yourself trimmed, toned and looking terrific in this weekly exercise class. Classes are facilitated by an experienced Personal Trainer and suitable for beginners and those with more experience.

### TUMS & BUMS

**Tuesday 11.30am - 12.30pm Cost: Free**

A structured, high-energy exercise class focusing on fitness and strength in a fun group environment.

## YOGA

**Thursday 4pm- 5pm  
Cost: Free**

Relax, unwind, strengthen and stretch. An all over gentle workout for your body and mind.

### PILATES

**Friday 11.00am to 12 noon Cost: Free**

A fabulous form of exercise that is low impact, relaxing and helps build up your core muscles, which can effectively and safely reduce back pain and help trim down those waistlines!

## MASSAGE

Relaxation massage eases stress from the body and assists the body's immune system functions. We offer several types of massage:

- Wednesdays: 1pm and 2:15pm - Deep Tissue with James or Wayne
- Alternate Thursdays: 10:30am, 11:30am & 12:30pm - Remedial with Oscar
- Relaxation with Myka Friday 11am to 2-30pm
- Relaxation with Wayne Tuesday 10.30am to 2pm

**Cost: \$2 for PLC Clients with Health-Care Card / \$5 for PLC Clients without Health Care Card.**

# BBV/STI PREVENTION IN THE LODDON MALLEE REGION

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The Victorian AIDS Council (VAC) and Bendigo Community Health Services will partner in 2016 to deliver programs and services related to the prevention of blood-borne viruses and sexually transmitted infections (BBV/STI) in the Loddon Mallee Region. The aim of the service is to ensure people at risk of BBV/STI can access the information and services they need to look after their health in a safe and inclusive way. Both receiving funding from the Department of Health and Human Services for the new initiative, the two organisations represent decades of experience and expertise in both the local community and in working with communities living with and affected by BBV/STI.

VAC and Bendigo Community Health Services will work with the Country Awareness Network (CAN) to integrate a number of the organisation's unique services into this new initiative. As part of this funding VAC has employed a staff member based in the area to oversee the organisation's activities and develop a presence in the region.

"We look forward to working with Bendigo Community Health Services and CAN on delivering important HIV-prevention programs and services to the Loddon Mallee region, and we hope to build on their expertise to engage the local community," said Simon Ruth, CEO of VAC.

"The funding is an opportunity for VAC to extend our wide range of programs and support services to the Loddon Mallee region, establishing a greater presence at local venues and events, delivering peer education and support for people living with HIV, and

LGBTI communities, distributing targeted information on BBV/STI-prevention and working to reduce stigma."

"We congratulate CAN on 20 years of work supporting LGBT people and people living with HIV in rural communities. It is vital that LGBTI people living in regional and rural Victoria have access to health services catering specifically to their needs."

THE AIM OF THE SERVICE IS TO ENSURE PEOPLE AT RISK OF BBV/STI CAN ACCESS THE INFORMATION AND SERVICES THEY NEED TO LOOK AFTER THEIR HEALTH IN A SAFE AND INCLUSIVE WAY.

BCHS will build on its existing expertise regarding blood borne viruses and sexually transmitted infections to ensure a strong suite of services are available to those needing these services such as young people, Aboriginal communities, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

"BCHS, in collaboration with VAC, aims to reduce the incidence of blood borne virus and sexually transmissible infections as well as ensuring that the highest level of assistance and clinical service is available to diagnose, treat and support those affected," BCHS CEO Kim Sykes said. "Each organisation brings expertise critical to ensuring a successful and comprehensive approach to those who have acquired a BBV or STI and to those who are at risk. This collaboration allows us to achieve better outcomes for communities in the Loddon Mallee by complementing each other's work."

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# HIV PEER SUPPORT GROUP

STARTING 5TH APRIL 2016



HIV Peer Support Groups at the Positive Living Centre provide a safe and supportive environment where key topics about living with HIV are explored.

Whether recently diagnosed, or living with HIV for a number of years, HIV Peer Support Groups can be a great way to meet other gay or bisexual men who share this life experience.

Other positive people just like you facilitate the groups.

Our groups run for eight weeks at the Positive Living Centre on a Tuesday evening from 6.00 to 8.00pm.

**For further information contact Gerry at the Positive Living Centre on either 9863 0420 or e-mail: [peersupport@vac.org.au](mailto:peersupport@vac.org.au)**



# NSP: NEEDLE AND SYRINGE PROGRAM



**If you choose to inject drugs, do so as safely as you can. Unsafe injecting risks the transmission of blood-borne viruses such as HIV, hepatitis C and B, as well as dirty hits, bruising, blood poisoning and abscesses.**

The Victorian Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) is a major public health initiative to minimise the spread of blood borne viruses, such as HIV and hepatitis C and B among injecting drug users and to the wider community. It began in 1987 and operates through and in a range of different service providers. These include:

- Primary NSP's whose sole function is NSP
- Community health services
- Hospital accident and emergency units
- Councils
- Drug treatment agencies
- Youth organisations, and

- Pharmacies. Secondary NSPs
- distribute needles and syringes
- sharps disposal containers
- sterile swabs
- condoms and water-based lubricant and provide health information.
- They also provide options for the appropriate disposal of used injecting equipment.

Secondary NSPs are unfunded programs operating within existing organisations, where the NSP is supplementary to the primary service objectives of that organisation.

VAC has two available outlets, one at 6 Claremont St. and one at PLC, 51 Commercial Rd. South Yarra.

**Ref: <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/aod/about/needle.htm>  
<http://www.vac.org.au/sex-drugs-and-hivstis>**

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VAC HAS TWO AVAILABLE OUTLETS, ONE AT 6 CLAREMONT ST. AND ONE AT PLC, 51 COMMERCIAL RD. SOUTH YARRA.

