



**Joint Australasian Sexual Health and
HIV&AIDS Conferences
VIRTUAL**

Monday 6 - Thursday 9 September, 2021

Dear Ivy,

Here we are on day four, the final day of the [2021 Joint Australasian Sexual Health + HIV&AIDS Conferences](#).

Today is also the **inaugural Australasian Sexual and Reproductive Health Day**, which will focus on the work that is needed to secure the future of reproductive health and rights. The day will explore how leadership, technology, workforce, community and broader society can work together to achieve universal access to contraception and abortion care and prevent reproductive coercion.

Although it's the final day of the joint conference, the dissemination of integral research continues. Today we will hear about the future of anti-retroviral treatments, ageing with HIV, calculating the costs of HIV management, and much more. Plus, a call to action from The Australian Queer Archives – who will be asking participants to consider if they would be willing to contribute their own research or experience living with HIV or in LGTBIQ+ communities.

But first, a look at some highlights from yesterday's sessions.

Yesterday's session highlights

Finding new ways to engage with Indigenous men

We were treated to two excellent keynote addresses yesterday, the first from Rob Monaghan at the Kirby Institute, UNSW, on **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health**. Monaghan spoke about novel initiatives to enhance Indigenous community engagement with sexual health services.

Monaghan's research looking at the sexual health initiatives that are currently in place to engage with Aboriginal men has identified many gaps. He has determined that through a range of initiatives, including Yarning Circles, which allow non-confrontational conversation without prejudice, Aboriginal men are developing trust in service providers and talking about their concerns. There is no one-size-fits-all approach but consulting with remote communities is making a difference.

Developing other prevention 'superheroes'

The second keynote, the David Cooper lecture, was delivered by Linda-Gail Bekker from the University of Cape Town. Bekker's lecture was titled **Extending the options for HIV Prevention: key to reducing transmission**.

Bekker highlighted some of the barriers to daily PrEP use and discussed new PrEP 'superheroes' that are in development, including a vaginal ring, implants, long-acting injectables and monoclonal antibodies. Having a range of options available will provide better choice for better coverage and improve overall protection. People come in many forms and prevention should too.

Challenges for nurse-led models of care

The joint session on models of HIV and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) nursing care showcased a range of services that bridge the divide between different parts of the healthcare system. We heard about positive health outcomes and promising research to improve care in areas without the resources of big cities.

William Hooke, Clinical Nurse Consultant with the Murrumbidgee Local

Health District, spoke of how central 'trust' is to nurse-led health care in rural areas – where he says people don't Google, they rely on word-of-mouth. Another factor rural service providers must take into account is the demographic changes being seen due to COVID, with a younger cohort leaving the cities for the country. Additionally, people living with HIV tend to be an ageing group that is moving to quieter or smaller rural centres.

Desirée LaGrapp, Clinical Nurse Specialist with the Northern Territory Department of Health, based in the Kimberley, also has some unique Northern Territory challenges – particularly vast spaces with few people. LaGrapp says that while the nurse-led model of HIV care has great advantages generally, in the NT it is a necessity. With one specialist in Darwin, the need for nurses providing a high standard of care is crucial. But the cooperation between various service providers in the field is also extremely strong.

In New Zealand there are not such vast distances, but there is a similarly important role for nurse-led care in sexual health. **Kerrie Salwey** RN, Youth Contraception and Sexual Health Counties Manukau Health, New Zealand and **Kate ChiTar**, Nurse Practitioner, at CMDHB spoke about the challenges of providing care for young people in their district. They explained that school nurses are a vital part of the health services there and the preferred source of information on sexual health matters for young people.

And finally, **Jessica Botfield**, Research Fellow at SPHERE, explained that rural women are 1.5 times more likely to have an unplanned pregnancy than women in the cities due to a lack of access to contraception, highlighting the need for to increase access to MTOP through nurse-led models of care.

Weighing up options for infant feeding

When it comes to infant feeding and living with HIV, balancing the risks and benefits for mother and child can be complicated and exploring infant feeding options can be fraught with difficulty. Today ASHM launched The Optimal Scenario and Context of Care: [ASHM Guidance for Healthcare Providers regarding Infant Feeding Options for People Living with HIV](#). The launch included a panel discussion facilitated by Dr Lucy Stackpool-Moore, Director of HIV Programmes and Advocacy at the IAS, focusing on the experiences of infant feeding mothers living with HIV.

All sessions are available to watch on demand in the virtual event portal.

Today's sessions:

**Future of anti-retroviral treatments, ageing with HIV,
calculating the cost of HIV management, and more**

We have three keynote addresses in today's plenary session. The first is from Professor Suzanne Fraser, Director of the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, who will discuss **Critique and creativity: Social research and policy, and the 'challenge...to what is'**.

The second sees Beatriz Grinsztejn of Brazil's Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, discuss the future of ARTs with a focus on **promising injectables and new treatment paradigms**.

Following that, Eillean Scully, Assistant Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University, will address the basic science of **sex and gender difference in the immunopathogenesis of HIV**.

