



# Karumah Update

## October 2018

### From the Coordinator

2018 has gone in a flash, it's been a big year for us at Karumah, and it's not over yet. Looking back over the year these are some of the highlights.

- We've had a terrific board this year, made up of volunteers, they have had their work cut out for them, with a number of unusual issues to deal with, but they have risen to the occasion each and every time. A big THANK YOU from the staff for your continued support.
- Karumah and the NDIS is well and truly established, with a small number of clients, it has been very exciting. Catherine and I have attended appropriate training as it becomes available. If you, or someone you know, thinks they are eligible for a disability package, or if you already have a disability plan and are not happy with your supports, please don't hesitate to give Catherine or myself a call.
- Our Peer Leader group has taken on a life of its own, which is fantastic, they meet regularly and are planning, a holiday away. We are very proud of the success of this group. Karumah has some exciting upcoming events planned for this group.
- Karumah has been visiting a number of service users in corrections this year. We have been working in collaboration with the 'Prison exit Program' and have had the opportunity to meet some new people in need of support.
- Connexions Entertainment have generously donated money to Karumah again this year, from their August 2018 event. We THANK YOU, all donations go to support our programs and our service users.

Karumah now has a third staff member, please be sure to say hello when you cross her path.

**Karumahs AGM** is set for Tuesday 22nd January 2019, at a location yet to be decided. All the information and forms will be posted in December including the location to financial members. We hope to see you all there.

Our office will be closed from Thursday 20th December 2018 and reopen again on Monday 21st January 2019. From all of us here at Karumah, we wish you a safe and happy Christmas and New Year break, and look forward to seeing you all next year.





# **Karumah Christmas Party 2018**

## **The Happy Wombat Restaurant**

Wednesday 19th December 2018

575 Hunter Street Newcastle

12pm—2pm

[RSVP](#) - Catherine 0447 003 386 or email [casemanager@karumah.com.au](mailto:casemanager@karumah.com.au)



## **Government announces improved NDIS mental Health support**

Posted on 10th October 2018

People with severe and persistent mental health issues will have improved access and support in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the Federal Government has announced today. Minister for Families and Social Services, Paul Fletcher, and Assistant Minister for Disability Services, Sarah Henderson, jointly announced a new 'psychosocial disability stream' for the landmark scheme during World Mental Health Day.

Psychosocial disabilities are those that may arise from severe and persistent mental health issues. Mr. Fletcher said the new stream is a critical step for the NDIS in providing a better pathway and support to about 64,000 Australians with psychosocial disability, as well as their families and carers.

The new stream will be implemented progressively and includes;

- The employment of specialised planners and Local Area Coordinators,
- Better linkages between mental health services and National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) staff, partners and
- Focus on recovery-based planning and episodic needs.

"This reform follows recommendations by the national peak organisation, Mental Health Australia in its National Disability Insurance Scheme Psychosocial Disability Stream Report" Mr. Fletcher said. Assistant Minister Henderson thanked Mental Health Australia and the many stakeholders, including NDIS participants, families and carers, mental health professionals, advocates and partner agencies who informed the reports recommendations.

"The Government is listening to the sector and acting on its recommendations, as we see today with establishment of the new NDIS stream" Ms HENDERSON SAID.

Mental Health Australia CEO Frank Quinlan welcomed the Governments announcement and the NDIA's support of the majority of the report's recommendations on World Mental Health Day. "We're pleased the NDIA and Government is listening to the concerns of NDIS participants and their carers, and will be investing in improving the experience of people with mental health issues under the NDIS. We look forward to working with the NDIA in the further design and implementation of the new psychosocial disability stream". Mr Quinlan said.



National  
**disabilityinsurance**  
Scheme





## Australian PrEP trial leads to unprecedented reductions in HIV transmission

(SYDNEY, Thursday 18 October 2018) Recent HIV infections in gay and bisexual men in New South Wales (NSW) have declined by almost one-third following the trial of an HIV prevention medication called PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis), according to Kirby Institute research published today in *The Lancet HIV*. These globally unprecedented reductions provide strong evidence to support the large-scale, targeted provision of PrEP to prevent HIV transmission.

The new research, funded by NSW Health, reports the findings from the NSW PrEP trial (called EPIC-NSW), which was launched in March 2016. When taken daily, PrEP prevents HIV negative people from acquiring the virus. The EPIC-NSW trial is the first study globally to measure the impact of PrEP on reducing HIV in a large population.

