

PRACTICE BASED TEMPLATE

Submissions must not exceed 300 words (excluding title & authors). The document **must not** be password protected or saved as read only as this may result in your abstract failing to upload successfully. Use Arial 12 point type only. Please structure your submission using the subheadings below. If the abstract does not fit the headings, please put full abstract beneath introduction and we will remove the headings once submitted.

DEVELOPING THE HEALTH LITERACY FRAMEWORK: THE CENTRAL ROLE OF COMMUNITY ADVOCATES

Authors:

Sirimanotham S¹, Monteiro E¹, Reeders D^{1,2},

¹ *National Association of People Living with HIV Australia (NAPWHA), Gadigal Land, Sydney, Australia;* ² *Australian National University, School of Regulation and Global Governance (RegNet)*

Background/Purpose:

The Health Literacy Framework project is a three-year initiative (2019-21) which aimed to improve HIV-related health literacy at the individual, community, organisational, sectoral, health system, and societal levels. It focused on engaging diverse cohorts of PLHIV who have not benefited equally from recent successes across the HIV care continuum. These included positive women, heterosexual men, people from Asian and Latin American backgrounds, and people who inject drugs.

Approach:

Early definitions of health literacy focused on individuals and their ability to process complex health information, not the complicated health systems that demand that ability. A literature review (Woods, 2019) recommended NAPWHA take an ecological approach considering the social and contextual aspects of health literacy in practice. This involves taking what we have learned from individuals and communities and disseminating it through NAPWHA's sectoral, systemic and society-level activities.

In each priority community, we partnered with relevant organisations and recruited Community Advocates — HIV peers who received training, support and remuneration to become project ambassadors and undertake consultation activities. Community Advocates led NAPWHA in a co-design process to prepare health promotion interventions to address the needs identified through consultation.

Outcomes/Impact:

This presentation will focus on a case study of a breastfeeding guide developed for positive women in collaboration with Positive Women Victoria and ASHM. Advocates led consultation in various formats (discussion groups, in-depth interviews, forums) and collated relevant evidence to better understand the needs of positive women considering infant feeding options. Health promotion initiatives included the guide as well as active participation of Community Advocates in ASHM's development of clinical guidelines on breastfeeding.

Innovation and Significance:

What NAPWHA has learned from upskilling Community Advocates now informs our work on other projects and our engagement with partners in the HIV sector, health system, and our advocacy on the broader social determinants of positive health.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

NAPWHA has received funding for The Health Literacy Framework Project from ViiV Healthcare Australia.