

POSITIVELY

December/January
2008—2009

WESTLUND HOUSE
16 Gordon Street
ACTON ACT 2601



Merry Christmas

**Christmas Party Westlund House Resource Centre - Staff ,
clients and volunteers - from 6 pm 17 December.**

Please RSVP on 6257 2855

<p style="text-align: center;">Contents</p> <p>3.ASHM</p> <p>4. Who am I?</p> <p>6. Treatments Update</p> <p>7. Brenda</p>	<p>As you are all aware, POSITIVELY is a monthly publication for people living with HIV/AIDS in the ACT and surrounding districts. Currently we are looking for people to assist us with the publication e.g. writing groups. No experience is necessary as we will provide training in all aspects of publishing from writing articles through to the printing stage. If you can spare a couple of hours from time to time please drop into the office for a chat or give Marcus a call. Positively is a monthly publication produced within the ACT with funding from the ACT Dept of Health. Submissions for the next edition are due on Wednesday 28 January. Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, publisher, nor PLWHA ACT.</p>
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Positive Support Services in the ACT and surrounding areas

<p>People Living With HIV/AIDS ACT</p> <p>Provides support for HIV+ people in the ACT through a newsletter and links with other PLWHA organisations throughout Australia. We also provide individual support with advocacy and representation on health and other issues, and referral to other agencies. Phone 6257 4985</p> <p>Positive Support Network</p> <p>HIV+ people get together to offer support and share information. PSN is mostly a social occasion where people can share the experience of being HIV+ over a free meal, without the formality of a structured meeting. Dinner on alternate Tuesdays. Ph 6257 4985.</p> <p>Positive Women's Group</p> <p>The Positive Women's Group meets for social activities throughout the year. For information on the group's gatherings contact Marcus, Nada or Stephanie on 6257 2855 or 6257 4985</p> <p>Trevor Daley Fund</p> <p>The Fund provides assistance for people with HIV/AIDS who are experiencing financial hardship, for the part payment of bills, a treatments allowance and some other costs. Applications can be made to the TDF Committee by any service provider. For more information call the TDF on 6257 2855.</p> <p>Counselling</p> <p>Stephanie Buckle is the AIDS Action Council counsellor. Free consultation available to all HIV+ people, their partners, carers or significant others. Phone 6257 2855 to make an appointment.</p> <p>Jane Keany is the counsellor for the ACT Division of General Practice HIV/AIDS Program, and offers subsidised counselling services for people infected with or affected by HIV, their significant others and people at risk of HIV infection. Jane is available at the Interchange General Practice. Phone 6257 3004 or 0402 222 408 to make an appointment</p>	<p>Health Maintenance and Treatments Information</p> <p>All enquires to Marcus</p> <p>Phone 6257 2855</p> <p>Massage</p> <p>Massages are available each Wednesday between 12.45pm and 4.15pm Treatments are of ½ hour duration. Appointments can be made by contacting the PLWHA ACT Office on 6257 4985.</p> <p>Nutrition</p> <p>Consultation with a dietician from The Canberra Hospital is available free at the Canberra Sexual Health Centre. Appointments necessary. Phone Canberra Sexual Health on 6244 2184.</p> <p>An HIV specialist nutritionist from Melbourne will be visiting quarterly. For further info contact Marcus on 6257 4985</p> <p>Canberra Sexual Health Centre</p> <p>Co-located with The Canberra Hospital. Free service available (no Medicare card is required) for testing and treatment of STIs, HIV clinic and counselling for issues such as safe sex, relationships and sexual functioning problems. Walk-in consultations available for urgent matters. Call on 6244 2184 to make an appointment.</p> <p>Library</p> <p>PLWHA and the AAC have an extensive range of books and videos for your enjoyment.</p> <p>Educational books on HIV issues, cooking, Sci-Fi and general reading material just to name a few of the areas covered. If you would like to borrow any of them please see Lynn or Mandi at the AAC reception desk who will sign them out to you and explain the borrowing conditions. We also have a number of new books in the library this month.</p>	<p>Greater Southern Area Sexual Health and Hep C Service</p> <p><u>Sexual Health Counsellor/Educators</u></p> <p>Angela Trevaskis</p> <p>Queanbeyan, Braidwood, Yarrowlumla Shire</p> <p>Ph- 02-6298 9233 Mobile 0428 972 414</p> <p><u>Aboriginal Sexual Health HIV/AIDS worker</u></p> <p>Sharyn Medway</p> <p>Ph 02-4827 3913 Mobile 0429 985 606</p> <p><u>Sexual Health Nurses</u></p> <p>Christine Taylor -</p> <p>South Coast, Batemans Bay - Eden</p> <p>Ph- 02-4476 2344 Mobile 0427 219 874</p> <p>Shannon Woodward, Lee Constable</p> <p>Queanbeyan-Goulburn Region</p> <p>Ph- 02-6298 9213 mobile 042 789 3247</p> <p>Margaret Trill</p> <p>Albury 02 6058 1839</p> <p>Robyn Ridley & Sally Anne Brennan</p> <p>Wagga Wagga 02 6938 6492</p> <p>Sally Daveron</p> <p>Griffith 02 6966 9930</p> <p><u>Clinical Nurse Consultant</u></p> <p>Alison Kincaid Albury 02 6058 1831</p> <p><u>Sexual Health Physician</u></p> <p>Dr Katherine Turner</p> <p>Ph 6298 9213</p> <p><u>HIV/AIDS Related Programs Manager</u></p> <p>Michael Bolton</p> <p>Ph: 02 6923 5774</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">The Fine Print</p> <p>PLWHA ACT 16 Gordon Street Acton ACT 2601 GPO Box 229 Canberra ACT 2601 Phone 02 6257 2855 Fax 02 6257 4838 email: plwha.act@aidsaction.org.au</p> </div>
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Australian Sexual Health (ASH) Conference -15 to 17 September 2008
Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM) -
Conference 17 to 20 September 2008