Professor Andrew Grulich from the Kirby Institute at UNSW Sydney led the trial. “The speed of the decline we’ve seen in new HIV infections in gay and bisexual men is a world first. In the year following the trial, state-wide new HIV infections in this population decreased by one third, from 149 infections in the 12 months prior, to 102 in the 12 months after. These numbers are the lowest on record since HIV surveillance began in 1985,” said Professor Grulich. “Our research tells us that these reductions are a result of PrEP, implemented on a background of high and increasing HIV testing and treatment rates.”

The declines were highest among Australian-born gay and bisexual men (48.7%) and gay and bisexual men living in the ‘gay suburbs’ of Sydney (51.8%). “These communities had the highest uptake of PrEP, and in these populations, new HIV infections have halved since the trial began,” said Professor Grulich. “However, we did not see the same reductions across the board. Reductions were lower in non-English speaking immigrants with a smaller 21% decline among those born in Asia. We need to improve education and promote access to PrEP, particularly amongst culturally and linguistically diverse men who have sex with men, and those outside the gay neighbourhoods of Sydney.”

NSW was the first state in Australia to trial PrEP at a large scale. The EPIC-NSW trial enrolled 9,714 HIV negative people at high risk of HIV and provided them with PrEP. The study ceased enrolling on the 30 April 2018, following PrEP being made available through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. “Now that PrEP has been listed on the PBS, and is available across Australia, we need to focus our attention on ensuring equitable access for all people at risk of HIV,” said Professor Grulich.

Professor Grulich credits the success of EPIC-NSW to a collaborative approach and the commitment of multiple partners across clinics, community and researchers, as well as leadership from the NSW government. Dr Kerry Chant, the NSW Chief Health Officer also highlighted the importance of collaboration. “NSW has a long history of successful partnerships in HIV prevention. It’s these partnerships that have led to the success of EPIC-NSW and serve as a blueprint for other states and countries aiming to eliminate HIV transmission,” said Dr Chant.

“The results from EPIC-NSW provide an important evidence-base to inform our response to HIV globally,” added Professor Grulich. “We now know that PrEP implemented quickly, at a large scale, and targeted to high-risk populations can help turn the HIV epidemic around.”

The Kirby Institute - UNSW

# Karumah Getaway

**Date: 23/11/18 (4pm) to 25/11/18 (4pm)**

**Location: Myuna Bay Sport & Recreation Centre**

**Cost: \$50 pp (for members) plus minimal contribution towards food.**

**RSVP with full payment by: 18th October 2018**

**by Phone: 02 4940 8393**

**or email: [peersupport@karumah.com.au](mailto:peersupport@karumah.com.au)**

**Swimming, Mini Golf and Fishing  
Relaxation**

**Social Media/ Smart Phone Workshop**

**Interactive nutrition program and demonstration with  
"The Wholesome Collective"**

**Places will be limited for this event, so to avoid missing out  
please RSVP as soon as possible.**







## October 2018

Thursday 18th October      Peer Catch Up—Wickham Park Hotel 12.30pm

Friday 19th October      Carers Cruise

## November 2018

Thursday 15th November      Peer Catch Up - Wickham Park Hotel 12.30pm

Friday 23/11/2018 to Sunday 25/11/2018      Karumah Getaway—Myuna Bay

Tuesday 27th November      Understanding Dementia - with a focus on men 10am to 11am Male Health Network event

## December 2018

Friday 1st December      World AIDS day

Wednesday 19th December      Karumah Christmas Party -

Thursday 20th December      Karumah Closed for Christmas New Year break

## January 2019

Monday 21st January 2019      Karumah Open for business

Tuesday 22nd January 2019      Karumah AGM





October 17, 2018

## **Social Support Important in Short-Term Care for Older Adults With HIV**

Social support is among the most significant factors in preferences for short-term care among older adults with HIV, according to a study recently published in *AIDS Care*. This preference was not associated with long-term care, underscoring the potential vulnerability of those with limited social networks.

Researchers recruited participants from clinics in Los Angeles and New Orleans and provided optional surveys, which collected data on gender, race or ethnicity, employment, living arrangement, recent CD4 range, detectability of viral load, age, sexual orientation, education, relationship status, and years since first diagnosis of [HIV](#). Descriptive statistics summarized characteristics and outcomes of participants, and differences between groups were examined using chi-squared tests and t-tests

This cross-sectional study included 154 participants, 33.6% of whom were at risk for social isolation. For short-term care ranging from several days to several weeks, 73.4% of individuals reported informal support as their preferred care method.

The study researchers found “social support to be a significant determinant for short-term caregiving preferences and access to emergency caregivers but not long-term care preferences and advance care planning. For older adults living with HIV with limited social networks, this highlights vulnerability in terms of access to caregivers in sudden or unexpected health situations. Cultural differences by race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation may play important roles in long-term caregiving preferences and advance care planning.”

