

Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025

Introduction: Positive Life NSW (Positive Life) is the largest peer-led and run representative organisation of all people living with HIV (PLHIV) in NSW. We are the public face and voice of all PLHIV in NSW, and make a significant contribution to and a positive impact across the spectrum of health, wellbeing, and social issues on behalf of PLHIV. Positive Life collaborates with HIV specialist and mainstream organisations to improve the health and quality of life of PLHIV. We do this through evidence-based health promotion, representation and advocacy, peer navigation, and capacity building.

Vision: For all PLHIV to be empowered agents attaining optimal health, quality of life and free from the impacts of stigma and discrimination and for all people in NSW to be free of HIV infection acquisition.

Mission: Positive Life is the state-wide peer based agency that speaks for and on behalf of PLHIV in NSW. We provide health information, advice and leadership to improve the health and advance the human rights and quality of life of PLHIV in NSW.

Principles:

The work of Positive Life is supported by the following principles:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- The Denver Principles (1983)
- The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986)
- The Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV and AIDS (MIPA) Declaration (2010), which evolved from The Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV and AIDS (GIPA) Declaration (1994)
- The United Nations General Assembly Declaration of Commitment on HIV (2001)
- The NAPWHA Declaration of Rights (1995)
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2009)
- The Shanghai Declaration on promoting health in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2016)
- The United Nations Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Ending Inequalities and Getting on Track to End AIDS by 2030 (2021)

Objectives:

- Empower and inform PLHIV in NSW through the provision of information, referral and advice on all relevant issues associated with HIV and in particular, information concerning treatment of HIV infection and related conditions.
- Advocate on behalf of PLHIV and lobby relevant community groups, governments and other organisations about the needs of PLHIV and areas of concern, ensuring PLHIV have equitable access to the best possible care, support and treatment services in NSW.
- Positively represent PLHIV to eliminate prejudice, stigma and discrimination.
- Work closely with the HIV and the broader infectious diseases health sectors and other relevant organisations in the pursuit of these objectives.

FOCUS OF ACTIVITY FOR 2021 – 2025

Positive Life NSW will continue its work in the four key strategy areas identified in previous Strategic Plans for all PLHIV in NSW. The Body Positive has endorsed these as the key areas of focus for Positive Life. Within these strategy areas particular energies will be directed towards:

- meeting the needs of all PLHIV from under-represented and priority populations, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds,
- ensuring services are available for people in regional, rural, and remote locations,
- improving the quality of life of all PLHIV, and
- to be free from stigma and discrimination.

Strategies:

1. **Health Promotion and Education:** Produce best practice peer-based HIV health promotion initiatives, improving and maintaining PLHIV health literacy and numeracy and increasing the ability and capacity of all PLHIV to manage their HIV and other chronic and complex health conditions while preventing onward HIV transmission and build a stronger community.
2. **Peer Navigation:** Deliver evidence-based peer navigation activities that reflect the principles of empowerment, social justice, and social inclusion, so that all PLHIV are able to maximise their own health and wellbeing, resilience, and quality of life, with the aim of preventing stigma, discrimination, and social isolation.
3. **Representation and Advocacy:** Meaningfully engage and lead the peer-run HIV health policy response in NSW, ensuring all PLHIV are central and participatory in policy design, analysis, and representation.
4. **Capacity Building:** Provide leadership, training, and raising awareness about the lived diversity of all PLHIV in NSW.

1. Health Promotion and Education

Produce best practice peer-based HIV health promotion initiatives, improving and maintaining PLHIV health literacy and numeracy and increasing the ability and capacity of all PLHIV to manage their HIV and other chronic and complex health conditions while preventing onward HIV transmission and build a stronger community.

