

Reaching beyond 95+ and connecting the dots:

A co-designed housing support model strengthens health outcomes and improves quality of life for people living with HIV

Authors: [Joyce M¹](#), [Heslop A¹](#), [Costello J¹](#)
1. Positive Life NSW

Background / Purpose

- A lack of safe, secure housing for people living with HIV (PLHIV) creates barriers to:
 - **retention in care**
 - **access and adherence to antiretroviral medications**
 - **sustained viral suppression**
 - **elimination of HIV transmission**
- NSW has the largest jurisdiction of PLHIV in Australia
- 50% of PLHIV aged 50 years and older
- NSW government has set targets for the virtual elimination of HIV transmission by 2025
- 2016 Census data recorded:

37,715 people in NSW classified as homeless

A 37% increase from 2011: 14% higher than the national increase

43% increase in people aged over 55 years

experiencing homelessness between 2011–2016

Approach

In 2016 Positive Life NSW co-designed a housing support model offering advocacy to all PLHIV across NSW to:

- **access, achieve and maintain** stable accommodation, including those at risk of homelessness
- Program receives referrals from allied health, housing and HIV sector, including self-referrals

Positive Life NSW continues to be the only organisation offering housing support and referrals for PLHIV in NSW. Now in its sixth year, the Program has:

961 PLHIV

788 men, 154 women and 19 non-binary individuals

8.7% of the estimated population

of PLHIV in NSW

41% increase in new enrolments

when comparing year 1 with year 5

Outcomes / Impact

- Importance of safe and secure housing has **increased** dramatically as **supply of public housing stock lags behind demand**
- Evidence-base demonstrates PLHIV supported into stable housing benefit from positive health outcomes including:
 - increased prevention strategies
 - greater treatment adherence
 - retention in care, support
 - improved quality of life.



Innovation and significance

- Contributes to the achievement of NSW Health HIV Strategy targets
- Opportunities to scale up housing support interventions across other jurisdictions
- Expands the evidence base
- Builds and sustains capacity for implementation research.

There continues to be a critical need for dedicated services for PLHIV at risk of or experiencing homelessness across NSW.



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