### **Reference**

Nguyen AL, Seal D, Bruce O, et al. [Caregiving preferences and advance care planning among older adults living with HIV](#) [published online August 25, 2018] *AIDS Care*. doi: 10.1080/09540121.2018.1515472



## **Experts call for easing of Australia's Gay Blood Donation Ban**

Experts have called for an easing of Australia's blood donation policy, which effectively bans gay men from donating blood. Australia has a 12-month deferral period on donating blood for men who have sex with another man in the last 12 months. But experts from the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) say scientific advancements mean that period is "unreasonable" and can be reduced, allowing gay donors to help the Red Cross Blood Service meet periodic supply shortages.

"Australia doesn't want to change its really high rate of success in terms of blood supply safety, but it still needs to be responsive to the scientific evidence we have," AFAO President Bridget Haire told News.com.au. "The fact is 12 months is just way too long. It's unreasonable and unnecessary, and it's deeply unfair - the science tells us that." "If you're asked to accept something that introduces some level of discrimination between people, you can kind of accept it if it's necessary. But if it's unnecessary, it's wrong. "

Australia has not had a case of blood supply contamination since 1999, when the blood of a donor who unknowingly had HIV was used in a transfusion and infected the person who received it. It prompted the introduction of a host of new testing practices, which likely would have prevented the donor's blood from being used, Ms Haire said. "We have really good testing of blood being done now. Blood is tested for all of the relevant viruses - both the presence of the virus as well as the presence of antibodies," she said.

Even if you look at the test that takes the longest period of time to conduct, it's one month. If you double it as a kind of buffer for peace of mind, that's two months. The question is, why aren't we lowering the 12 month exclusion to two months? That is very reasonable. It is safe and perfectly scientifically relevant.

## **HIV Home Testing - Dried Blood Spot (DBS) HIV Testing Kit**



The HIV home testing kit, Dried Blood Spot (DBS) HIV test, makes testing easy, reliable and convenient by allowing individuals to order a free self-sampling kit online, take their own sample in the privacy of their home and send it to a laboratory for testing and results management. The free testing kit can be ordered at <http://www.hivtest.health.nsw.gov.au>.



## Case Managers Report.

Growth of the NDIS at Karumah has meant that staff have been pushed to their limits over the last few months, my apologies if you have not heard from me as much as you would have liked, but with the extra workload and difficulties employing staff, means I may not have had a chance to get to see you all. This will change now as I devote my time and resources to you and thank you for being so patient. I expect to get around to you all in the near future, for anyone who may like to see me sooner rather than later, please contact me directly on 0447 003 386.

Our regular Peer Catch up at the Wickham Park hotel has been a little poorly attended in the last few months and I would like to boost this event again. Therefore I would like announce that our next Peer Catch Up Thursday on the 15<sup>th</sup> November will be a celebration event, with **FREE** lunch for Karumah members and a small pre-Christmas gift, so we hope to see you there. You will also meet our new Peer Support & Promotions Officer – Aly James, who will be making her debut at this event. We can discuss whether we want to have a Peer Catch Up in December at the November lunch as the Karumah Christmas lunch will be held the following week.

There has been a good response to the Karumah 'Getaway' to be held on 23-25 November and this has led to a change to the accommodation. We will now be housed in a lodge rather than the cottages. Given that the kitchen duties fell largely to the women for the last mixed Getaway, we will have a roster system in place and an agreed contract of management of the Getaway upon your arrival. Meals will be very basic and anyone with specific dietary needs are requested to bring their own food. A list of required ingredients will be sent individually prior to arrival at Myuna Bay. For example, you may be requested to bring a few dozen eggs, or a kilo of bacon. There will be swimming, mini golf, fishing and other relaxing things to do and two workshops, Social media/smart phone and a workshop from the "Wholesome Collection" based on interactive nutrition and preparation demonstrations.

I am keen to catch up with everyone at the Getaway and would encourage those who have not yet paid their \$50 to be proactive around this. It will be much easier to determine who has what responsibility when we have attendees confirmed.

Father's Day was enjoyed recently by all the Dad's in the nation and a NSW Health display was provided at the Bunnings Father's Day sausage sizzle on the Thursday preceding it. With Karumah volunteering some time, it provided an opportunity to distribute information on men's health and the means by which we can all encourage men to attend their GP etc.

Our Carers Cruise went well, it was lovely to be able to provide a bit of 'time out' for our busy carers, and give them an opportunity to relax. Our thanks to 'Carers NSW' for their support.

Learning Sphere has reached out to Karumah requesting us to provide a venue for their Certificate II and III cleaning groups to have an opportunity to have work experience. In addition, any service user that may be keen to upgrade their skills are welcome to join the team and become trained in cleaning. This allows people to have a sense of purpose and achieve outcomes. A very useful partnership.

