

**Positive Life NSW**

# Annual Report 2025



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*"I would like to take a moment to acknowledge and sincerely thank Positive Life's Peer Navigators for the support they have given me over the past couple of months. Their patience, kindness, and willingness to listen have made a real difference during a very difficult time for me. They have gone above and beyond in their roles as peer support workers."*

– Community Member





# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which Positive Life NSW operates from, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, and the traditional owners of all of the lands across NSW, and we pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

We acknowledge the ongoing connection that Aboriginal people have to land, water, culture and heritage, and recognise Aboriginal people as the original custodians of this land.

We recognise and acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded, and always was, and always will be Aboriginal Land.

*Artwork by Steven Morgan, illustrating a Gathering Circle with pathways extending outward to represent the pursuit of a brighter future for those living with HIV.*

# Who We Are

Positive Life NSW (Positive Life) is the peer-led and run representative community organisation of all people living with and affected by HIV in NSW.

- We have over 37 years of community experience advocating for all people living with HIV with the aim of eliminating stigma and discrimination, and alleviating social isolation.
- We empower and support all people living with HIV to achieve optimal quality of life and health and wellbeing outcomes through the provision of health promotion information, targeted referrals, and policy advice through a range of peer support and community engagement activities.
- We represent and advocate on behalf of all people living with HIV, and collaborate with a range of stakeholders including government, clinicians, researchers and other sector partners on issues that impact all people living with HIV in NSW.
- We provide peer navigation (by and for people living with HIV), health and wellbeing, testing, prevention and treatment information, social inclusion groups and activities, referrals, and counselling services.
- Our programs include ageing, employment and vocational support, partner notification assistance, digital capacity building, and the Positive Speakers Bureau, sharing diverse lived experiences of HIV with schools, tertiary institutions, organisations and health sector partners.

Our membership is inclusive of all people living with or affected by HIV in NSW, including gay and bisexual men, heterosexual people, women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, trans and gender diverse people, people from multicultural communities, older people, people who use drugs, migrants and refugees, and our family, friends and partners.



## Our Values



### **Respect**

We value and celebrate difference in others  
We treat each person with dignity, care and consideration  
We strive to understand and appreciate difference in others



### **Integrity**

We are transparent and accountable in all our operations and actions  
We act from a just and ethical base and take responsibility for our actions  
We strive to be authentic and approachable in the way we work



### **Excellence**

We are committed to professionalism and high standards in all we do  
We value ongoing learning and development  
We create an environment where people can optimise their potential



### **Equity & Fairness**

We ensure equity of access and fair treatment of all without prejudice or discrimination  
We are impartial and unbiased in provision of support and care  
We value the lived experience of our community









*"I was recently diagnosed, and I thought it was the worst thing that ever happened to me, and I would lose everything. Now, I know it is okay, I feel so much better."*

– Community Member



# Reports

## From the President

As I reflect on the past year, it has been a time in which we have delivered a significant amount of work across a number of important issues, while promoting a positive image of people living with and affected by HIV and ensuring their optimum well-being, care and support.

A central focus of the past financial year has been our increased engagement and reach, and successful expansion of our peer navigation programs into a broader context - including regional engagement through our online programs and regional visits, as well as our work with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Another significant area of work has been our Positive Pathways initiative. This continues our commitment to supporting young people who acquired HIV vertically by addressing a clearly identified and significant gap in transitional services for young people moving from pediatric to adult care. The transition can be difficult to navigate, and gaps in transitional support during this period can significantly impact their quality of life.

Positive Transitions helps address this by providing young people with access to peer support networks, practical activities, and

interactive 'talking groups', where they can openly and confidently share their experiences and thoughts while also developing tangible and practical self-advocacy skills.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board for their ongoing support, and for stepping up over the last year to further support the events and activities that Positive Life NSW delivers for our communities.