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### CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

*I am a HIV Positive man with very limited income, poor health and approaching 60 years of age. I needed to make a Will and Powers of Attorney, both Financial and Medical, in case I become incapacitated. I sought advice from HALC and these very important documents were made.*

*The experience I had dealing with the many professional legal volunteers who give their valuable time at the Positive Living Centre to assist clients was professional, thorough and friendly and I would not hesitate in recommending their services.*

*Assistance in many legal matters may be accessed through HALC and all one needs to do is contact the Positive Living Centre or HALC to make an appointment. Thank you HALC.*

# HIV / AIDS LEGAL CENTRE (HALC)

**HALC is a Community Legal Centre which has been operating since 1993, from the Positive Living Centre. HALC provides a free service and is part of VAC and is run by professional volunteers.**

HALC volunteers are sensitive to the variety of issues that may face people living with and affected by HIV. HALC provides legal advice to people living with and affected by HIV/ AIDS within Victoria. People 'affected' includes partners, family members, close friends and carers, of a person living with HIV. Legal services.

HALC can assist with a variety of matters:

- Making a Will
- Medical Powers of Attorney
- Enduring Powers of Attorney
- Criminal Law
- Family Law
- Employment Law
- Superannuation
- Centrelink Matters
- Family and Relationship Law
- Discrimination
- Migration
- Disclosure of Status for Insurance Purposes
- Equal Opportunity
- Debt
- Small/Civil Claims
- Unconscionable Conduct
- Contracts of Sale
- Tenancy

A range of information brochures

are available.

### APPOINTMENTS

Appointments with lawyers are only offered at the PLC every second Thursday from 7.00pm to 9.00 pm. Availabilities are limited. Alternatively, appointments for women are also available in a female friendly space, once a month, between 7pm and 9pm. HALC will attempt to provide legal assistance within a reasonable period of time. Referrals will be offered under certain circumstances.

### Contact Us

If you would like to make an appointment to see a lawyer please contact HALC directly: HALC, 9863 0406 [legal@vac.org.au](mailto:legal@vac.org.au). Alternatively, you can obtain a referral form from PLC reception. Please note: HALC **only operates once a week on a Thursday evening**. A representative will contact you on a Thursday evening between 6.30pm and 9.00pm. It is important that you are contactable during these hours after your initial contact.

**If you require urgent legal advice, please contact: St Kilda Legal Service 9534 0777 [st\\_kilda\\_vic@clc.net.au](mailto:st_kilda_vic@clc.net.au) OR Victoria Legal Aid 1300 792 387 [www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)**

# DAVID WILLIAMS FUND

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THE DAVID WILLIAMS FUND (DWF) WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1986 TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV (PLHIV) WHO ARE EXPERIENCING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP. THE FUND RELIES UPON DONATIONS.

Services include:

- Financial advice and referral
- Study Assist
- Emergency Financial assistance
- Food Vouchers
- No interest loan scheme

Poverty affects a substantial number of PLHIV, and demand for assistance regularly outstrips the funding available. The Fund is totally reliant upon donations and the generous sponsorship of M·A·C Cosmetics - to ensure adequate levels of funding are available.

**M·A·C Cosmetics**

[www.maccosmetics.com.au](http://www.maccosmetics.com.au)



DWF has limited funds and we need to ensure that all monies spent go to those in financial hardship. Please note we do not count Superannuation as money in the bank. The fund also understands that sometimes people are asset rich but income poor, so even if you own your own house, this does not affect applications. The fund is more concerned about those that have the funds in their bank but are asking the DWF to assist them.

Being a client of the PLC does not necessarily mean you are registered with the DWF. To be a member of the DWF you must be on Newstart/ Austudy/ or a disability pension (Health care card) of some sort and verify that you are HIV+ by a doctor and be in financial hardship (we need the original doctors letter, not a photocopy). Registration forms must also be completed. Feel free to ring reception and book an appointment with the DWF coordinator if you would like

assistance to register with the fund, or see your Social worker / community worker.

**FINANCIAL COUNSELLING** - Financial advice and referral

The David Williams Fund offers financial advice and referral for people in financial hardship. If you are booking an appointment for this service please make sure it is a one hour booking.

- Are you in debt?
- Need to know how to manage your money better?
- Being harassed by debt collectors?
- Want to know what your rights are?
- Want to know more about credit?
- Financial Goals
- Budgeting Debt
- Credit & Bankruptcy
- Need to know how to budget?
- Having difficulty with utility companies?

**Book a financial counselling advice and referral appointment on 9863 0444.**

## STUDY ASSIST

With improved medications, longer life spans and improved social accessibility many people living with HIV are considering various career options, including returning to study.

The committee of DWF is proud to offer the *DWF Study Assist*, a way to support you to gain higher education qualifications. Going back to study after years of unemployment can be difficult, especially the costs associated with returning to study. The *DWF Study Assist* allocation has been established to contribute towards the cost of further education, i.e. books, enrolment fees, short

courses etc. Further, there are many equity scholarships associated with Universities / TAFE's / Colleges, which this project can direct you to. For more information, please make an appointment with the David Williams Fund Coordinator or check university / TAFE websites for more information.

The David Williams Fund is committed to working in a more holistic way to enhance health outcomes through skills development and information acquisition through further education. Ask reception if you would like a copy of a complete information document. Interview with the DWF coordinator are essential to be eligible for this service. **NO INTEREST LOANS SCHEME (NILS)**

The David Williams Fund (DWF) is pleased to announce that we are partnering with Good Sheppard Microfinance to provide a No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) to HIV+ Victorians on low incomes.

Appointments will be available for loan interviews at the Positive Living Centre on Wednesdays (book through reception and get the information pack sent out so you know what to bring in).

NILS works through a process called 'circular community credit'. This means when a borrower makes a repayment to NILS, the funds are then available to someone else in the community. Funds are available to DWF clients because others have repaid their loans before. This is why a willingness and ability to repay the loan is so important. We will be providing small loans (\$300-\$1200) to eligible clients on low incomes (Centrelink or under \$45,000 per year). Applicants will need to show they are capable of, and willing to, repay the loans at around \$20-\$40 per fortnight without causing financial hardship.

## EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (ER)

What we can assist with  
Assistance may be provided for any item that will legitimately improve and enhance the

health and well-being of PLHIV.  
Items for consideration may include:

- Medical, Pharmaceutical, Dental and Optical expenses.
- Removal/storage expenses.
- Food vouchers.
- Utilities, eg, gas, water, electricity – installments only.
- White goods, eg, refrigerator, washing machine.
- Two weeks rent or mortgage payments may be considered
- Motor vehicle/bike repairs.
- Rates and Body Corporate fees.
- Funeral assistance
- Clothing.
- Childcare and/or respite costs.
- Beds and Manchester.
- Education/retraining.

The fund does not assist with

- Legal, fines, loans/credit cards, pawned items & accounts already paid.

All applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis. No application is guaranteed. You can discuss your application with the DWF Administration worker to determine the likelihood of your application being approved. Please note that DWF applications are not accepted by fax.

DWF application forms are available online [www.vac.org.au/dwf](http://www.vac.org.au/dwf) or at the following locations:

- The Positive Living Centre, at 51 Commercial Road, South Yarra.
- VAC's Peter Knight Centre, at 6 Claremont Street, South Yarra.
- The Social Work Department of the Alfred Hospital.
- The HIV Coordinator at the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

## ELIGIBILITY

- Provide proof of HIV Status;
- Demonstrated receipt of a Social Security Benefit or Pension
- Demonstrated financial hardship
- Resident of Victoria.
- Provide a Centrelink income statement

# VAC SERVICES

## VAC SERVICES

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## VAC COUNSELLING SERVICES

**Our counselling service provides professional, affordable counselling for individuals and couples who are affected by or at risk of HIV, and for members of the GLBT community. We also offer a therapeutic groups program.**

Counselling involves talking with an impartial listener in a confidential, non-judgmental, supportive and respectful environment. The counsellor will encourage you to work through issues with increased awareness and understanding. It can help you develop greater self-acceptance, personal insight, and make positive life changes and decisions. Counselling helps in a range of areas including:

New or recent HIV diagnosis or other health issues

- Living with HIV
- Living with HEP C
- HIV and relationships
- HIV positive friends, family members or partners
- Same-sex domestic violence issues
- Anxiety and depression
- Relationship issues
- Coming out
- Self-esteem
- Grief and loss
- Emotional, physical or sexual abuse
- Safe sex.

Be proactive. Getting counselling before you get into a crisis can sometimes prevent it from happening or reduce its effects.

Our counsellors are professionally trained in psychology, social work, counselling, couples therapy or psychotherapy. They are sensitive to the needs of people living with HIV and members of the GLBT community. All counsellors are bound by a code of practice privacy, confidentiality and duty of care policies. The counselling service is in South Yarra and easily accessible by train and tram.

The first session is free. From then on, fees are based on a scale depending on your income. A gold coin donation is the fee for Healthcare Card holders and those on a Disability Support Pension. Appointments

**Monday to Thursday 9am – 8pm  
Friday 9am – 4pm**

If you are unsure about seeing a counsellor, call our counselling service Client Liaison/Duty worker between 10AM-4PM Monday-Friday.

**Phone: (03) 9865 6700 or  
1800 134 840  
(free call for country callers).  
If we are unable to answer your call, we will get back to you within the next working day. In case you are unable to speak to us and you are in crisis please call Lifeline on 13 11 14.**

COUNSELLING INVOLVES TALKING WITH AN IMPARTIAL LISTENER IN A CONFIDENTIAL, NON-JUDGMENTAL, SUPPORTIVE AND RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT.



# RE-WIRED 2.0

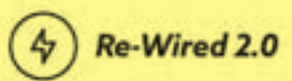
## Peer Support Group

Wrestling with meth? Is it affecting your relationships and your life?

If you are a man who has sex with other men and want regular ongoing support to control, reduce or stop your meth use, then maybe the Re-Wired 2.0 peer support group is for you?

VAC runs a fortnightly peer led support group for men looking to change their meth use.

This small group will be held at  
**VAC, South Yarra**  
 Touch base with VAC on 03 9865 6700 for program details.



For more information or to register interest, please contact VAC on 03 9865 6700



# VAC ALCOHOL AND DRUG SERVICES

### INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING

Experienced counsellors can meet with you to discuss your concerns and goals around your alcohol or drug use.

You may wish to learn more about the effects of drug use on your health or mental health, find strategies to better control or reduce your drug use or access support to stop using completely and improve your well-being.

Whatever your goals, whether it is to control, reduce or stop your drug use, our counsellors will be able to help you with:

- Information about the effects of alcohol and drug use on your health and mental health
- Helping you to reduce the harms associated with alcohol and drug use
- Developing a plan and practical strategies to control or reduce your use
- Assisting you to plan to cease your drug use and provide you with strategies to prevent relapse
- Information and support for families affected by alcohol and other drug use
- Information and referral to VAC's therapeutic groups or other treatment services including residential or non-residential withdrawal and/or rehabilitation

### RECOVERY SUPPORT

Sometimes, when a person is struggling with drug and alcohol issues, they may need support in other areas of their life like housing, accessing health or mental health services or connecting with community supports like social groups and activities.

Our Care & Recovery Coordinator can work with you to look at the different areas of your life and help you to create a plan and work

out goals to help you move forward, not only in relation to changing your drug and alcohol use but in other areas of your life.

Working with our Care & Recovery Coordinator you will be supported to:

- Develop a holistic support plan and develop achievable goals in different areas of your life
- Access residential and non-residential alcohol and other drug withdrawal services
- Link in with health and mental health services
- Access Centrelink services
- Access employment services
- Connect with education providers
- Connect with community supports, including social and living skills groups, to help you in your recovery

Our Care & Recovery Coordinator will be able to help you access services by organising referrals and where needed, take you to appointments and introduce you to other service providers. They will also support you on your journey to help you stay on track and access services as your needs and goals change.

