

POSITIVELY

December 2010–January 2011

WESTLUND HOUSE
16 Gordon Street ACTON ACT 2601

Merry Christmas 2010



Positively is a newsletter for HIV positive people, their carers, families and friends in Canberra and the surrounding areas.

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Introducing the HIV Stigma Audit

A research project to help end HIV stigma in Australia

The stigma of HIV is something we can live without and with your help we can make a start

The HIV Stigma Audit is a new research project from NAPWA and the National Centre in HIV Social Research at the University of New South Wales. The audit is being conducted by a web-based survey.

We would like to hear from all sorts of people with HIV about their experiences. If you are HIV positive and living in Australia you are welcome to complete the survey.

The survey only takes about 20 mins to complete, and is open to all HIV-positive people over the age of 18 living in Australia. Your feedback is invaluable in helping us understand HIV stigma and start to do something about ending it.

If you are HIV-positive, over 18 and living in Australia, please consider participating in this valuable research. For more information about the Stigma Audit, please visit www.hivstigma.net.au.



<p>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.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How to apply?</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Care Inc. Financial Counselling Service is a community organisation set up to ensure low income consumers are treated fairly and to support them to overcome debt.</p> <p>We offer information and financial counselling, and have a community development and education program. Care also hosts the Consumer Law Centre of the ACT and the No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS). Care Inc. is based in Canberra, ACT, but provides financial counselling services to the surrounding areas.</p> <p>We have Budget tools to help you review your finances.</p> <p>If you would like to speak to a financial counsellor please call us any weekday morning on 02 6257 1788.</p>
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NAPWA 2010 AGM Report

On Friday 19th November and Saturday 20th November Mick Doring and Mandi Collins attended as the ACT representatives at the NAPWA (National Association of People Living With HIV/AIDS) AGM in Sydney. These meetings are run twice a year and are attended by the NAPWA Board, two representatives from each state and territory and other HIV interest groups from within Australia such as Straight Arrows and Patsin (Positive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network) .

Over the two days of the meeting many interesting and important reports/issues on and around HIV/AIDS in Australia and the Pacific region. This report will cover just some of some of those reports that were discussed at the meeting.

NAPWA 2010 Board Elections

Conformation and endorsement the outcome of the 2010 Board Elections.

The results of the election were,

Robert Mitchell retained the Presidents position: Vice president: Sony Williams, Secretary/treasurer: Robert Langton, 5 ordinary Members were Peter Fenoglio, Des Hargeaves, Geoff Honnor, Dianne Lloyd, Rebecca Matheson.

State Members' Report

This session gives each of the state members the opportunity to share information about their recent activities and state issues.

Dianne Lloyd from West Australia reported that their lunch club was still going strong with an average of 15-20 people attending. South Australia PLWHA spoke about the many changes they have gone through and they changed their name from PLWHA to Positive Life-SA.

Daniel from Alice Springs reported they had a Chewing the Fat event with Venessa Wagner. The road show also had two positive speakers on board ,Bev Greet and Tobin Saunders.

Treatments Session by Jo Watson

Jo Watson reported that she was coming to Canberra the week after the SGM to speak to MediCare about Sculptra being approved to go on the PBS, Joe said that she was expecting it to go on around January/February 2011.

Overall we thought the AGM meeting was very successful and informative, and we find attending these meetings does not only give us the opportunity to broaden our knowledge around HIV issues, it also gives us the opportunity to meet up swap information and ideas with other PLWHA staff from around Australia.

Mick Doring/Mandi Collins



Farewell Stephanie



On 4th December 2010 the AIDS Action Council of the ACT gave a Garden Party on the lawns of Westlund House to farewell our friend and colleague Stephanie Buckle after providing nearly twenty years of counselling service to our organisation.

PLWHA would like to thank Stephanie for all that she has done throughout those years for our present and past members.

Stephanie has worked with our members and their families to help them get through the traumas associated with being diagnosed and living with HIV. PLWHA ACT and its members would like to wish Stephanie a long and happy retirement.

Farewell

WORLD AIDS DAY STALL AT THE CANBERRA HOSPITAL

On the 1st December we conducted an awareness raising stall in the main foyer of The Canberra Hospital. I always find that World AIDS Day and the wearing of the red ribbon evoke conversations with people that would not otherwise occur. It was great to be out in the general public talking about HIV and educating people with the facts. The people who engaged with us were from varying walks of life and income brackets. Everyone was supportive both with their attitudes, their willingness to learn and their generous donations.