This morning's proffered papers session focusing on social, political and cultural aspects of HIV&AIDS presents some fascinating research subjects including the complexities of **ageing with HIV**. Other papers presented during the session will include a discussion of the use of detention, involuntary testing and treatment powers relating to HIV, , gay men's experiences of **HIV anxiety, injecting drug use** among gay and bisexual men in Australia and the search for **quality of life for all**.

Our **4pm** invited speaker session takes a practical look at clinical guidelines, including an update on **ART management of women and pregnancy** and managing **downsides of ART**.

The second **Abstract Spotlight Session** of the week brings a keynote by Judith Dean, a Registered Nurse and Research Fellow at The University of Queensland, who will be discussing **Self-testing, Nurse and Peer led models of care**. Other paper highlights include a study examining **viral suppression and the HIV care cascade** including HIV testing among men who have sex with men in Southeast Asia, the **lifetime cost of HIV management**, the **experiences of Telehealth** by people living with HIV.

Closing Session - Building HIV&AIDS knowledge through the Australian Queer Archives

Could your work, research or experience help others understand more about HIV&AIDS in the LGBTIQ+ community? The Australian Queer Archives is the largest collection of material relating to Australian LGBTIQ+ life, and the largest collection of non-Australian LGBTIQ+ material in Australia – including life experiences with HIV&AIDS.

Join our closing session to hear from colleagues who work on the histories of HIV&AIDS in Australia and the region. As we mark 40 years since the first case reports of AIDS and in ASHM's 30th year of conferences, we welcome the opportunity to hear from the leadership of the Australian Queer Archives about their collection of Australian HIV&AIDS materials as well as emerging academics with regard to the importance of archival materials. This is also a call to action for our sector to consider its support and contributions to the Australian Queer Archives and other initiatives, and the role we all must take to ensure that our past informs our present, and this understanding informs the future.

BONUS CONTENT

Devils in the Details – Making sense of COVID-19 Conference Day is taking place tomorrow, Friday 10 September on the same virtual platform as this week's conference.

All Joint Sexual Health and HIV&AIDS Conference attendees have free access to this event as part of their registration (see Tomorrow tab on your platform). This one day inaugural conference is convened by Professor Sharon Lewin, AO, Director of the Peter Doherty Institute and co-chaired by Associate Professor Edwina Wright, AM, of the Alfred Hospital and Monash University in Melbourne.

It will include high level science and research delivered by leading experts in an accessible way including plenary speaker Professor Paul Young from The University of Queensland on the challenges and opportunities in vaccine development. You will also hear from lived experience speaker Mirabai Nicholson-McKellar, who will be interviewed by Edwina Wright, on her experiences living with "long COVID".

Not to be missed! The [full program](#) is available online and on the virtual platform.

What you're saying on Twitter

There were some great conversations on Twitter again yesterday, engaging with speakers and delegates on topics such as the experiences of women living with HIV, ending HIV stigma, and what sexual health can learn from the experience of COVID-19.

ASHM Retweeted
SPHERE @SPHERE_CRE · 15m

The impact of the COVID pandemic has meant many women have had to make difficult choices - particularly in the context of reduced access to abortion services
 @Danielle_Mazza @ASHMMedia #SH2021

The Context: Effects of the COVID pandemic on women

- more women have had to make difficult choices because of:
 - increased financial stress,
 - increased levels of family violence,
 - concerns for their own safety and wellbeing and that of their family,
 - uncertainty about the future,
 - real concerns about contracting COVID-19 when attending hospitals and clinics, particularly those located in COVID-19 hotspots,
- reduced access to abortion services
 - border and travel restrictions making it difficult for providers to deliver services and women to travel to them,
- changed patterns of demand for abortion services - [JGIM 2020](#)

ASHM Retweeted

ASHM Retweeted
Martin Holt @martinholt · 7h

Listening to @LindaGailBekker talk about challenges in sustaining #PrEP use in multiple populations makes me think it's not just alternative dosing options but also a vibrant, supportive community that makes #PrEP effective #HIVAIDS2021 #SH2021

Impact so far: Scaling Up PrEP A cck of Persistence??
 Population-Level Reductions in HIV Risk, amo - simply cycling on and off...

San Francisco ↓ 51% (2012-2016)

Seattle ↓ 42% (2010-2017)

Patterns of PrEP among young, MSM

| Category | Count |
|---------------------|--------|
| all-day persistence | 10,000 |
| 2-3 days | 10,000 |
| 1-2 days | 10,000 |
| 1 day or less | 10,000 |

ASHM Retweeted

ASHM Retweeted
Daniel Reorders @engagedpractx · 2h

Vanessa Wagner's 'Un-Agony Aunt' is probably the best conference session I've ever done @ASHMMedia #HIVAIDS2021

ASHM Retweeted

Join the conversation on Twitter using #HIVAIDS2021 and #SH2021

We love hearing your thoughts and comments on the sessions you're attending. Please keep using the hashtags #HIVAUS2021 and #SH2021 so we and others can follow and re-tweet you (we'll be tweeting from @ashmmedia).

If you have any questions or technical troubles, contact us at conference@ashm.org.au or on +61 2 8204 0770.

We hope you enjoy the day, and we'll be bringing you some highlights once again tomorrow morning.

Cheers,

Bill & ASHM Conference and Events Team.

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