**For more information on our Alcohol and other Drugs Service, you can call VAC on 9865 6700.**

**If you would like to access our Counselling or Care & Recovery Coordination services, please call 1800 906 669 for a free and confidential assessment.**

# VAC JOY ON 94.9



FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DON'T KNOW, WELL WELL WELL IS A SPOT DEDICATED TO HIV AND MENS HEALTH EVERY TUESDAY ON JOY Program at VAC have a weekly spot on Joy FM radio. Well, Well, Well is on JOY every Tuesday from 12PM when you can tune in and hear all the latest about

HIV and men's health in general, along with snippets of news and events happening around town. And all of this is interspersed with music chosen by the presenters themselves.

**So tune into Joy on 94.9 for 'Well, Well, Well' on Tuesdays at noon.**

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# VAC HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICES

## PEER EDUCATION PROGRAM

### YOUNG & GAY

Young & Gay is a free, 6 week workshop for guys who are attracted to other guys. This workshop is for guys aged 26 years and under. This is a great opportunity to meet new people while talking about sexuality, sex and sexual health. Topics for discussion include self esteem, stereotypes, coming out, relationships, HIV, STIs and safe sex.



**To find out more, visit [www.www.vac.org.au/young-and-gay](http://www.www.vac.org.au/young-and-gay) or call 9865 6700.**



### MOMENTUM

Momentum is a free, 6 weeks workshop for men aged 27 years and above. This workshop offers a welcoming, confidential and informative environment to meet new people and discuss topics on sexuality, sex and sexual health. This includes homophobia, coming out later in life, relationships, HIV, STIs and safe sex.



**To find out more, visit [www.www.vac.org.au/momentum](http://www.www.vac.org.au/momentum) or call 9865 6700.**



### RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships is a free, 6 weeks workshop for men of all ages to talk about topics on establishing and maintaining a relationship. This is a great opportunity to share your experiences while receive helpful hints on communication, conflict resolution and talking about sex with your partner/s.

**To find out more, visit [www.www.vac.org.au/relationships](http://www.www.vac.org.au/relationships) or call 9865 6700.**

### GAY ASIAN PROUD/TALK ASIAN

Gay Asian Proud is a social support network for gay Asian men, their partners and friends. We meet once a month in a social setting. Our activities include yum cha, dinner, movies and picnics.

**To find out more, visit [www.vac.org.au/gay-asian-proud](http://www.vac.org.au/gay-asian-proud) or call 9865 6700.**

**Talk Asian is a monthly workshop for gay Asian men only to get together and talk about topics relating to sexuality and race/ethnicity. To find out more, visit [www.www.vac.org.au/talk-asian](http://www.www.vac.org.au/talk-asian) or call 9865 6700.**

# THE CENTRE CLINIC



**The Centre Clinic is a medical clinic administered and supported by VAC. It is a General Practice with a special interest in HIV and Sexual Health.**

The clinic is committed to achieving the best possible standards of preventative, ongoing care and treatment.

Our aim is to give our patients the highest possible quality of care, by ensuring excellence in all aspects of our practice. We endeavour to provide patients with the best and most current treatments, methods, materials and equipment within our resource capabilities to ensure that patients receive the high quality of service they have come to expect.

## CLINIC SERVICES

Services available include:

- The Centre Clinic is a fully bulk billing clinic. This means that we bill Medicare directly for services provided to patients. There is no cost to patients for this service. There are charges however, for some vaccinations and treatments. Your doctor will make you aware of any charges before

treatment is offered.

- Health and medical care for people living with HIV/AIDS
- HIV monitoring
- Antiretroviral treatment and advice
- PEP – Post HIV Exposure Prophylaxis
- Sexual, general, emotional and psychological health
- STI testing and treatment
- HIV testing & counselling with results in one week
- Hepatitis screening and vaccination
- Specialist HIV dietician service
- Accredited acupuncturist service
- Condoms and lubricant for sale

## APPOINTMENTS

**Please ring 9525 5866 for an appointment. Appointments are preferred. For more information about the clinic:**

**The Centre Clinic is located at the rear of 77 Fitzroy Street, St.Kilda, on the corner of Fitzroy and Loch Streets. Melway Ref. p58 A9. [www.vac.org.au/medical-services](http://www.vac.org.au/medical-services)**

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OUR AIM IS TO GIVE OUR PATIENTS THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE QUALITY OF CARE, BY ENSURING EXCELLENCE IN ALL ASPECTS OF OUR PRACTICE.

# EVERYDAY HEALTHCARE FOR EVERYBODY!

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, INTERSEX AND QUEER PEOPLE ARE ALL WELCOMED AT THE CENTRE CLINIC! WE OFFER EVERYDAY HEALTHCARE FROM THE COMMON COLD TO SPECIALIST SEXUAL HEALTH AND HIV TREATMENT - AND WE BULK BILL. CALL 03 9525 5866 FOR AN APPOINTMENT.



VAC | CENTRE CLINIC

# OTHER SERVICES

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ANONYMOUS,  
FREE  
TELEPHONE  
COUNSELLING,  
INFORMATION  
AND  
REFERRALS  
FOR THE  
LESBIAN, GAY,  
BISEXUAL,  
TRANSEXUAL  
AND INTERSEX  
COMMUNITIES  
OF VICTORIA  
AND TASMANIA  
1800 184 527  
5.30PM TO  
10.30PM  
SEVEN DAYS  
PER WEEK

WEBCCHAT AT  
QLIFE.ORG.AU

## TELEPHONE COUNSELLING, INFORMATION AND REFERRALS



Switchboard is a volunteer organisation which provides a free, confidential and anonymous telephone counselling, referral and information service for the Victorian and Tasmanian lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) communities and their supporters.

The telephones are answered by trained volunteers who themselves identify as LGBTIQ and we receive calls from a wide range of people; some may be experiencing problems at work, in their relationships, with family or who are coming out; not to mention callers who simply want a referral to other community organisations and groups.