I also acknowledge that we are only able to remain focused and responsive to the emerging needs of all PLHIV in NSW because of the contributions from our members, our collaboration with agency partners and sector allies, and the critical funding support we receive from NSW Health, ViiV Healthcare, Gilead Sciences, and the MAC AIDS Fund.

I cannot thank you enough. You are, and always will be, the most significant part of our existence and a major contributor to our success.

**Stephen Lunny**  
**President**





## From the Treasurer

I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report for Positive Life NSW Incorporated for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

### Financial Performance

Positive Life NSW delivered a strong financial result in 2024–25, achieving a net surplus of **\$66,571**, a significant improvement on the prior year's surplus of \$14,785. This outcome reflects prudent financial management, disciplined budgeting, and the effective use of grant funding to support service delivery.

Total income for the year was **\$1,466,209** (2024: \$1,322,126), driven by:

- Grant income of \$1,385,146, up from \$1,246,219 in 2024, largely due to continued support from NSW Health and additional project-based grants
- Interest income of \$26,855, increasing from \$18,376 in 2024 due to improved cash management
- Other revenue of \$54,208, remaining broadly in line with the prior year's \$57,531

Total expenses were \$1,399,638 (2024: \$1,307,341), reflecting investment in programs, staffing, and organisational capability:

- Employee expenses increased to \$839,005 (2024: \$800,832), consistent with a growing workforce supporting expanded service delivery
- Core activity expenses grew to \$474,156 (2024: \$420,186) in line with increased program activity
- Depreciation decreased slightly to \$26,897 (2024: \$31,980), following the normal asset life cycle

### Financial Position

At 30 June 2025, Positive Life NSW held net assets of \$258,013, up from \$191,442 in 2024.

Key balances include:

- Cash and cash equivalents of \$177,100 (2024: \$81,950), reflecting strong liquidity
- Term deposits of \$243,198, providing financial stability
- Total liabilities of \$236,512, significantly reduced from \$352,816 in 2024, primarily due to a reduction in grant funding received in advance

Although total assets decreased from \$544,258 to \$494,525, this was expected given the drawdown of grant liabilities as program activity increased.



### Key Considerations

- The organisation remains primarily funded by NSW Health, and maintaining this partnership remains essential
- A portion of revenue continues to be tied to specific funded programs, reinforcing the need for continued grant diversification
- Strong liquidity, sound reserves, and responsible budgeting position Positive Life NSW well to meet future obligations
- Continued support from partners including Viiv Healthcare, Gilead Sciences, MAC AIDS Fund, and the Good Things Foundation.

### Audit

The financial statements were independently audited by SDJA. The auditor issued an unqualified opinion, confirming:

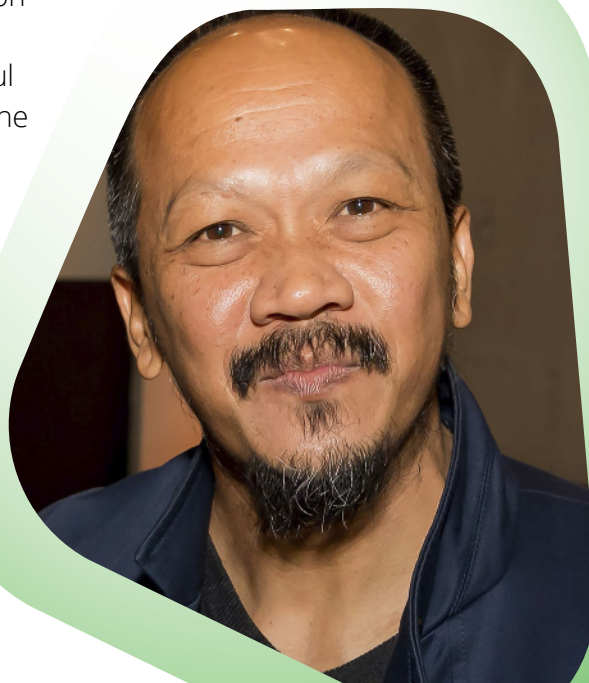
- The financial report gives a true and fair view of the Association's position
- Compliance with Australian Accounting Standards and relevant regulatory requirements
- No breaches of auditor independence or professional conduct

