

## TREATMENT FOR HIV: THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN POLICY AND DATA IN NSW

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### SETTING TREATMENT TARGETS

The NSW HIV Strategy 2012-2015: A New Era committed NSW to reinvigorating efforts to increase to 90% the number of people living with HIV on treatment. Consistent with coalition theory on change, leadership provided through the NSW partnership facilitated an integrated and multi-strategic approach spanning the continuum from system reform to promotion campaigns.

### COLLABORATION & COORDINATION

Leadership on treatment uptake was provided from the NSW HIV partnership:

- Champions with the same core beliefs including representative HIV community organisations (ACON & Positive Life NSW), HIV/Sexual Health Service Directors, GP s100 prescribers and researchers ensured reach across all sectors
- Champions in decision making positions including the NSW Minister for Health & NSW Chief Health Officer enabled a policy and funding focus on the promotion of HIV treatment uptake
- An Implementation Committee of champions with expertise provided advice on the evidence and strategies
- Collaboration with clinicians and researchers occurred on ways to deliver evidence & monitor outcomes

### COMMUNICATING THE EVIDENCE

The NSW partnership recognised that evidence was crucial to changing conservative approaches to treatment prescribing. Efforts to deliver the evidence included:

- Communicating research findings
- Enhanced surveillance
- Identifying the key indicators and pathways for reporting so that performance could be monitored
- Providing regular feedback on strategy implementation  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/endinghiv>

### UPDATING KNOWLEDGE OF HIV COMMUNITY

Targeted efforts in NSW set about replacing myths held about HIV treatment and promoting early uptake of treatment through community lead campaigns and resources:

- <http://endinghiv.org.au/nsw/treat-early/>
- <http://takecontrol.positivelife.org.au>

### STRENGTHENING THE BASE FOR CHANGE

#### ENGAGING WITH CLINICIANS:

##### 1. HIV Support Program (HSP)

The HSP is a key initiative established to provide expert support to primary care clinicians at the time of new HIV diagnoses. Expected elements in delivery of care were established. These, the 5 Key Support Services, included:

- effective clinical management
- HIV prevention counselling
- psychosocial support
- contact tracing
- specialist and community service linkages

##### 2. Resources to support clinicians

A range of resources were developed to support clinical management and conversations with patients  
[www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/hiv](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/hiv)

##### 3. HIV S100 Prescriber Forums

Regular forums held by the NSW Chief Health Officer provided opportunity to discuss the evidence for treatment.

#### SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH HIV

System redesign occurred to resolve barriers to treatment access:

- providing support for treatment costs
- making public pharmacies easier to access
- working with other jurisdictions and the Commonwealth government on:
  - removal of the CD4 count restriction on accessing subsidised treatment
  - broadened treatment dispensing to community pharmacies.

### OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

Treatment coverage in NSW has increased from an estimated 54-70% in 2012 to over 90% in June 2015 for people living with HIV and attending public sexual health clinics.

Among the cohort of 698 NSW residents notified with newly diagnosed HIV infection from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2014, 447 (64%) were reported to have commenced ART within six months of diagnosis.

In addition, 49% of the 2013 new diagnoses cohort was on ART within three months of diagnosis, compared with 61% of 2014 new diagnoses cohort. It would appear that early commencement of ART is increasing.