We also do speak to the family and friends of people who might identify as LGBTIQ; and receive calls from health and welfare professionals.

Please explore our website and feel free to call our counsellors to seek any information you need or to discuss any issues.

[www.switchboard.org.au](http://www.switchboard.org.au)

## GROUPS FOR POSITIVE PEOPLE



### CIRCUIT @ THE ALFRED

A fun, structured or individualised exercise group focusing on cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength & flexibility. Accommodates ALL fitness levels.

**When: Monday 3:30pm,  
Tuesday 11:00am, Wednesday  
3:30pm, Thursday 2:30pm  
& Friday 12:30pm**

**Where: Physiotherapy Gym  
Level 4 Philip Block**

**The Alfred  
Cost: Free**

### HYDROTHERAPY @ MSAC

A fun, water-based exercise group run in a relaxing (& warm!) hydro pool.

**When: Thursday 12:30pm**  
**Where: Melbourne Sports &  
Aquatic Centre: Aughtie Drive,  
Albert Park**  
**(Wellness Zone, level 3)**  
**Cost: \$4.95 casual.**  
**Less with 'club card'**

### PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT

**P: 03 9076 3450**  
**F: 03 9076 543**

LIFE IS SHORT,  
LIVE IT. LOVE IS  
RARE, GRAB IT.  
ANGER IS BAD,  
DUMP IT. FEAR IS  
AWFUL, FACE IT.  
MEMORIES ARE  
SWEET, CHERISH IT.

– UNKNOWN



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## WORKING OUT

**WorkingOUT is specialist job service for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex identified people with a disability. It is a unique job service in Australia catering to the GLBTI community.**

In this free Government-funded program, GLBTI jobseekers with a disability will be able to access the support they need to find and keep sustainable and worthwhile employment.

An experienced Employment Consultant with a background in GLBTI community work can tailor a range of services each job seeker will need to meet their work goal. This can include assistance with:

- Career counselling
- Training options to fill skills gaps
- Job search techniques and preparation
- Preparing a professional resume
- Job interview practice and support
- Referrals to other agencies
- Coming out in the workplace (or choosing not to)

- Ongoing support to make the new job a success
- Disability and/or Sexuality Awareness Training for colleagues in the workplace

WorkingOUT can be accessed from an office in the Melbourne CBD or the Positive Living Centre. WorkingOUT can assist job seekers to join the program, or can organise a transfer from another DES provider if a job seekers is not satisfied with their services and would benefit from a more understanding approach. WorkingOUT is also available for GLBTI workers with a disability who feel that their job is in jeopardy and would like some support overcoming barriers or issues.

**WorkingOUT**

**Check out [www.senswide.com.au](http://www.senswide.com.au) for more information or to apply for service. Alternatively, call 03 9015 5155 to speak with someone directly, or TTY 9614 3070.**

**WorkingOUT is a Disability Employment Service. Potential clients must meet Centrelink eligibly criteria. Working out is a new initiative from SensWide Employment, a division of the Victorian Deaf Society.**



# WISE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

**Founded in Australia in 1992, WISE Employment is a not-for-profit community service organisation, with branches across Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.**

## ABOUT US

WISE Employment Service is an area wide, free service where individuals can access suitable and sustainable employment opportunities. Our program aims to assist people who may be living with a disability or one or more medical conditions to re-enter the workforce and obtain employment that matches their skills and capabilities, as well as being mindful of personal circumstances and support needs. Our approach is strength based and focuses on individuals capabilities. No two people are the same and with that in mind, our tailored service creates employment opportunities through working closely with employers to promote the skills and attributes of our clients. Our consultants do 'Reverse Marketing', which means we attempt to obtain access to current vacancies before employers advertise. This allows individual advocacy to take place and ensures the job requirements match a person's skills set and needs. As part of this function, WISE also offers wage incentives to potential employers to assist participants in getting a foot in the door and helping them establish their career and a future employment pathway.

## ABOUT YOU:

At WISE, we assist you with either full or part time employment, however to be eligible for our service you must be willing to work a minimum of 8 hours per week. You also need to attend Centrelink for a Job Capacity Assessment (JCA). For those that have heard of the JCA it can be common to see it as a daunting process. We will work with participants to answer all your questions and concerns regarding this process, can attend JCA appointments with you to advocate and ensure a fair, accurate assessment is completed, and that all the medical and personal circumstances are taken into account.

**For further information or enquiry: Please contact the WISE Disability Employment Case Manager in Prahran on 9529 3688. As WISE Employment Service is an area wide service, they will be able to refer you to an office in your local area.**

**Alternatively, feel free to visit the office:  
Level 2/159 High Street  
Prahran 3181  
P: 9529 3688  
WISE Employment Service offers a monthly outreach service at the PLC.**

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## STRAIGHT ARROWS

**Men, Women, Children,  
Partners, Families-  
You are not alone.**

Straight Arrows is a not for profit organisation governed by and for heterosexual people living with HIV and is Victoria's lead agency for heterosexuality and HIV. We offer peer support, information, advocacy, health promotion and referrals for HIV positive heterosexual men, women, their partners and families. In recognition of our members' diverse needs, we provide a safe and comfortable environment that is completely confidential. SA can assist, facilitate, and/or advocate on your behalf. We provide regular lunches, dinners and outings.



**Visit our website  
[www.straightarrows.org.au](http://www.straightarrows.org.au)  
Suite 1,  
111 Coventry Street  
Southbank 3006 VIC**

**You can contact the  
Straight Arrows office  
on 9863 9414 for further  
information.**



Living Positive Victoria (LPV) is committed to the greater and meaningful engagement of people with HIV in all our programs, events and activities. If support is required to participate (i.e. child care, transport costs, etc.) please contact us to discuss what support is available.

Brand New Program for all people with HIV in the greater border region of Northern Victoria and Southern NSW. Border Peer to Peer - Next gathering Wednesday 16th March 11am followed by lunch.