Positive Life NSW remains in a robust financial position, supported by strong operational performance, careful resource management, and committed funding partners. I extend my sincere thanks to our CEO, staff, Board, partners, and supporters for their dedication and stewardship throughout the year. Together, we continue to deliver meaningful impact for our community while ensuring the organisation's financial sustainability.

**Chompol Chaimongkol**  
**Treasurer**

*"I had the pleasure of listening to one of your team members speaking yesterday at the CALD SHAG symposium and I wanted to say that their story and session were just incredible. The call to action - encouraging LGBTQ community to reach beyond our immediate community to connect and support people with HIV in the wider community - was really impactful and incredibly well received."*

– Sector Partner





## From the CEO

It is my pleasure to present the 2024/25 Annual Report for Positive Life NSW. Over the past year, we have continued to create meaningful impact around health and wellbeing outcomes and quality of life for all people living with HIV in NSW, through the expansion of our Peer Navigation programs, provision of health and wellbeing, testing, prevention and treatment information, social inclusion programs, counselling services, representation, advocacy and communication activities. This year was not without challenges, including funding pressures, cost-of-living and housing issues impacting many in our community, and sector changes. I am proud of the resilience, passion and commitment of our staff, Board, volunteers, partners and supporters.

### Our Impact at a Glance

#### In-clinic Peer Navigation services in Greater Western Sydney

We saw increased enrolments across the Peer Navigation Program, including many people engaging with an HIV community organisation for the first time. Over 80% of our peer navigation work supported people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Our in-clinic Peer Navigation services at Western Sydney Sexual Health Clinic, Liverpool Sexual Health Clinic and the Immunology Department at Liverpool Hospital have continued to strengthen. The Program was recognised at the NSW PRISM Partnership Scientific Meeting for increasing clinician awareness of our services and reducing clinic workloads or creating capacity to see more patients. Clinicians report that having Peer Navigators on site improves collaboration, breaks down engagement barriers and ensures prompt referrals.

Feedback from consumers and clinicians has been exceptional, and the professionalism of our staff continues to be commended. The Program is currently being evaluated as part of

the NSW PRISM Research Partnership. Flexible access, including evening clinics and outreach appointments, ensures we can meet people where and when it suits them. We aim to expand in-clinic peer navigation to additional sexual health clinics in the coming year,

#### Successful Outcome for a Community Targeted Call for Research (TCR)

Positive Life NSW has long advocated for greater awareness and research around HPV-related anal cancer for people living with HIV. In 2024, we coordinated a consortium submission to the NHMRC Community TCR on anal cancer. I am pleased to announce the submission was successful, ensuring anal cancer is now prioritised on the research and implementation agenda. Only one topic is funded each year, making this an exceptional achievement.

The TCR is valued at \$5 million over five years, and several grant applications are now in development. Positive Life NSW was also invited to join the Australasian Society of HIV and Hepatitis Medicine's (ASHM) Anal Cancer Screening Guidelines writing group.

#### HIV Testing and Prevention Strategic Consultation

Despite NSW's global leadership in reducing HIV transmission, declines have not been shared equally across all population groups. With support from NSW Health, we facilitated the Positive Impact: Heterosexual HIV Prevention Workshop to address barriers faced by heterosexual people living with HIV, particularly those from CALD backgrounds. This groundbreaking consultation is the first of its kind in Australia and has generated insights and initiatives to inform future targeted health promotion and ensure no community is left behind.

#### Impact metrics

- 3,397 occasions of service offered
- 519 unique community members living with HIV who received peer support
- 400 sexual health in-clinic Peer Navigation Programs services delivered

- 1,744 community members attending social inclusion events
- 228 stakeholder meetings attended
- 155 advisory groups and committee meetings participated in

These outcomes reflect not only our programs but also our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and community engagement.