Both conferences brought together a wide range of people working in areas such as basic science, clinical medicine, community organisations, advocates and social research just to name a few. But they all have one thing in common and that is to advance their and the community's understanding of Sexual Health and HIV and some other bits and pieces thrown in as well.

The ASH conference was the first that I have attended and I found it a little on the clinical side until I started to talk to other participants regarding their work and how this informs what they do. One size shoe has never fit everyone and not one program has been seen to work effectively across all communities. It's the bits and pieces or, as the conference theme 'Diamonds and Pearls' would suggest, you need to think of taking away the little bits of treasures; treasures that make an impact on you as an individual and how they may be incorporated into the work that is done back home.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) was a topic on everyone's lips, so to speak. With the release of the Gardasil vaccine some time ago, there is still an ongoing debate about whether boys should be offered the vaccine along with girls to protect against cancer. Gardasil is a vaccine which has been proven to be effective against various types of HPV causing cervical cancer in women. The same types of HPV can also cause anal cancers in men. So why not vaccinate all the population who are at risk and reduce the possibility of cancer causing HPV? Apparently it's not that easy and the debate still rolls on about rates of anal cancer and the cost effectiveness of mass immunisation. I for one, think that it should be offered to all, it takes two or more people for transmission of the virus to take place and whether that is boy meets girl, girl meets girl or boy meets boy, the outcome of

some transmissions of HPV will be anal or cervical cancer. The more people that are vaccinated the less HPV is being transmitted.

For people who are already infected with HPV virus the expanding options for treatments are ongoing with a once daily dosing option sitting well along side the current medications with the same efficacy and out comes, less shedding or chance of infecting other people. Given the correlation between genital herpes and its interaction and transmission with other sexually transmissible infections such as HIV, I found this stream of the conference very interesting.

The ASHM conference had me thinking more about living with HIV than medication, which is a nice change as a lot of us would know sometimes it is so easy to live your life on the medical side of HIV, plotting when pills need to be taken with what food or without food to lower our bad cholesterol and raise the good one. With many other bits and pieces that make up getting the best possible outcome of the medicines, we sometimes forget that living and having some fun is also good for the body and soul and can have real and tangible effects on an individual's health.

As HIV is being described more and more as a long term manageable and chronic illness, more is being spoken about looking beyond the veil to see whether this is, in fact, the case. I hope I live for a long time yet but being a realist along with having HIV, I have other pressing issues staring me in the face: age and lifestyle issues. While I am a spritely 44 and could afford to lose a couple of kilos and cut down on some of life's other little pleasures, it really does have me thinking about what I can do in my day to day life to support my goals into the future. HIV is still a disease

that plays havoc with our bodies and with side effects of some medications sometimes being harsh as well as hearing the words "long term manageable and chronic illness" does not always inspire me to make some of the changes I need to.

*Many HIV support programs around Australia are offering a more social program of services to support people in not only living with HIV but **living well** with HIV. The back bone of most services, peer support is now growing to include life coaching and other services for clients to look at what comes after HIV and how to reach it? These kind of services sit well with complementary therapies and advocacy on offer and add more ways to look at our lives and live well.*

Just quickly touching on the pills, there is still an awful lot of work being done. There are new and existing medications to fight HIV with new classes of drugs being developed to tackle HIV at different stages of its life cycle. However many are still in clinical trials or awaiting approval to be used. Some interesting reading can be had in the latest edition of Positive Living available on line at www.napwa.org.au or by calling into the office to pick up a printed copy.