This safe and confidential space is for all people with HIV and meets monthly in the Albury/Wodonga area. It's a social support group with 1 on 1 support being offered as well.

**For more information -  
borderpeertopeer@gmail.com  
Supported by Living Positive Victoria,  
Positive Life NSW, PozHet NSW, ACON,  
Murrumbidgee Local Health District  
and Albury Wodonga Health.**

## IN THE LOOP

1 Day workshop for partners/families/friends of people with HIV. It is recognised that people who are close to People with HIV (PLHIV) may often feel silenced by the virus and this can make it harder for them to access support for themselves. This therapeutic workshop explores the constraints that partners, family and friends may experience and how they might overcome these. Plenty of information about support services available will also be provided.

**The next workshop will be held  
Saturday 2 April.**

If you have a partner, family member or close friend that may benefit from attending this workshop or would like more information contact

Dimitri - 98638733 - ddaskalakis@livingpositivevictoria.org.au

## PHOENIX WORKSHOPS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE NEWLY DIAGNOSED WITH HIV

Gay and Bisexual men  
April Friday 8th  
Saturday 9th, 10am-5pm  
Sunday 10th, 10am-5pm

Women  
April Saturday 16th, 9am-4.30pm  
Sunday 17th, 9am-4.30pm

This successful weekend workshop for people newly diagnosed with HIV is where you can get valuable information on HIV as well as hear others in a similar situation share their experiences with you. We look at how HIV affects your immune system and what your CD4 and viral load counts actually mean. We also look at the latest in treatment options. You'll have an opportunity to share with others your feelings and issues around your new HIV identity and what it means to you as well as explore strategies to deal with them. We discuss the issues around disclosure, sex and relationships. And much much more!  
To book or for more information on the workshop:

**For gay and Bisexual men contact  
Vic Perri 03 9863 8733 or vperri@livingpositivevictoria.org.au  
For woman contact Positive  
Women 03 9863 8747 peersupport@positivewomen.org.au**

## QUIT SMOKING - QUIT FRESH START 6 WEEK COURSE

One on one or group sessions  
Face to face in person  
Face to face online (requires a reliable internet connection and webcam)

Commencing mid April  
Living Positive Victoria in partnership with Quit Victoria offer the Quit FRESH START 6 week course free for people living with HIV who wish to quit smoking.  
This comprehensive course covers:  
Understanding Smoking, Planning to Quit, Health Effects, Quitting methods, Coping without Cigarettes Physically and Emotionally, Staying stopped in the short term and long term, and Enjoying being a Non Smoker forever.

**To book or for more information  
contact: 9863 8733, Face to face  
in person - Dimitri - ddaskalakis@livingpositivevictoria.org.au  
Face to face online - Vic - vperri@livingpositivevictoria.org.au**

## SYPHILIS IS ON THE UP AND UP!!!!

1 in 10 gay men with HIV are now also infected with Syphilis. AND Syphilis can progress faster in gay men with HIV. And for those popular studs with around 10 sexual partners a month, they probably have Syphilis.nlf all GAY, BISEXUAL and TRANS men get tested for syphilis, together we can stamp it out for good.

**Find out how you can look after  
yourself and your mates.  
For more information go to  
www.stampoutsyphilis.info**

## HIV/HEPC COINFECTION RADIO DOCUMENTARY: SEXC IN TRANSMISSION

Living Positive Victoria along with Positive Speaker and radio producer, Peter Davis, have produced a 40 minute radio documentary following the impact that living with both Hep C and HIV has had on two individuals. Included are interviews with Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist, Dr David Iser, and former Community health worker at Hepatitis Victoria, Garry Sattell. An informative documentary with an look into HIV/Hep C Coinfection, sexual transmission of Hep C, treatments, and symptoms experienced from treatments.  
To listen to the documentary, go to Living Positive Victoria's new section

on Living with HIV and Hepatitis C [www.livingpositivevictoria.org.au/living-with-HIV/HIV-HEPC-Coinfection](http://www.livingpositivevictoria.org.au/living-with-HIV/HIV-HEPC-Coinfection) or go to [www.hepcawareub2.info](http://www.hepcawareub2.info)  
Discover the rewarding experience of volunteering! Are you are interested in becoming a volunteer for Living Positive Victoria and/or Straight Arrows?

**For more information, contact Dimitri  
at Living Positive Victoria on 98638733  
or volunteering@livingpositivevictoria.org.au**

## ADD YOUR VOICE TO CYBERSPACE

### My Fears

Disclosure of your HIV status is deeply tied to personal identity and is a major act happening across the lifespan for people living with HIV (PLHIV). Before, during and after disclosure of an individual's HIV status many PLHIV can feel apprehension, shame and/or other difficult emotions. In short, for PLHIV disclosure is often a significant, personal challenge.

### My Voice

Disclosure performs a vital function for many PLHIV. It reclaims their diagnosis as their own narrative and establishes a 'frame' from which they can build strength and resilience.

### My Choice

Imagine writing a script where the editing process never ends. The HIV disclosure scripts formulated in the minds of the PLHIV (where all possible and improbable endings) have been formulated but when the words are said out loud, its 'performance' changes yet again. The performance of disclosure commonly reverts to one of improvisation – an interplay between disclosure and how this is received. A PLHIV's disclosure narrative is never fully written, fully said or indeed fully for every possible scenario; it alters with time, environment and context. Disclosure is about experiential learning.

**For more information on how you  
can add your voice, go here:  
www.disclosureproject.org.au**



THE MELBOURNE SEXUAL HEALTH CENTRE IS VICTORIA'S LEADING CLINIC FOR THE TESTING AND TREATMENT OF SEXUALLY TRANSMISSIBLE INFECTIONS.

Sexual Health Centre (MSHC) are experienced specialists in all aspects of sexual health, so clients visiting MSHC can be assured of high quality professional and non-judgmental care. Melbourne Sexual Health Centre also provides support to community based health professionals via online resources and on-site education and training opportunities.

