



MEDIA RELEASE
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World AIDS Day 2022: Boldly Positive

In 2021 there were an estimated 580 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with HIV in Australia. While new diagnoses have declined over the past year, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to be diagnosed late (more than 4 years after becoming infected with HIV) compared to non-Indigenous people, reflecting complex social factors including poverty, lack of access to health services, low health literacy, high incarceration rates and intergenerational trauma.¹

The national theme for World AIDS Day 2022 is Boldly Positive, promoting openness around HIV and AIDS discussion without shame and stigma, while developing bold and effective prevention strategies free from discrimination.

NACCHO Chair, Donnella Mills says, 'in the spirit of this year's theme, Boldly Positive, it cannot be understated that to achieve the goal of eliminating HIV transmission in Australia for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we need further investment for the scale up of preventative measures, innovative approaches to increase access to culturally safe testing and treatment pathways and improved stigma reduction programs. More must be done to improve the HIV cascade of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, ensuring access to treatment and supporting people to achieve viral suppression'.

To coincide with World AIDS Day, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HIV Awareness Week (ATSIHAW) brings together Aboriginal Community Controlled health sector professionals to raise awareness of HIV and promote community action. Whilst ATSIHAW is a great event to shed light on HIV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, sexual health teams within the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health sector, work tirelessly throughout the year to test, treat and educate Community about HIV and other BBVs and STIs.

One of the most popular ATSIHAW events is Virtual Trivia which will be held on Thursday 8 December 2022, co-hosted by the University of Queensland Poche Centre for Indigenous Health and NACCHO. Mills states, 'this event brings together people from across Australia, working in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, to raise awareness of HIV and mobilise community action to bring down HIV rates. This event raises serious issues with serious amounts of fun. It really is a wonderful event that gains momentum each year.'

NACCHO will continue to advocate for ongoing funding and work with partner organisations to address the disproportionate rates of sexually transmitted diseases and blood-borne viruses among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

You can register [here](#) for the ATSIHAW virtual trivia, which will be held on Thursday 8 December at 4pm and is open to all ACCHO staff and organisations supporting ACCHOs.

¹ <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2022/06/fifth-national-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-bloodborne-viruses-and-sexually-transmissible-infections-strategy-2018-2022.pdf>



Media enquiries: Verity Leach

e. verity.leach@naccho.org.au

p. 0401 953 908

NACCHO is the national peak body representing 144 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) across the country on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing issues. NACCHO is the third largest employer of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, with over 3,500 out of the 6,000 staff working in ACCHOs being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background.

Many NACCHO members have almost 50 years of experience in the delivery of comprehensive primary health care. Services are delivered through fixed, outreach and mobile clinics operating in urban, rural and remote settings across Australia.