### Strategic Priorities & Progress

Guided by our 2021–2025 Strategic Plan, and having already discussed Peer Navigation as one of our four strategic areas, we have made strong progress across all four focus areas:

#### 1. Health Promotion and Education

Over the course of the year, we developed or updated five accessible peer-based health promotion resources to meet the shared and differing needs of people living with HIV from diverse backgrounds and marginalised populations. These included a resource on HIV-Associated Neurocognitive Disorder (HAND); new factsheets on HIV and medicinal cannabis, and HPV and head and neck cancers; and updated HPV & Anal Cancer and HIV & Your Cervix materials that promoted person-centred care and optimal health and wellbeing outcomes.

We continued partnering with HIV sector organisations to design workshops that build peer-based health promotion initiatives, including collaborations with ACON on the aSTARTx weekend workshops, the one-day aSTARTx THRIVE workshop, and Treatments By the Sea in northern NSW. We also partnered with Living Positive Victoria to offer a HIV Disclosure workshop in Sydney facilitated by Peer Navigators from both organisations.

In addition, we facilitated two targeted peer-led workshops, More Than a Patient and Torque, designed specifically for heterosexual and bisexual people living with HIV. More Than a Patient was a co-designed one-day pilot workshop for people from CALD backgrounds to explore and practice self-advocacy and confidently navigate the healthcare system. The second iteration of the Torque workshop

supported both newly diagnosed individuals and those living long-term with HIV, with a focus on enhancing knowledge around HIV, medications and health and wellbeing initiatives.

Throughout the year, our Positive Speakers Coordinator, in collaboration with one of our long-term speakers, continued to develop a framework and revised Positive Speakers Bureau (PSB) training and support program to enhance speaker skills, update HIV-related knowledge, and support speakers to adapt their content to audience needs. As part of this framework, a new promotional strategy and plan has been created, prioritising a redesign of the PSB's promotional materials and resources in the coming year.

#### 2. Representation and Advocacy

In 2024-25 we contributed to submissions and responses by partners that identified and responded to the emerging issues for all people living with HIV. Our joint work with partners such as Health Consumers NSW and the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre included feedback on the NHMRC's draft Statement on Consumer and Community Involvement in Health and Medical Research; representation at the Inquiry into the impact of the regulatory framework for cannabis in New South Wales; and an invitation to the NSW Law Reform Commission's review of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) (ADA) consultation roundtable.

Positive Life represented all people living with HIV on over 80 government, non-government, health and research committees and advisory groups, and participated in 243 meetings throughout the year.

#### 3. Capacity Building

Positive Life NSW successfully completed its regular assessment cycle and accreditation process this year, meeting all assessed compliance standards and receiving Certification to the National Standards for Disability Services. This achievement reflects our commitment to continuous quality improvement across our organisational systems, processes, and practices that support effective service provision and delivery.



In 2024–25, we produced a volunteer training framework that offers varied opportunities for new and existing volunteers, strengthening individual capacity for meaningful engagement with Positive Life. We also held our annual Board and Staff Planning Day, bringing governance and operational teams together to enhance cohesion, reaffirm our strategic direction, and collaboratively set priorities for the year ahead.

### **Challenges & Opportunities**

Many of the challenges faced by Positive Life NSW and our community of people living with HIV in NSW can be understood through the lens of equity, lived experience, and the growing demand for frontline peer navigation resources. Equity issues are often complex and multi-layered, intersecting with broader social determinants of health such as culture, race, gender, and sexuality, and creating barriers to accessing healthcare. Stigma and discrimination remain widespread, with many community members experiencing judgement, social isolation, and exclusion from families, social networks, and healthcare workers.