**580 Swanston Street,  
Carlton Victoria 3053**

**Tel: 9341 6200 Free call:  
1800 032 017 (Toll free  
from outside Melbourne  
metropolitan  
area only)**

**TTY: 9347 8619 (Telephone  
for the hearing impaired)  
Fax: 9341 6279**

**www.mshc.org.au**

**THE GREEN ROOM**  
The Green Room provides specialist HIV care for people living with HIV. The team specializes in HIV and comprises doctors, nurses, counselors, pharmacists, a dietician, research nurses and psychiatry. Referrals can be made for social work, support work and other community based workers.

Appointments are necessary and doctors are available from Monday to Thursday. It is ideal that you also have a GP for assistance with general health care and non HIV related conditions. Referral to The Green Room is not necessary. To discuss your HIV health care site options call 93416214.

**The Green Room is located  
at the Melbourne Sexual  
Health Centre at 580  
Swanston Street Carlton**

**Ph: 9341 6214**

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# POSITIVE WOMEN VICTORIA



POSITIVE WOMEN VICTORIA (PWV) IS THE ONLY COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATION SPECIFICALLY FUNDED TO SUPPORT WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV IN AUSTRALIA.

PWV provides support, information and advocacy for women in Victoria living with HIV. For over twenty five years PWV has responded to the changing needs of women living with HIV, recognising the impact gender has on the way women experience HIV and addressing the specific needs and emerging issues that affect women and HIV in Victoria.

PWV was set up by and for women living with HIV. Positive Women Victoria is funded by the Victorian Department of Health to provide health promotion to women living with HIV.

**Location**  
**Positive Women Victoria**  
**Coventry House**  
**Suite 1, 111 Coventry Street**  
**Southbank VIC 3006**  
**Tel: 9863 8747**

**www.positivewomen.org.au**

# PHOENIX

for women

A WORKSHOP FOR WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV



**PHOENIX** IS FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN RECENTLY DIAGNOSED OR LIVING WITH HIV FOR SOME TIME AND ARE READY TO CONNECT IN A SAFE AND CONFIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT

Meet other women living with HIV and receive the latest information from the healthcare profession on treatment, relationships, disclosure and wellbeing

*"What a confidence booster - I didn't think I needed this but I was so wrong"*

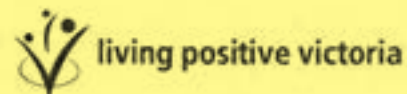
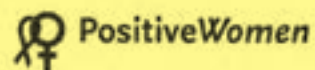
*"Meeting and talking with others in the same situation makes all the difference"*

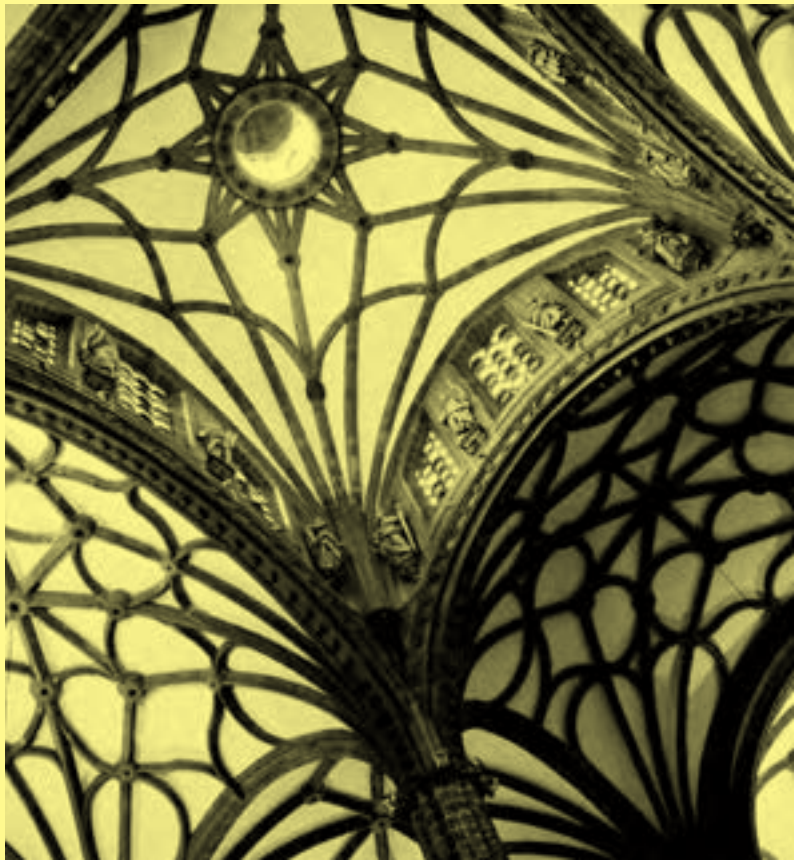
Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea will be provided  
Childcare is available

Financial assistance for long distance travel can be arranged

**BE INFORMED. BE EMPOWERED. THRIVE.**

To find out more email [peersupport@positivewomen.org.au](mailto:peersupport@positivewomen.org.au)  
or call 03 9863 8747





## CATHOLIC AIDS MINISTRY

### Monday lunch at St. Mary of the Cross Centre

Cuppa from 11am,  
Taize prayer 12.15  
Lunch served at 12.30pm

### Good Friday 25th of March

Hot X Buns 2 – 4pm  
Prayer around the Cross 4pm

### 2016 Annual Retreat, 8th to 10th April

To be held at Amberley, Edmund Rice Centre, Lower Plenty.  
Themed “Mercy – stepping into the other’s shoes.”

\$60 waged \$30 unwaged.  
Payment required by 4th April.