Having this awareness stall reiterated to me that not nearly enough HIV education and awareness raising is aimed at the whole community. We bombard people in high risk groups with an overwhelming amount of information constantly. However, the horrific, fear evoking grim reaper commercial is the only campaign which has ever had an impact on those who are not affected by HIV. Personally, I do not believe that we will lessen the stigma and discrimination until a lot more education is provided to the whole community. Once people are educated and their fears are alleviated they are much more open to becoming accepting of People Living With HIV. We need to be portraying ourselves as openly and as positively as our own individual limitations allow.

The strength of HIV positive people can never be underestimated. Despite the illness, the hardships, the stigma and discrimination that we face, HIV positive people can, and do, accomplish amazing achievements. We just need the rest of the population to realize that we are just the same as anyone else, we just happen to be living with HIV.

Many thanks to Sallie, Geoff, Ross, Nada and Rachel who all generously donated their time to help out on the stall, their contributions were invaluable.

Dear Nurse Philip

I have been positive for some time now and over those years I have changed my HIV medications many times due to resistances to the Virus. My medications at the moment are Truvada and Kaletra and they are working fine at the moment but I was wondering if they build up a resistance to the Virus what my next options will be.

I know that there has been some new drugs released in the last few years but I was wondering if those drugs that built a resistance years ago would be any good to me now after a break of over 5 years

Every time HIV reproduces itself, it is likely that it will change slightly. When it reproduces, it is not very accurate; HIV does not have the same ability as most other organisms, to check that the new viruses are a good copy of the previous one. This means that there is a great range of diversity in the new generations. Most of these changes result in less effective viruses, which don't go on to thrive. They will either die out or manage to hang on at very low levels; some can even hide away in certain body cells. So you end up with a wide variety of virus types in differing amounts in many locations.

Some of the new viruses however, will do very well and some of them will manage better than their parents under certain conditions. For example, some viruses will be better equipped than their parents to live in the presence of certain antiretroviral therapy (ART) combinations; they may displace their parents if the antiretroviral therapy continues. These viruses are said to have a greater resistance to ART than their parents.

Each virus type has its own level of resistance to a particular antiviral or combination of ART. And if there is resistance to one medication, there may also be resistance to other medications in the same class. Fortunately, viruses that are resistant to a particular ART combination can often be suppressed by another one. You saw this happening with the changes in your own medications; virus that had become resistant to one combination was able to be suppressed by another one.

Even when viruses are suppressed, they are not always eliminated. Just like the minor viral populations mentioned earlier, they may be found in very low levels in the blood or in cells in other body tissues. So if you were to change back to a combination which had previously stopped working, some residual resistant virus would increase in numbers and would again become apparent; you would once again have unsuppressed virus.

So, generally, combinations that have stopped working in the past are unlikely to be effective again. If the virus has only developed resistance to some of the drugs in that combination, it may be possible to use the other components in future effective combinations. Your doctor may order resistance testing to work out which parts of a failing combination can be used in future ART. It may be possible to use them with medications that you haven't previously used (possibly the newly released drugs that you mentioned) to form another effective combination.

Hopefully, though your current combination will continue to work and you won't have to change things for some time yet.

Brenda's Blenda

Beef Chipolatas and Onion Casserole, with Spicy Tomato Sauce

Spring is in the Air and due to the warm weather and rain the ACT and surrounding area is lush green and a mass of colour.

This recipe is a friendly favourite and just so easy to prepare. Great for a meal and the left over's can go on toast for breakfast and is so easy on the budget.