The changing demographics of people living with HIV in NSW require increasingly nuanced and culturally appropriate responses. Systemic barriers continue to affect access to healthcare and other services, particularly for those for whom English is a second language, as immigration and language issues complicate health navigation.

NSW is also experiencing a significant housing and homelessness crisis due to a lack of affordable and social housing. Many people living with HIV are affected by cost-of-living pressures, couch surfing, homelessness, or long waitlists for social or community housing, which negatively impact mental health outcomes. Broader gaps exist in access to affordable, non-stigmatising dental care and s100 providers in outer metropolitan, rural, and remote regions.

We operate in an increasingly competitive funding environment, with growing demands and competing priorities for resources, funding,

and philanthropic support. Yet, Positive Life NSW remains committed to financial sustainability and responsible stewardship. One of our greatest achievements this year has been the increasing diversity of the communities we represent, now reflected in our Board and staffing complement, providing opportunities to strengthen future initiatives, including targeted HIV testing and prevention strategies for marginalised communities.

There is high demand for our services, particularly peer navigation, with increasing enrolments in our ageing and counselling programs. The evolving healthcare landscape, economic pressures, and shifting social dynamics present challenges that require innovation, adaptability, and resilience. Within these challenges lie opportunities to grow, strengthen collaboration, and develop creative approaches to better serve people living with HIV.

Heading into 2025–26, our strategies will focus on expanding community engagement, representation, systemic advocacy, collaboration, and consolidation to ensure ongoing effectiveness, success, and sustainability, while building organisational capacity to support optimal health, wellbeing, and quality of life for our community.

### **Acknowledgements**

Our work is made possible by the collective dedication, passion, and commitment of the many people and our partners who support us. I would like to express my sincere appreciation and acknowledge:

Our staff, whose professionalism, creativity, and unwavering commitment drive the quality and integrity of everything we do. Their hard work, perseverance, and adaptability ensure that our programs continue to grow and meet the evolving needs of our community.

Our Board, for their guidance, governance, and strategic leadership. Their vision and stewardship provides the foundation that enables us to operate with assurance and purpose.

Our volunteers, who generously give their time, skills, and energy. Their enthusiasm

and dedication enrich our programs, extend our reach, and bring connection to those we support.

Our partners and funders - NSW Health, ViiV Healthcare, Gilead Sciences, the MAC AIDS Fund, Good Things Foundation and the City of Sydney whose collaboration make our programs possible. Their ongoing support strengthens capacity, and enables us to deliver meaningful programs and outcomes for our community.

Our community, whose voices sit at the heart of our work and with whom we engage in ongoing consultation to ensure their perspectives are meaningfully represented.

Thank you for all that you do. Together, we are building a stronger and more inclusive response. I look forward to the year ahead and the opportunities it brings.

**Jane Costello**  
**CEO**







*"I went to 1-2 funerals each week for a while back then. I was almost numb. Now I don't have to grieve alone, and you have helped me to remember and honour my friends."*

– Community Member Accessing Counselling Program

# Our Year in Numbers



**400**

Sexual Health In-Clinic Peer Navigation Programs services delivered



**7**

Number of staff



**900+**

Total number of counselling sessions



**85**

Social inclusion events



**228**

Stakeholder meetings attended



**1,744**

Total number of community members who attended the social inclusion events



**20**

Total number of health promotion workshops





**3,397**

Occasions of service  
were offered during this  
financial year



**155**

Advisory groups and  
committee meetings  
participated in



**519**

Unique community members living  
with HIV who received support  
from our Peer Navigators



**28**

Training and  
information  
sessions held



**1300**

Number of show  
bags handed out at  
community events



**5**

Major HIV community  
commemoration and awareness  
events including, Mardi Gras Fair Day,  
Mardi Gras Parade, National Day of  
Women Living with HIV, Candlelight  
Memorial, World AIDS Day

# Year in Review

## 2024 NSW HIV Data

235 new HIV diagnoses in 2024 of which:



**157**

were men who have sex with men (MSM)



**6**

identified as Transgender



**5**

were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



**31.9%**

GP not s100



**57**

were heterosexual people  
27 were male  
30 were female



**85**

were between the ages of 40 to 59



**136**

under 40 years of age



**34.5%**

Never tested before





In 2024 the number of new diagnoses of HIV and the characteristics of those diagnosed in NSW were similar to 2023. Most new diagnoses still report MSM exposure (69%), while 25% report heterosexual exposure, and 3% report injecting drug use (IDU) exposure. Prevention measures such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), have been effective in reducing recently acquired cases of HIV.

Earlier detection of HIV through access to testing, and reducing the time from diagnosis to initiation of HIV treatment results in improved health outcomes for all people living with HIV. In 2024, overall, the number of HIV tests decreased by 1% from 2023.

In 2024 there was an increase in the proportion of Australian-born people who received an early diagnosis of HIV compared to 2023, but there was no change for those people born overseas. The median time from diagnosis to initiation of HIV treatment in 2023/24 was between 12 and 13 days. This represents a **72% decrease** over the past ten years.

The ongoing negative impacts of HIV-related stigma and discrimination however still remain, and perpetuate inequity in our diverse communities of people living with HIV. While data periodically collected by The Stigma Indicators Monitoring Project indicates that people living with HIV are reporting less stigma or discrimination compared to 2018, **31% still report experiencing any discrimination**. The proportion reporting negative treatment by healthcare workers decreased only slightly from 27.9% to 26.1% between 2018 and 2022.

Continued efforts are essential to address stigma and discrimination, and Positive Life NSW remains committed to advocating for safe, respectful, and inclusive healthcare for all people living with HIV.

[Credit: NSW HIV Strategy 2021 – 2025 Annual Data Report 2024](#)

# Our Impact

## Peer Navigation Programs

**Peer Navigators** draw on their lived experience of HIV to deliver expert, professional support grounded in the core principles of peer-based service delivery. As trained, professional peer workers, they collaborate with community members to build capacity, strengthen personal agency, and provide compassionate, trauma-informed, and person-centred care.

Peer Navigators assist people living with HIV to navigate, link, and advocate for access to health and social services that may initially feel complex or overwhelming, while offering an immediate and authentic connection to someone who understands the realities of living with HIV. They model and facilitate practical responses to diagnosis, treatment, and ongoing care, and support individuals through partner notification by offering guidance on who to tell, when, and how, ensuring this sensitive process is approached safely and respectfully.

In the past financial year, our Peer Navigators have supported **519 individual community members** with evidence-based information that has enabled them to make informed decisions about their health, and be active participants in managing their ongoing healthcare.

## Ageing Support

The Positive NSW Ageing Support Program provides one-on-one support to people living with HIV aged 45 and over – whether in metropolitan, rural, or regional NSW, to navigate the labyrinth of aged care, disability, and healthcare systems. We work with each person to identify pathways and connect them to services that fit their life, needs, and health goals.

We are seeing growing numbers of community members with multiple long-term health conditions enrolling in the program, many of whom are not eligible for aged care services but still require tailored support packages to manage their health and wellbeing.

One of the highlights of the Ageing Support Program this year, was the annual commemoration of HIV Long Term Survivors Day. This year we showed a film screening of *Rampant: How a City Stopped a Plague*, which documents the pragmatic and highly successful Australian public health approach to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, particularly in Sydney. The film highlights the collaboration between activists, politicians, clinicians and community members, and we were honoured to have three of the people who featured in the film – Basil Donovan, Jullie Bates and Stephen Allkins, join us for a panel discussion afterward.





## Counselling

Our counselling service continued to provide flexible, empathetic, peer-based and person-centred support to people living with HIV throughout the year. We delivered over 900 hours of counselling, allowing community members to engage at their own pace and for as long as they need, with no limits or time pressure. This approach recognises that healing, adjustment, and wellbeing are not linear, and that people should be able to access support until they feel ready to safely disengage.