Number	Activity	Actions and Results
1.1	Produce peer-based health promotion initiatives to increase the capacity of all PLHIV to make informed decisions about their health and prevention benefits of condom use, HIV treatments, and HIV testing, and improve health and reduce rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), delayed diagnosis, and HIV disease progression	Support the role that all PLHIV play in onward HIV and STI transmission prevention and develop targeted peer-led health promotion, community education, and community mobilisation initiatives that inform all PLHIV about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual health benefits and reduced transmission risk provided by cART (combination antiretroviral therapy) and viral suppression, including the concepts of Treatment as Prevention (TasP) also known as Undetectable = Untransmissible (U=U) - the longer term health and prevention benefits of immediate HIV treatment commencement - medication access through community and hospital pharmacies, particularly in regional, rural, and remote areas - medication reviews, new treatments, and polypharmacy - reinforcing harm reduction strategies including vaccinations and diagnoses of other chronic health conditions. Knowing your HIV and other health condition status through regular testing, treatment adherence, and viral load monitoring - reinforcing the health and transmission risks associated with delayed HIV and STI diagnoses
1.2	Continue to raise community awareness about the impacts of stigma and discrimination on PLHIV through the Positive Speakers' Bureau (PSB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop the capacity of the PSB to provide presentations to a wide range of audiences and environments and create a contemporary awareness of the diverse lived experiences of all PLHIV - Support the PSB to educate the community about the positive impacts of cART on health and transmission, the negative impacts of HIV associated stigma and discrimination, and the effectiveness of prevention, testing, and treatment initiatives
1.3	Produce peer-led health promotion initiatives to more effectively address the needs of PLHIV from under-represented populations, including PLHIV from Aboriginal and Torres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce peer-based health promotion that is culturally appropriate, accessible, effectively targeted, and meets the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with and at risk of HIV, PLHIV from CALD backgrounds, and from marginalised populations

	Strait Islander backgrounds and CALD backgrounds, rural and regional NSW, and PLHIV who are trans and gender diverse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce targeted health promotion messages and themes that reflect the shared and differing needs of priority populations including men who have sex with men (MSM), heterosexual people, people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD communities, women, trans and gender diverse people, people in custodial settings, people who inject drugs (PWID), people with disability (PWD), young people, sex workers, PLHIV who are ageing, experiencing co-morbidities, and/or living in rural and regional areas
1.4	Enhance the capacity of PLHIV who are ageing and living with multiple chronic health conditions to improve their health and quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop peer-led health promotion initiatives to enable ageing PLHIV with co- and multi-morbidities to make informed decisions about health management, health care access, and care coordination/integration to improve their physical and mental health and quality of life
1.5	Enhance and maintain a digital communications and social media presence through the provision of health promotion information to all PLHIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create an ongoing dialogue with and for all PLHIV that contributes to levels of community awareness related to living with HIV and the PLHIV lived experience - Investigate new and innovative ways to reach out and connect with all PLHIV, continuously improving the quality and reach of our communications
1.6	Develop, implement, and evaluate health promotion activities that improve health-related and quality of life outcomes for all PLHIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support new peer-led community development activities piloted to address HIV stigma and discrimination and improve health and social outcomes for all PLHIV - Systematically assess stigma and discrimination among PLHIV in NSW through the use of tools such as PozQol quality of life survey - Engage with NSW Ministry of Health to consider and alleviate stigma as an unintended consequence of any communications, health promotion, and campaigns of the Ministry of Health, and aim to reduce the impact of stigma - Support the health outcomes of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Strategic Timing of AntiRetroviral Treatment (START) study, by supporting immediate start to treatment for all newly diagnosed PLHIV
1.7	Improve health promotion and health literacy and numeracy activities, ensuring they are evidence based and align with the needs of all PLHIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide health promotion activities that reflect the diverse information and support needs of all PLHIV and measure these through an evaluation process - Promote the benefits of TasP for all PLHIV as a prevention method alongside others such as condoms, serosorting, strategic positioning, negotiated safety, Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) (including different dosing options, such as daily, on-demand, and seasonal), and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), and its role in improving the health and wellbeing outcomes for all PLHIV

2. Peer Navigation

Deliver evidence-based peer navigation activities that reflect the principles of empowerment, social justice, and social inclusion, so that all PLHIV are able to maximise their own health and wellbeing, resilience, and quality of life, with the aim of eliminating stigma, discrimination, and social isolation.

