

MEDIA RELEASE

28 August 2018

AFAO welcomes ministerial appointments

The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) has welcomed the re-appointment of the Hon Greg Hunt MP as Minister for Health and the Hon Ken Wyatt MP as Minister for Indigenous Health.

Both ministers have demonstrated resolve in creating a bolder, more effective community-led HIV response in Australia.

The 2018 Budget commitment of \$180 million to put HIV prevention drug, PrEP, on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme is evidence of this commitment.

Minister Hunt has recognised the opportunity to drive rates of HIV to very low levels in Australia. In 2017, AFAO presented the Minister with our [Blueprint to end HIV transmission in Australia](#).

AFAO congratulates Minister Hunt on his re-appointment and looks forward to our continuing work with him to realise the vision of the Blueprint through the forthcoming *National HIV Strategy* and new investments in Australia's national HIV response. We also look forward to working with him to accelerate access to new technology, including the registration of a much-needed HIV self-test.

Minister Wyatt has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, particularly his recognition of the growing problem of HIV and STI transmission. HIV transmission among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continues to increase, rising 39 per cent since 2012.

AFAO is grateful for its productive relationship with Minister Wyatt and his commitment to reversing this trend.

AFAO also warmly congratulates Senator the Hon Marise Payne on her appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

We look forward to working with Minister Payne as Australia grapples with the emergence of HIV treatment resistance in our near neighbour, Papua New Guinea, and the challenge of HIV more broadly in Asia and the Pacific. HIV disproportionately affects the most marginalised and vulnerable, and less than half of those living with HIV in our region have access to life-saving treatment.

Australia's leadership in the replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will be an important priority.

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