



ENDING HIV IN AUSTRALIA

Guaranteeing access to PrEP

Safer. Stronger. Together.

We have the chance to end HIV transmission in Australia. With a medication available to protect people at risk of HIV infection, combined with strong health promotion and community education on safe sex, we can stop the epidemic in its tracks. Now is the time for affordable access to PrEP.

We have the chance to end HIV transmission in Australia. But until people at high-risk get reliable access to affordable PrEP, we will continue to see avoidable HIV transmissions.

Since taking over the Sexuality and Marriage Equality portfolio in 2015, Senator Robert Simms has called for better access to HIV-prevention medication, Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP).

Studies from around the world have shown that PrEP is highly successful at helping to prevent HIV transmission¹. In May 2016, a drug for PrEP was approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). This drug is an effective HIV prevention tool, and the government should be doing all that it can to make PrEP as accessible and affordable as possible.

The Greens commit up to **\$34.4 million over four years to guarantee access to PrEP** for people at high-risk of exposure to HIV.

> GUARANTEEING ACCESS TO PrEP

With TGA approval, PrEP is now available for purchase, but the price is prohibitive without PBS listing. PrEP is available through clinical trials or through personal importation making access more difficult, and more expensive in the case of importation, than for medications listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Current clinical trials with a capped number of government funded places are expected to conclude in 2018 leaving approximately 8,000 users of PrEP without easy access to the drug unless it is listed on the PBS.

The trials are only operating in Victoria, NSW and Queensland. It is estimated that up to 3,000 people at high-risk of exposure to HIV cannot access government funded places on clinical trials for PrEP².

People are reliant on PrEP for protection and peace of mind. The Greens commitment to guarantee access includes:

¹ https://www.afao.org.au/library/topic/hiv-prevention/background-briefing-prep_September-2015_FINAL.pdf

² Data informed by experts.

- \$8.7 million over the next two years to fund supply of PrEP to high-risk Australians who are not currently in clinical trials
- an additional \$25.7 million over the following two years as a safety net for high-risk users of PrEP to guarantee access to the drug after clinical trials finish, should PrEP medication not be added to the PBS.

The Greens proposal involves the Commonwealth Government working with the states/territories and community organisations to support personal importation of PrEP at a cost of about \$1,200 per person, per year for people at high-risk who are not in clinical trials. This would cost about \$7.2 million over the next two years.

\$1.5 million would be allocated for administration and support for community organisations to assist clients with the personal importation of the drug. For example, the WA AIDS Council has peer navigators that assist clients with the personal importation of the drug.

After two years and once the patent on the current drug listed by the TGA expires, up to \$25.7m will be allocated as a safety net to provide PrEP to high risk individuals if PrEP medication has not been approved for the PBS. At this time, the price of PrEP will significantly reduce as generic products come on to the market.

> THE NEXT WAVE OF OUR RESPONSE

The history of HIV in Australia has involved action by affected communities, researchers and government working together to respond to the epidemic. Whether it's with lifesaving care and treatment for people living with HIV, the latest in safe sex health promotion or needle and syringe programs, Australia has been at the forefront of many important innovations.

In the last decade, as with other countries, rates of new HIV infections have risen³. Prevention is the key and funding the continued supply of PrEP will provide people at high-risk with a better chance of avoiding HIV infection.

³ http://kirby.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/hiv/resources/ASR2015_v4.pdf