Number	Activity	Actions and Results
2.1	Provide accessible peer navigation and support activities with PLHIV to promote treatment uptake, adherence and retention in care, and reduce the numbers of people lost to follow-up and care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement innovative and best-practice peer navigation activities that empower and support all PLHIV to successfully manage their health, which have an emphasis on immediate cART initiation, regular testing for STIs/BBVs, and information around the importance of smoking cessation, cancer prevention, exercise, diet and nutrition, reducing harmful substance use (including alcohol), the management of mental health conditions, and chronic health conditions associated with ageing.
2.2	Provide a peer-led navigational support program that responds to the service needs of ageing PLHIV and improves the health, quality of life, and self-agency of ageing PLHIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to implement a service navigation model that addresses the service, information, and navigational needs of ageing PLHIV to improve aged care service access and utilisation. This includes assistance with financial-related matters such as inheritances, navigating Centrelink, end of life planning, etc.
2.3	Develop, implement, and evaluate peer support groups that inform, support, and empower all PLHIV to improve their health and quality of life and prevent the transmission of HIV, other BBVs/STIs, and reduce the impacts of stigma and discrimination	<p>Provide peer support groups that empower all PLHIV to sustain and strengthen physical and mental health, increase social connectedness, and reduce loneliness/social isolation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partner with sector allies to produce workshops to inform and empower people newly diagnosed with HIV - Provide a diverse range of social opportunities for peer connection and information sharing, focused on supporting marginalised individuals and communities of all PLHIV in NSW - Participate in community events and festivals to provide a personal experience in raising the awareness of HIV in the general community and as opportunities to discuss and reduce stigmatising beliefs - Community Outreach to engage, consult, educate, and provide health promotion, social connection and identify emerging PLHIV support and service issues through forums, discussion and focus groups. These will have an emphasis on but not be limited to ensuring access and participation to those living in rural, regional and remote areas of NSW, as well as people in incarceration settings

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suicide Prevention to increase awareness of all PLHIV direct and indirect suicide risk and prevention
2.4	Develop, implement, and evaluate peer-led navigation programs that respond to social determinants of health and improve the health, quality of life, and self-agency of all PLHIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to support the Employment and Vocational Support Project to increase meaningful PLHIV participation in paid and unpaid work and provide vocational training, mentoring, and peer support - Continue to develop the Housing Support Project to provide peer support and navigation services to PLHIV who need assistance to avert homelessness and apply for and achieve stable housing - Continue to develop the Ageing Support Project to provide peer support and navigation services to PLHIV who need support to navigate the aged care, disability and/or healthcare services to facilitate PLHIV access to independent living - Continue the Peer Navigation Project to provide peer support to PLHIV to address their needs and guide, refer, educate, and connect PLHIV to systems of care, ensuring everyone diagnosed with HIV is offered the opportunity to speak to a trained peer living with HIV - Develop and implement a best-practice, co-designed, and culturally focused health, wellbeing, resilience, and capacity building service delivery model for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with or at risk of HIV in NSW - Support all people living with HIV in NSW, including but not limited to young people, heterosexual people, those in incarceration, people living in regional/rural/remote areas, etc.
2.5	Implement and evaluate a peer support model to assist newly diagnosed PLHIV to effectively communicate with sexual contacts and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The peer-led partner notification (contact tracing) interventions will increase HIV testing amongst the sexual and drug using contacts of people newly diagnosed with HIV or an STI and provide information and resources to support partner notification, increase accessibility of culturally-appropriate testing, and reduce the risk of onward transmission of HIV, HCV, and STIs, particularly among people with diverse gender and sexual identities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people from CALD backgrounds - Ensure s100 GPs and other services are aware of the availability of Positive Life's peer-led partner notification support services, and train these services to ensure they are able to support PLHIV in contact tracing - Collaborate with the Australasian Society of HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) to ensure HIV and STI training for practice nurses is relevant and current

2.6	Support opportunities for all PLHIV to engage in meaningful leadership development activities and sustain and enhance involvement by PLHIV in HIV response activities and initiatives	- All PLHIV in NSW are encouraged to explore their potential and are provided with opportunities to develop skills and engage in and contribute to advocacy, representation, research, program development, implementation, evaluation, and governance activities through community consultations and engagement processes
2.7	Ensure that peer support initiatives are evidence based and align with the needs of all PLHIV and reflect the principles of self-empowerment, self-determination, social justice, and meaningful engagement	- Evaluate and improve peer-support programs and activities to reflect effectiveness, relevance, accessibility (for diverse and marginalised populations of PLHIV and regional/rural access), and cultural appropriateness, and identify any areas that need improvements
2.8	Emerging and strategic issues identified in peer support programs and initiatives are documented and incorporated in quality improvement initiatives, and annual program and service planning and development	- Provide consumer consultation and engagement reports that identify issues, and are utilised in annual program review and planning processes to inform alignment of program planning priorities with the needs of PLHIV

3. Representation and Advocacy

Meaningfully engage and lead the peer-run HIV health policy response in NSW, ensuring all PLHIV are central and participatory in policy design, analysis, and representation.

