

# **GIPA Audit: Assessing the National Association of People Living with HIV Australia's engagement with people living with HIV**

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## **Background:**

The National Association of People Living with HIV Australia (NAPWHA) relies upon its membership and the body positive to understand the priorities for people living with HIV (PLHIV) across Australia.

As the national peak organisation representing PLHIV, they commissioned an independent assessment of their engagement with positive people, including 17 priority populations.

## **Methods:**

Over nine months, NAPWHA engaged external consultants to assess community and expert perceptions of the organisation's engagement with PLHIV. The consultants used 'engagement' as a theoretical lens to capture consultation and interaction with PLHIV more broadly than 'involvement'.

The consultants utilised Greater Involvement and more Meaningful Engagement of PLHIV (GIPA/MIPA) principles and best practice guidelines sourced from NGOs, peak bodies and advocacy organisations to construct a bespoke survey for NAPWHA's leadership group (n=34).

Consultants further conducted in-depth interviews with six nominated representatives based on five broad themes that emerged from the survey results: accountability, autonomy, resources, representation and transparency.

## **Results:**

There is a high degree of appreciation for NAPWHA's work. However, the organisation could improve engagement in some areas—overall perception of engagement did not always align with priority group perceptions. Ultimately, GIPA/MIPA principles provide a sound basis for a PLHIV organisation's engagement review.

NAPWHA has commenced a governance review and will be commissioning an engagement strategy in 2022. By scrutinising internal policies, procedures and priorities through this lens NAPWHA strengthened its position as one of the few continuously operating national PLHIV organisations globally.

## **Conclusion:**

The report provides critical insights which will help NAPWHA improve its engagement practices with members and the broader communities of PLHIV.

## **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

No conflicts of interest to disclose.