### Catholic HIV/AIDS Ministry CatholicCare

Mary of the Cross Centre  
23 Brunswick Street Fitzroy 3065  
Ph. (03) 8417 1280  
Fax (03) 8417 1299  
E [am23@ccam.org.au](mailto:am23@ccam.org.au)



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## MULTICULTURAL HEALTH AND SUPPORT SERVICE

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The Multicultural Health and Support Service (MHSS) is a free and confidential service for people from migrant and refugee backgrounds with issues relating to sexual health and viral hepatitis.

We can help by:

- answering any questions you may have on HIV, hepatitis and STI
- going with you to get tested for infections
- helping you to access health services
- assisting you and your family to remain safe and healthy

Our bi-cultural community workers can talk to you over the phone or meet you in person. You can speak to a male or female worker, whichever you choose.

#### Contact us:

**P: +61 3 9418 9929**

**F: +61 3 9421 4662**

**E: [enquiries@ceh.org.au](mailto:enquiries@ceh.org.au)**

**Visit our website for more information**

**[www.ceh.org.au/mhss.aspx](http://www.ceh.org.au/mhss.aspx)**

## HIV CALD SERVICE UPDATE



The HIV CALD service continues to provide support to individuals living with HIV from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

During the past few years, a number of clients have undertaken tertiary study. Like all of the clients, they have faced challenges in adjusting to their diagnosis and resettling in a new country, however, despite this they have also focused on developing their careers. One client is currently undertaking a Masters course in health and another client has successfully completed study to become a qualified nurse. The assistance of the David William Fund has been greatly appreciated to enable these clients with limited income to access this education.

The HIV CALD service commenced in 2004 and it prides itself in the consistency of staff which can only benefit the clients.

In October 2015, Annie Ngo Nga, CALD co worker who supports many of the Vietnamese clients of the program was recognised for her 10 years service at the Alfred. Annie is an exceptional co worker who has always provided support and encouragement to her clients and is a valued member of the CALD team. Thanks Annie.

**For referrals to the HIV CALD service please call Maureen  
Plain Ph: 9076 3942.**

## USEFUL WEBSITES

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### LOCAL SITES

[www.afao.org.au](http://www.afao.org.au)  
[www.aidsinfonet.org](http://www.aidsinfonet.org)  
[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)  
[www.communitylaw.org.au/stkilda](http://www.communitylaw.org.au/stkilda)  
[www.downanddirty.org](http://www.downanddirty.org)  
[www.getpep.info](http://www.getpep.info)  
[www.hrvic.org.au](http://www.hrvic.org.au)  
[www.livingpositivevictoria.org.au](http://www.livingpositivevictoria.org.au)  
[www.napwa.org.au](http://www.napwa.org.au)  
[www.northsideclinic.net.au](http://www.northsideclinic.net.au)  
[www.pozpersonals.com](http://www.pozpersonals.com)  
[www.prahranmarketclinic.com](http://www.prahranmarketclinic.com)  
[www.pronto.org.au](http://www.pronto.org.au)  
[www.protection.org.au](http://www.protection.org.au)

[www.stayingnegative.net.au](http://www.stayingnegative.net.au)  
[www.thedramadownunder.info](http://www.thedramadownunder.info)  
[www.top2bottom.org.au](http://www.top2bottom.org.au)  
[www.touchbase.org.au](http://www.touchbase.org.au)  
[www.vac.org.au](http://www.vac.org.au)  
[www.wherversexhappens.co](http://www.wherversexhappens.co)

### OVERSEAS SITES

[www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)  
[www.i-base.info](http://www.i-base.info)  
[www.managinghiv.com](http://www.managinghiv.com)  
[www.medscape.com](http://www.medscape.com)  
[www.pozpersonals.com](http://www.pozpersonals.com)  
[www.thebody.com](http://www.thebody.com)

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## USEFUL NUMBERS

- Alfred Hospital 9076 2000
- **Alfred Hospital I.D. CLINIC** **9076 6081**
- Alfred Social Work Department 9076 3026
- **Beyondblue** **1300 22 4636**
- CALD Service Alfred Hospital 90763942
- **Catholic AIDS Ministry - Contact Marg Hayes** **8417 1280**
- Centre Clinic 9525 5866
- **Centrelink (Employment services)** **13 28 50**
- Centrelink (Disability, Sickness and Carers) 13 27 17
- **Counselling VAC** **98676700**
- David Williams Fund - Contact Lynda 9863 0444
- **Dental Service "Dental Plus"** **9520 3177**
- Gay & Lesbian Switchboard 9663 2939
- **Green Room** **93416214**
- Harm Reduction Victoria 9329 1500
- **Hepatitis Infoline** **1800 703 003**
- Hepatitis Victoria 9380 4644
- **HIV/HEP/STI Ed & Resource Centre (Alfred)** **9076 6993**
- HIV / AIDS Legal Service (HALC) 9863 0406
- **HIV Peer Support at the PLC - Contact Gerry** **9863 0444**
- Launch Housing 1800825955
- **Housing Plus (previously AHAG)** **9066 1401**
- Lifeline 13 11 14
- **Melbourne Sexual Health Centre** **9341 6200**
- Monash Medical Centre 9594 6666
- **Multicultural Health & Support Service** **9342 9700**
- Northside Clinic 9485 7700
- **Partner Notification** **90963367**
- PEP Hotline 1800 889 887
- **Living Positive Victoria** **9863 8733**
- Police Gay & Lesbian Liaison Officer 9247 6944
- **Positive Living Centre** **9863 0444**
- Positive Women Victoria 9863 8747
- **Prahran Market Clinic** **9514 0888**
- Royal District Nursing Service HIV Team 1300 334 455
- **Royal Melbourne Hospital / VIDS** **9324 7212**
- SensWide Employment 86207155
- **Straight Arrows** **9863 9414**
- Turning Point Drug and Alcohol Service 8413 8413
- **Victorian AIDS Council** **9865 6700**
- Wise Employment 95293688



**PROVIDING INTEGRATED AND COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES FOR ALL PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV**

*A PROGRAM OF THE VICTORIAN AIDS COUNCIL*