Number	Activity	Actions and Results
3.1	Continue to be the leading representative voice for all PLHIV in NSW. Contribute to and provide leadership and advice on the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies, services, and initiatives that address the health, wellbeing and social needs of all PLHIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiate strategic policy advice and responses aimed at improving the health, quality of life, and service equity of all PLHIV and reducing stigma and discrimination - Contribute to submissions and responses by partners that inform the health and quality of life needs of all PLHIV - Communicate with PLHIV, agency partners, and service providers on advice, representation, and advocacy outcomes - Contribute to the work of the PozAction Operational Leadership Group, aimed at improving the health and quality of life of Australian PLHIV - Advocate on behalf of PLHIV for greater investment and equitable policies in the key areas of: housing and homelessness; financial disadvantage; health and mental health care access, availability, and wait times; and systems of aged care support

3.2	Provide advocacy, analysis, advice, and representative views developed through published and agency driven research, PLHIV engagement and consultation, and from HIV service providers/partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct consumer and community-centred research with PLHIV and identify emerging needs and priority issues for action - Use various media to conduct engagement and consultations with PLHIV and HIV services partners that identify and respond to emerging issues - Provide analysis of research findings and service delivery data and produce reports and submissions that identify and responds to emerging issues
3.3	Represent all PLHIV on relevant government, non-government, and private committees and establish new partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actively participate in and contribute to government, non-government, and privately convened committees to improve the health and quality of life of all PLHIV
3.4	Monitor advice, advocacy, and representation activities to ensure the agency improves the effectiveness and efficiency of activities and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analyse and review the efficiency and effectiveness of advice and advocacy activities through an evaluation process

4. Capacity Building

Provide leadership, training, and raising awareness about the lived diversity of all PLHIV in NSW.

Number	Activity	Actions and Results
4.1	Develop the capacity of speakers living with HIV (positive speakers) through the provision of media and public speaking training, so speakers can confidently and competently deliver presentations that engage and raise awareness about the contemporary lived experience of PLHIV, and highlight the harmful impacts of stigma and discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to conduct a PSB training and support program for speakers living with HIV to improve their skills, update their knowledge on HIV-related issues, and allow them to adapt their content to the needs of their audience - Enable the PSB to actively engage and create networks with the wider community to facilitate opportunities for positive speakers to reach broader audiences and educate the general community about the contemporary lived experience of PLHIV, and the impact of cART and TasP on health outcomes and transmission risk
4.2	Develop the competencies of staff to increase their capacity to deliver activities and programs that meet the health and support needs of all PLHIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a range of training opportunities to enhance staff knowledge and skill sets and strengthen their capabilities to meet the objectives of the agency and needs of all PLHIV

4.3	Maintain Board governance competence so the agency can meet its compliance requirements, and provide strategic stewardship on behalf of all PLHIV throughout NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct annual induction training for the Board, covering governance practice, Directors' responsibilities, policy development, and legal and financial compliance obligations - Conduct an annual Board and Staff Planning Day to generate synergy and cohesion across the agency - Conduct yearly Board performance evaluation to assess its competency and skills development supplementation
4.4	Develop and maintain the capacity of volunteers to have meaningful and satisfying involvement in the agency's initiatives and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a volunteer training framework that provides varied opportunities to existing and new volunteers around participation, and increases the individual capacity of volunteers to meaningfully engage with the agency
4.5	Successfully achieve a process of continuous quality improvement and accreditation	<p>Continue to promote continuous quality improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain QIC Accreditation status to support continuous quality improvement in service delivery and all aspects of organisational functions - Audit Financial Statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Submit audited Annual Financial Statements to the NSW Department of Fair Trading - Provide declarations where appropriate against the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 - Continue to provide a supportive, consistent, and objective accreditation process and strive to excel in all areas of compliance standards
4.6	Partner with Local Health Districts (LHDs), professional medical organisations, and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to promote policies and deliver education and services that combat and reduce stigma and discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to further partnerships with the Ministry of Health, LHDs HIV and Related Programs Units, Primary Health Networks (PHNs), the NSW Sexually Transmitted Infections Programs Unit (STIPU), the National Association of People Living with HIV Australia (NAPWHA), the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS), ACON, Pozhet, the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF), Hepatitis NSW, the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre (HALC), ASHM, NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA), the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP), Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National), and the Kirby Institute to actively engage and collaborate on work that aims to deliver education that reduces stigma and discrimination for all people accessing health services with HIV or at risk of HIV, connecting people to high-quality prevention, testing and treatment - Continue to further partnerships with the abovementioned agencies to actively engage and collaborate on work that aims to identify systemised stigma and reduce it, with a focus on person-centred care. This could include processes, guidelines,