Karumahs Christmas Party is set for Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December, this year we are going to “The Happy Wombat” at 575 Hunter Street Newcastle. It’s a 12pm start and we hope to see you all there. We need RSVP’s for this event so could you please let us know by the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018 as we will need to confirm numbers.

2019 heralds Karumah 30 Years in service. We would love some input from you stories from those connected to the beginning of Karumahs journey, or ideas for celebrations, please pass them on to me – thanks.

Karumah will be closed from Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and reopen on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019, however as usual we will be available if you need any support during this period. Please don’t hesitate to contact me on 0447 003 386, I will be checking messages regularly and will get back to you as soon as possible. We will also be on call for our NDIS clients so, again feel free to contact either Machele or myself for any assistance.

Thank you all for another fantastic year, we hope you have a great Christmas and New Year break and look forward to catching up with you all next year.



## **Karumah Christmas Lunch**

Wednesday 19th December 12.30pm.

RSVP - 0447 003 386 or [casemanager@karumah.com.au](mailto:casemanager@karumah.com.au)

‘The Happy Wombat’ Restaurant - 575 Hunter Street Newcastle

12pm to 2pm

RSVP by 10th December 2018





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[www.karumah.com.au](http://www.karumah.com.au)

u <http://>

[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/karumahonline)

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[twitter.com/](http://twitter.com/KarumahOnline)

[KarumahOnline](http://KarumahOnline)

## Karumah Peer Catch - Ups

Wickham Park Hotel  
come along for peer dis-  
cussions; good food and  
good company, meals  
only \$6 for Karumah  
members - Lunches are



held every four weeks on  
a Thursday at 12.30pm  
dates for Peer Catch Ups

18th October 2018

15th November 2018



Access to HIV medi-  
cines has improved -  
HIV medicines are  
free, you can get  
them from the hospi-  
tal pharmacy or your  
local chemist—The  
choice is yours.



**PEP (Post Exposure  
Prophylaxis) is a course  
of anti-HIV medications  
taken over a four week  
period that can prevent  
you becoming infected.**

PEP (Post-Exposure  
Prophylaxis) is a month-  
long course of anti-HIV  
drugs that may prevent HIV  
infection after a possible  
exposure.

The sooner someone starts  
PEP the better, but it must  
be started within 72 hours  
after a possible exposure to  
HIV.

## Help end HIV transmission -



You can continue to col-  
lect your HIV medication  
from the hospital phar-  
macy in the same way as  
you have in the past,  
since 1 July 2015, you've  
had the option to have  
your HIV medications  
dispensed through your  
local community phar-  
macy (chemist) or  
through a hospital phar-  
macy. If you take HIV  
medications, they are  
free from 1 October  
2015. This applies to all  
NSW residents regard-  
less of whether you get  
HIV medicines dispensed  
from a hospital pharma-  
cy or a community phar-  
macy (chemist). Your pri-  
vacy will be maintained  
in the same way by a  
hospital pharmacy or by  
a chemist.

Using the technology



The Pharmacy  
Guild of Australia



## Want a free sexual health check up?

**Newcastle**  
ACON Hunter  
Tuesdays 3:30 - 6:30pm  
Thursdays 11am -  
6:30pm  
129 Maitland Rd, Isling-  
ton  
The clinic is free and  
confidential. No appoint-  
ment necessary just  
drop in

**Newcastle** Pacific Clinic  
Newcastle Community  
Health Centre  
Level 2, 670 Hunter St  
Newcastle West  
4016 4536

**Tamworth** Sexual  
Health  
468 Peel St, Tamworth  
6764 8080

**Dubbo** Sexual Health  
203 Brisbane St, Dubbo  
1800 851 700 or 6841  
2489

**Orange** Sexual Health  
96 Kite St, Orange  
1800 816 925 or 6392  
8600

## SEXUAL HEALTH TESTING

Find out where you can  
get tested near where  
you live [here](#).





**Health**  
Hunter New England  
Local Health District

*You are Invited to*

## **“UNDERSTANDING DEMENTIA – with a focus on males”**

### ***A Male Health Network Mini-Forum***



- When?** 10am to 11am Tuesday 27th November 2018 followed by morning tea
- Where?** Elsie Graham Building, Corner of Longworth Avenue and Lowry Lanes, Wallsend Health Campus
- What?** Insights onto Dementia, with a focus of men both as carers and as sufferers.  
Dr John Ward, Geriatrician - An open Forum Discussion to identify strategies to Implement a) in your field of work and b) as a Network. Extra parking is available off the Corner of Bean St and Shields Lane.