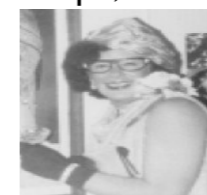
What you need:

- 1- 500pkt of Woolworths Beef Chipolatas (small sausages).
- 1-Large brown onion, cut into thin wedges.
- 1-Red or green capsicum, chopped.
- 200g Punnet of cherry tomatoes /halved.
- 200g jar of mild taco sauce.
- 400g can of diced tomatoes.
- ½ cup of beef stock

How to prepare;

- Preheat oven to 180°c.
- Preheat a non stick frying pan to a moderate heat, add the Chipolatas and brown them on all sides, you don't need to cook them through. Place the browned Chipolatas in a casserole dish. Add a little oil to the fry pan and add the onions and cook until softened and lightly golden. Add the capsicum, and Cherry tomatoes to the pan, cook for 1 minute, add the taco Sauce the tomatoes and stock. Stir mixture until it comes to the boil then pour over the chipolatas and stir to mix.
- Cover the casserole dish, place in the oven and cook for 30 minutes or until mixture is hot and bubbling. Serve with mashed potatoes and vegetables or rice and if you like a dollop of sour cream. You will get 4 good serves with this recipe, so enjoy

Love Brenda



Eating Well-Living well.

Dietitian Clinic

Jenny McDonald is a well renowned HIV Dietitian and Treatments Officer and has worked in the area of HIV nutrition for many years.

People living with HIV (PLHIV) may benefit from using Jenny's services and we encourage all PLHIV to take advantage of this free service.

Jenny regularly visits Canberra on conduct a Dietitian Clinic at the Westlund House Resource Centre.

There will be a number of appointments available starting from 9.15 am.

We can be contacted on 02 6257 2855 during business hours to discuss bookings.

PLWHA—COMING EVENTS

PSN lunch dates for January

February 2011

Wednesday 5th January 12-2pm

Friday 7th 12-2pm.

Wednesday 12th January 12-2pm

Friday 14th 12-2pm.


Wednesday 26th January 12-2pm


Friday 28th 12-2pm

PSN Dinner for January

February 2011

 **Wednesday 5th January
6pm Westlund House.**

 **Wednesday 19th January
6pm Westlund House.**

 **Wednesday 2nd February
6pm Westlund House**

Successful Fairday Fundraiser

Fairday 2010 was a very successful fundraising event for PLWHA. We would like to thank all the volunteers from our membership who generously gave up their day to contribute to making this event successful. We would like to express a special thank you to Rachel, Geoff, Kenn, Peter R, Peter L, Kath, Michelle and Nada. Thanks guys, you did a terrific job. Due to all your hard work on the sausage sizzle and book stall we managed to raise around \$900 which will be directed into our Happy Hampers Fund. Once again we would thank High Country Meats for the generous donation of sausages. We look forward to holding a similar event for Fairday 2011.

M & M

Please Note

PLWHA will be closed from 5pm Friday 24th December 2010 and will reopen 9.30 am on

Tuesday 4th January 2011, our last lunch for 2010 was held Wednesday 15th December.

Our next PSN lunch will be on 5th January 2011 and our first PSN dinner will also be held on

5th January 2011 6pm at Westlund House.

PLWHA wish you all a very Merry Christmas and we look forward to seeing you all in the new year. M&M

Positive Support Services in the ACT and surrounding areas

People Living With HIV/AIDS ACT

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. Ph 6257 4985

Positive Support Network

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.

Positive Women's Group

The Positive Women's Group meets for social activities throughout the year. For information on the group's gatherings or if you would like to suggest some activities contact Marcus, Nada or Stephanie on 6257 2855.

Trevor Daley Fund

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.

Counselling

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.

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

Health Maintenance and Treatments Information

All enquires to Marcus or Nada
Phone 6257 2855

Treataware
www.treataware.info

Nutrition

Consultation with a Dietitian from The Canberra Hospital is available free at the Canberra Sexual Health Centre. Appointments necessary. Phone Canberra Sexual Health on 62442184.

An HIV specialist nutritionist from Melbourne will be visiting quarterly. For further info contact Nada or Mick on 6257 2855

Canberra Sexual Health Centre

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.

Library

PLWHA and the AAC have an extensive range of books and videos for your enjoyment.

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.

Greater Southern Area Sexual Health and Hep C Service

GSAHS Queanbeyan Sexual Health Service

For Appointment

Ph- 02-6298 9233

Aboriginal Sexual Health HIV/AIDS Worker

Sharyn Medway

Ph 02-4827 3913 Mobile 0429 985 606

Sexual Health Nurses

Christine Taylor - South Coast, Batemans Bay - Eden

Ph- 02-4476 2344 Mobile 0427 219 874

Queanbeyan-Goulburn Region

Ph- 02-6298 9213 mobile 042 789 3247

Margaret Traill

Albury 02 6058 1839

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