

ONLINE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

a resource for people newly diagnosed with HIV

Online Information and Support Services

For many people, testing HIV positive can be a difficult, confronting or overwhelming experience. It is not unusual for a person to feel anxious, depressed or confused. While dealing with the news of a positive diagnosis may not be easy, the prospects for living a long healthy life are better now than they have ever been. There are many support services and lots of information available to help.

Following a diagnosis, there may be some people who have to be told immediately. A person diagnosed with HIV may also initially decide to share the information with only a few people they feel they can confide in and trust.

If you have just been diagnosed with HIV, or someone you know has just told you they have HIV, try not to panic. We suggest you take some time to allow yourself to adjust to the news, or get over your initial shock, before you make any important decisions. Living with HIV can be challenging but you can take control.

Recommended reading

The Australian information booklet for people who have just been diagnosed

www.afao.org.au/living-with-hiv/recently-diagnosed

Albion Centre information sheet on disclosure

www.sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au/albionstcentre/clinical/psychology/DisclosureASC.pdf

The HIV Legal Service booklet on disclosure

www.halc.org.au/downloads/Disclosure.pdf

Support services

Albion Centre – Medical, nutritional support, psychology and pharmacy services available.

Call 9332 9600.

www.sesiahs.nsw.gov.au/albionstcentre/index.asp

ACON – promotes health & wellbeing for people with HIV in NSW.

Call 9206 2000.

www.acon.org.au

ACON also have a New Diagnosis Priority Service –

for priority access to counselling and support.

Call 9206 2000 (Sydney), 1800 063 060 (outside Sydney) or 9283 2053 (for the deaf).

www.acon.org.au/mental-health/Counselling/HIV-Diagnosis-Priority-Service

Sexual Health Services – you can see all the NSW locations at this website or look in the white pages. www.health.nsw.gov.au/PublicHealth/sexualhealth/sexual_phus.asp

Phone based information and support

HIV Information Line – NSW phone based service

Call: 9332 9700 or 1800 451 600.

Mon-Fri: 8am-6.30pm.

Lifeline – 24 hours/7 days.

In an emergency call - 13 11 14.

Finding a Doctor with HIV experience

Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM) – puts out an annual booklet listing General Practitioners who can prescribe HIV medications in Australia. You can download or read the booklet: www.ashm.org.au/images/prescriber/ashmprescribers.pdf

Other main NSW support organisations

Bobby Goldsmith Foundation – assists people living with HIV (PLHIV) by providing practical, emotional and financial support in a professional and non-judgemental way.

www.bgf.org.au

Positive Life NSW – works to promote a positive image of people living with and affected by HIV with the aim of eliminating prejudice, isolation, stigmatisation and discrimination.

www.positivelife.org.au

For more information or support please contact Albion Centre's Psychology Unit on 93329600

Finding other support services in NSW

Positive Life NSW – maintains an online HIV Services Directory which you can search for support organisations in NSW.

www.positivelife.org.au/contacts

Some support groups

Genesis – is a once off weekend retreat/workshop for gay men diagnosed with HIV in the previous 2 years, run by Positive Life and ACON. Call ACON on 9206 2000 for information or bookings.

www.positivelife.org.au/peersupport/genesis

Nexus – is a monthly peer facilitated discussion group for newly diagnosed gay men providing an opportunity to talk about a wide range of issues in a supportive environment with others who may be experiencing similar issues.

www.acon.org.au/hiv/groups-and-workshops/Nexus

7-2-9 – is a monthly social support group for gay men living longer with HIV which allows a space to share and discuss experiences of living with HIV, exchange information and develop friendships and social networks. The group meets from 7.00pm to 9.00pm on the last Thursday of every month.

More information, dates and venues on the website.

www.positivelife.org.au/peersupport/seventonine

Planet Positive – is a quarterly social night for people with HIV and their friends. It's a night full of music + laughter and an opportunity to socialise, catch-up and have some fun. More information, dates and venues on the website.

www.positivelife.org.au/peersupport/planetpositive

Suggested websites for more info

AFAO – has some very useful resources available.

www.afao.org.au

NAPWA – has a variety of relevant resources.

www.napwa.org.au

Sydney Sexual Health Centre – provides a confidential service that can help put you in control of your sexual health. There are also fact sheets about STIs on their website.

www.sshc.org.au

Information for Women with HIV – Download the booklet “Treat Yourself Right”.

www.afao.org.au/living-with-hiv/positive-women

AIDSMap – A UK site with lots of news, information and resources.

www.aidsmap.com

Avert – An International HIV information website.

www.avert.org

POZ (magazine) – offers cutting-edge info and a useful guide to some of the questions you might have.

www.poz.com

Talkabout Magazine – from Positive Life NSW, covers Australian life issues for people with HIV.

www.positivelife.org.au/talkabout

The Body – An American HIV/AIDS Resource site which has lots of information and where doctors answer questions online.

www.thebody.com