Cheers Marcus

**Is he thinking
what I'm
thinking?**

www.thinkagain.com.au

Who am I?

Something I always wonder and I wonder because I am a member of a variety of different groups. I am a member of the ACT community, a member of the gay community, I'm a Kiwi by birth, British by upbringing and Australian by choice. I could also be a member of other groups – I could be a sex worker, an injecting drug user or HIV positive. This could all become confusing, but it doesn't because by and large I balanced all the demands of these 'sub-identities' into one overriding identity. I am Andrew Burry.

The AIDS Action Council is uniquely placed to respond to all our clients in a very individual way. To access our range of services you need only have a need for them. Yet, our services are often identified by their focus on particular groups; lesbians, young gay men, PLWHA and so on. This is in recognition that for any group, there are a variety of common needs that can be catered for. It is also in recognition of the proven effectiveness of a peer-based approach when it comes to empowering individuals within a community development philosophy.

When we began our development of "Living Well", a programme we plan to launch in the first half of next year, we originally envisaged it as being oriented towards our positive clients who have particular and well defined health needs. Yet as we thought more about it, we started to wonder if being so HIV specific was all that we could do?

"Living Well" is all about getting the

most out of life, being better equipped to cope with challenges and being positioned for personal growth and development. Beyond question, any person who develops these things will be at lower risk than another person who may feel isolated, unskilled and does not perceive opportunities.

As a result of this thinking and after reviewing a variety of programs in other states and territories, we have become determined that "Living Well" will become a whole-of-agency project that addresses significant needs across the full range of communities we serve. It will incorporate a range of core principles and values and these will apply to all services, activities and programs that are designed and developed for specific target groups.

Within the "Living Well" umbrella will exist the suite of services of the AIDS Action Council and its associated organisations including PLWHA ACT; both existing and new. New services will be based on evidence of need and developed in consultation with affected communities so they are as relevant as they can possibly be

As an individual and a member of your communities, you know what you want and need to live well – we will work with you to achieve that goal.

Personal Computer Reuse Scheme

Charity Computers is an organisation that enables people on a low income to access home computers at a greatly reduced price.

The computer packages are supplied at various prices starting at \$100.00. All computers come complete with monitor, mouse, keyboard, operating system and 12 months warranty.

Those with concession cards such as – student's, pensioner's and Health Care Cards can access this scheme.

Contact Details 46 Lhotsky St
Charnwood ACT 2615

Phone 02 6101 6931

Fax 02 6259 8034

Email:

admin@charitycomputers.com

Web: www.charitycomputers.com

HOURS: 9am-12 and 1-4.30pm Mon to Fri

LOCATION: Opposite the West Belconnen Fire Station in Charnwood in the Canberra Christian Life Centre facility (previously old Charnwood High School)

For further details or assistance in accessing this scheme please contact

Marcus or Mick on 6257 4985

COMMUNITY-BASED
TREATMENT INFOLINE
FOR PEOPLE
LIVING WITH HIV

1800 817 713

MONDAY TO FRIDAY
2-7PM EST

 **treataware**
www.treataware.info



Christmas is coming

It's that time of the year again, the carols have started in the supermarket, the store catalogues are full of helpful suggestions about what presents to buy, and everyone's talking parties and holidays. It seems that happiness and joy are mandatory, but it's not necessarily what everyone is feeling.

If you are on a pension, or feeling unwell physically, if your medications are disagreeing with you, or you're struggling with depression, or you're living alone, then the chances are fairly high that the thought of Christmas will be making you anxious rather than happy. Christmas can in fact highlight the negatives in peoples' lives; it can seem that everyone else is enjoying themselves when you are not.

If you are approaching Christmas with a feeling closer to dread than euphoria, - or even if you're not - the following Xmas Survival Guide may help.

Plan ahead - think about what it's possible and realistic for you to do, and put a plan in place to achieve it.

Concentrate on the things that you can do, rather than the things you can't. (eg a great alternative to buying gifts is making you own

gift vouchers of your time to do something for friends and family.)

Remember that many other people also find Xmas difficult - share some time with someone else who you know is feeling stressed by it.

Exercise every day - regular exercise lifts your mood, helps the digestion, gives you a better perspective on your problems, and helps you to sleep.

Grab a friend and a candle and go to one of the many free Carols concerts around town.