		procedures, environments and any other system or interaction that is stigmatising and/or discriminatory
4.7	Develop the capacity of health care providers and other relevant services to provide information, support, and referral to testing, treatment, care, and peer support services that ensure all PLHIV are followed up and effectively retained in care so their health and support needs are effectively met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to partner with LHDs, the Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI), ASHM, STIPU, the NSW Health HIV Support Program (HSP), NSW Sexual Health Infolink (SHIL), Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS), and MHAHS to identify and resolve barriers to engagement and retention in care, and enable all PLHIV to access appropriate high quality and timely specialist and mainstream health and support services, as well as normalising HIV testing (in accordance with the National Testing Guidelines) and PrEP prescribing in a range of settings as part of routine care in a culturally appropriate way
4.8	Identify ways to improve the relationships between public health policy, criminal sanctions and anti-discrimination laws to achieve an environment that supports safe practices, provides safeguards against discrimination, and protects public health and the rights of all PLHIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to engage and partner with key stakeholders (including the Ministry of Health, the Attorney General NSW, the Health Care Complaints Commission, MHAHS, HALC, NAPWHA, AFAO, and ACON) to have criminal law, anti-discrimination, and public health legislation and policy amended or repealed, so the negative impacts of stigma, discrimination, and criminalisation for PLHIV are addressed or reduced
4.9	Continue to analyse and monitor the effectiveness of activities of Positive Life including capacity building activities and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that capacity building activities continue to meet the ongoing and emerging health and support needs of PLHIV through an evaluation process
4.10	Develop and implement a plan to ensure financial sustainability of the agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and explore additional funding sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - within the housing and aged care sectors; - from Commonwealth sources; - partnering with other state-based;organisations for access to funding at a national level; - through NDIS, especially with respect to HIV-associated neurocognitive disorders (HAND) and Employment and Vocational Support Program programs; and - related to complex care/HPV-related cancers. - Use deidentified data from Socialsuite to demonstrate the impact and outcomes of Positive Life services. - Develop and cultivate relationships with relevant agencies to enhance the success of funding opportunities.

Glossary / Acronyms

ACCHS	Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services
ACI	Agency for Clinical Innovation
ACON	LGBTQ health organisation
AFAO	Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations
ASHM	Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine
BBVs	Blood borne viruses
BGF	Bobby Goldsmith Foundation
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
cART	Combination antiretroviral therapy
HALC	HIV/AIDS Legal Centre
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HCV	Hepatitis C Virus
LHD	Local Health District
MHAHS	Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service
MSM	Men who have sex with men
NAPWHA	National Association of People with HIV Australia
NGO	Non-government organisation
NUAA	NSW Users and AIDS Association
PEP	Post-Exposure Prophylaxis
PHN	Primary Health Network
PLHIV	People living with HIV
Pozhet	Heterosexual HIV Service
PrEP	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis
PSB	Positive Speakers Bureau
PWID	People who inject drugs
PWD	People with disability
QIC	Accreditation using the QIC Health and Community Services Standards
Socialsuite	Data analysis software
SHIL	Sexual Health Infolink
START	Immediate Start to Treatment study
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
STIPU	NSW Sexually Transmitted Infections Programs Unit
SWOP	Sex Workers Outreach Project
TasP	Treatment as Prevention
TIS National	Translating and Interpreting Service
U = U	Undetectable equals Untransmissible