

MEDIA RELEASE

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Funding commitment would help drive end of HIV transmission

The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations has welcomed federal Labor's commitment to fund a reinvigorated community-led HIV response, critical to Australia reaching its goal of ending HIV transmission.

The Shadow Minister for Health and Medicare, the Hon Catherine King MP, today announced a Labor Government would provide \$53 million in funding over three years. The package includes:

- \$3 million a year to better reach 'hidden populations'. These include people who have HIV but aren't yet diagnosed and people who are not treated, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, among whom HIV transmission has rapidly increased, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
- \$10 million a year to peak national organisations for a comprehensive and restored national HIV response. These organisations are the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations; the National Association of People with HIV Australia; Scarlet Alliance, the Australian Sex Workers Association; the Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League; and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation. The investment will allow these organisations to deliver prevention, testing, treatment programs at scale direct to communities and through on-the-ground local partner organisations;
- \$3.6 million a year to expand trials for the HIV prevention pill, PrEP, to a further 17,500 people, ensuring access for all those who need it, including starting a trial in the Northern Territory.

"We warmly welcome federal Labor's commitment, which would allow us to properly pursue the end of HIV transmission within a decade," said Darryl O'Donnell, CEO of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations.

"The emergence of the HIV prevention pill, PrEP, alongside home testing has created unprecedented opportunity to end HIV transmission. However, the effort will not succeed unless it is nationally driven to ensure nobody is left behind.

"HIV prevention and treatment among Indigenous Australians, migrants and some sections of the gay community is stubbornly difficult. A package such as this would allow us to go the extra mile, to ensure new medicines and testing technology reach every corner touched by the HIV epidemic.

"HIV thrives in the shadows of stigma and discrimination. It takes real resources to bring it into the open and prevent its transmission.

"Australia was an early leader in containing the spread of HIV. We now have an opportunity to resume that global leadership by ending HIV transmission."

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AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF AIDS ORGANISATIONS

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The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) is the national federation for the HIV community response. AFAO's members are the AIDS Councils and former AIDS Councils in each state and territory; the National Association of People With HIV Australia (NAPWHA); the Australian Injecting & Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL); Anwernekenhe National HIV Alliance (ANA); and Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association.