Remember that the main message of Christmas is goodwill and charity to others - and the wonderful thing about doing something for someone others is that you always feel better yourself!

Happy Christmas!

Stephanie



DIETICIAN'S CLINIC

Jenny MacDonald

will conduct a Dietician's Clinic at the

AIDS ACTION COUNCIL
Westlund House
on

**TUESDAY 9
December**

Please call Mick or Marcus on 6257 4985 for further information and to make an appointment.

Please bring your latest blood test results to the clinic.



A.C.T NILS (No Interest Loans Scheme)

The ACT NILS scheme is an alternative form of low cost credit provision which assists low income consumers to access affordable loans for the purchase of essential household items. To be eligible you must be an ACT resident, have leased or owned your current home for at least six months, can show the capacity to repay the loan in 12 months, and hold a current Centrelink Health Care Card.

How to apply?

You can request an application form from the PLWHA worker or contact Care Inc Direct on 62571788.

After lodgement of the application form the loans administrator will contact eligible applicants and arrange an appointment to assess the applicant's capacity to repay the loan.

CARE INC
Financial Counselling Service
& The Consumer Law Centre of the ACT

Need Vitamins?

Don't forget that vitamins are available from the AIDS Action Council at cost price for all people living with HIV/AIDS within the ACT. If you have a current pension concession card you may be able to access your monthly treatments allowance. The \$5.00 dispensing fee is payable by all clients accessing this service and using their treatments allowance.

To minimise your dispensing fees pick up your vitamins for the month in one go - no more than one month's supply of vitamins will be given at one time.

While there are outstanding dispensing fees no further vitamins will be available!

Should you have further questions about this service please contact Marcus on 02 6257 4985 or Nada 02- 6257 2855



New HIV treatments welcome

The listing of two new HIV treatment options on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) is good news for people living with HIV, the National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA) has said. The organisation also called on the federal government to expedite the listing of an urgently needed treatment for HIV-associated lipotrophy.

"Today is World AIDS Day and from today, people living with HIV will have expanded treatment options, thanks to the decision to list raltegravir on the PBS," said NAPWA treatments spokesperson Bill Whittaker. "Raltegravir is the first drug in the integrase inhibitor class to gain PBS listing, so today is an important milestone in the history of HIV treatment in this country."

Also known by the brand name Isentress®, raltegravir is used in combination with other anti-HIV drugs to inhibit HIV replication. While there is no cure for HIV infection, anti-HIV drugs are now capable of preventing disease progression for very long periods.

"Unfortunately, not all drugs work for all people, and the development of resistance to available treatments means that most people will need to change treatments from time to time. That's why it's important that we continue to make new drugs available for HIV," he said.

Also newly listed on the PBS from today is a new paediatric formulation of the protease inhibitor lopinavir/ritonavir (Kaletra®). "This is great news for children living with HIV, for whom treatment options are too limited. While there are only a small number of HIV-positive children in Australia, we need to ensure that treatments are made available for these most vulnerable boys and girls," he said.

The organisation also called on the federal government to provide PBS listing for Sculptra™, a treatment for HIV-associated lipotrophy.

"Unfortunately for many people living with HIV, dealing with the toxic long-term side effects of HIV treatments remains a major challenge," Whittaker said. "One of the biggest challenges is the physical disfigurement of facial lipotrophy – the loss of fatty tissue from the face resulting in the gaunt, hollow-cheeked look that is too often a signature of long-term HIV treatment."

"People with facial lipotrophy have reduced quality of life because their appearance is a reminder to them and a signal to others that they are living with HIV," he said.

"But there is hope: an injectable treatment called poly-L-lactic acid has been successfully used for some years to reverse this condition and resort self-esteem and quality of life. Unfortunately, the cost of treatment is too high for most people; that's why NAPWA strongly supports the application for PBS listing of Sculptra, and today we call on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee to make this desperately needed treatment available without delay.

"World AIDS Day is a day for remembering the friends and family we have lost to HIV, and for reminding ourselves of the need for continued effort to end the AIDS epidemic," Whittaker said. "The listing of these new drugs on the PBS provides a reminder of how far we have come in the field of HIV treatment, yet we shouldn't lose sight of how much remains to be done."

Media release • Paul Kidd •

1 December 2008

NAPWA

Brenda's Blenda easy Christmas Ideas

Tis the night before Christmas and you haven't made a cake? Just follow this recipe, for everyone's sake!

Ingredients (serves 8)

- 175g unsalted butter, softened
- 225g brown sugar
- 275g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 175ml buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- Grated rind of 1 lemon
- Grated rind of 1 orange
- 225g fruit mince
- 2 tbs brandy

Florentine topping

- 50g hazelnuts
- 50g blanched almonds
- 85g brazil nuts
- 140g red glace cherries
- 100g golden syrup

Icing

- 2/3 cup (100g) icing sugar
- 2 tsp lemon juice

Method

1. Preheat oven to 160°C. Grease and line base of a 20cm spring form cake pan. Beat butter and sugar in bowl of an electric mixer until light and fluffy, sift flour and baking powder and stir into butter mixture with buttermilk and eggs. Stir in rinds with fruit mince and brandy. Spoon into pan and bake for 1 hour.
2. Meanwhile, for florentine topping, place nuts, cherries and golden syrup in a saucepan and warm over a medium heat. When cake has cooked for 1 hour, remove from oven and spread topping over. Return for a further 15-30 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool, then transfer to a rack to cool completely.
3. For the icing, mix together sugar and lemon juice, place in a piping bag with a small nozzle and drizzle over cake. Decorate with ribbon, if desired.

An Easy lunch for Christmas

Easy Carve Roast Chicken

You need:

- 1kg chicken thighs
- 1kg potatoes, peeled, diced and forked
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 2 cloves garlic
- salt
- black pepper
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Method:

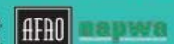
Toss all ingredients together. Bake at 200C for 50 minutes. Serve with a green salad, roman tomatoes and hot bread.

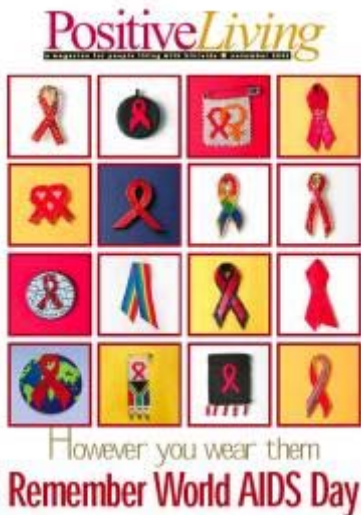


I hold a lot of stress in my body. Stretching has a meditative quality that helps me unwind and calm my mind.

Managing HIV. It's about balance.

For more information on balancing health and life, contact your local POWHA organisation or AIDS Council.





NAPWA's free newsmagazine for people living with HIV/AIDS in Australia. Published since 1989, PL is Australia's only national publication for positive people.

Copies are available from PLWHA ACT Westlund House —or via the web at www.napwa.org.au



HIV Futures 6: Making Positive Lives Count

HIV Futures 6 is the sixth national survey of Australian PLWHA conducted by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University. The HIV Futures surveys have been conducted every 2 years since 1997, attracting responses from around 1000 PLWHA each time.

The survey is about all aspects of living with HIV, including health, treatments, work, relationships and financial situation. HIV Futures is an important project because it lets community organisations, service providers, doctors and government know what it's really like to be HIV positive.

Look out for it at your local HIV/AIDS organisation or doctor. You can also order a copy by calling us on 1800 064 398.

The survey can also be filled out and submitted online by going to www.hivfutures.org.au

Make sure your experience counts. Let us know what living with HIV is like for you.

Survey Closes 15.01.2009

COMING EVENTS

Tuesday 9 December

Dietician Clinic

from 9.30am

Members Meeting and PSN Dinner 6pm Westlund House

Wednesday 10 December

Massage Clinic, PSN Lunch & Op-shop

12.45 - 4.15pm

Wednesday 17 December

Last Massage Clinic for the year, PSN Lunch & Op-shop

12.45 - 4.15pm

Christmas Party Westlund House Resource Centre Staff, clients and volunteers from 6 pm

Tuesday 23 December

PSN Dinner 6pm Westlund House

Wednesday 24 December

PSN Lunch & Op-shop — **Cancelled**

Westlund House Resource Centre closing at 2pm

Westlund House Closed Wednesday 2pm 24 December until Monday 9am , 5 January

Tuesday 6 January

PSN Dinner 6pm Westlund House

Wednesday 7 January

PSN Lunch & Op-shop

12 - 4pm

Wednesday 14 January

PSN Lunch & Op-shop

12- 4pm

Thursday 15 January

HIV Futures 6 Survey Closes

Tuesday 20 January

PSN Dinner 6pm Westlund House

Wednesday 21 January

PSN Lunch & Op-shop

12 - 4pm

Monday 26 January – Australia Day

Westlund House Resource Centre Closed

Wednesday 28 January

PSN Lunch & Op-shop

12 - 4pm