The Positive Life NSW Counselling Program supported individuals experiencing a wide range of concerns – including mental health, adjustment to diagnosis, relationships, stigma, migration stress, and the impacts of living long-term with HIV – while ensuring confidentiality, respect, and cultural safety. Our professionally accredited counsellors who are peers either living with or directly affected by HIV, worked collaboratively with community members, empowering them to build resilience, strengthen support networks, and make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

## Digital Mentors

The Positive Life NSW Digital Mentors program is a peer-led program that offers support to all people living with HIV across the NSW metropolitan and regional areas to build the digital skills, digital literacy and confidence using computers, mobile devices and the internet (digital technology) in a supportive, safe and friendly space. Digital Mentors are people living with HIV

who support others living with HIV to use digital technology through their first steps using computers, mobile devices and the internet.

In 2024/25, the Digital Mentors program continued to grow as a trusted, peer-led space supporting community members to build confidence with technology. This year we delivered a full calendar of interactive sessions, covering practical skills such as cloud storage, safe online shopping, subscriptions and budgeting, device setup, and navigating everyday digital tools. Participant attendance remained strong, with 91 total attendances, with many people returning month after month and reporting increased independence in managing their digital lives. Our mentors played a key role in creating a welcoming, supportive environment where people felt comfortable asking questions, trying new skills, and staying connected. The success of the last year reflects the program's ongoing relevance and the strong community relationships that continue to shape it.

## Employment and Vocational Support

The Positive Life NSW Employment and Vocational support program offers practical support and advice to all people living with HIV across the NSW metropolitan and regional areas to explore your study, training, paid (casual, part-time or full-time) or voluntary work options.

In 2024, the Employment and Vocational Support program saw a significant increase in community members seeking assistance, driven by rising cost-of-living pressures, newly arrived migrants navigating unfamiliar systems, and people needing support to enter or re-enter the workforce. We provided personalised help with job readiness, including CV development, interview preparation, navigating Australian workplace expectations, and using AI tools safely and effectively for job applications.

## Capacity Building and Health Promotion

Our capacity building and health promotion initiatives support people living with HIV across diverse communities.

In the past financial year in partnership with ACON, we facilitated two one-day a[STARTx] workshops for newly diagnosed gay and bisexual men living with HIV the first of which – HIV and You expanded on a range of topics identified from a previous workshop looking at healthy lifestyles, working with your doctor, travel and medications, drug use, private health insurance, and HIV and the workplace, drug use and partying. The second held later in the year focused on HIV treatments optimising life and vaccine and cure initiatives.

We also held another successful annual Torque workshop for heterosexual and bisexual people who had been diagnosed with HIV within the last five years which offered practical information, support and knowledge about managing a HIV diagnosis, HIV medications, relationships, disclosure and making informed decisions.

Additionally we delivered our groundbreaking Positive Impact workshop which utilised the knowledge and lived experience of heterosexually and bisexually identifying people living with HIV which aimed to inform and guide the development of HIV prevention strategies and interventions to reduce the incidence of new HIV notifications among heterosexual and bisexual populations in NSW; increase awareness and knowledge of HIV transmission, HIV testing uptake, prevention strategies, and sexual health among these communities; empower individuals to make informed decisions about their sexual health and sexual behaviour strategies; and reduce stigma and discrimination surrounding HIV within heterosexual and bisexual communities. This capitalised on recent synergies existent through our in-clinic peer navigation work in Greater Western Sydney, and successful heterosexual workshops held in the previous three years.

## In-Clinic Peer Navigation

Positive Life NSW's Peer Navigators have continued their in-clinic work at three sexual health clinics in Greater Western Sydney – Western Sydney Sexual Health Clinic in Parramatta, Liverpool Sexual Health Clinic and Liverpool Hospital Immunology Department.

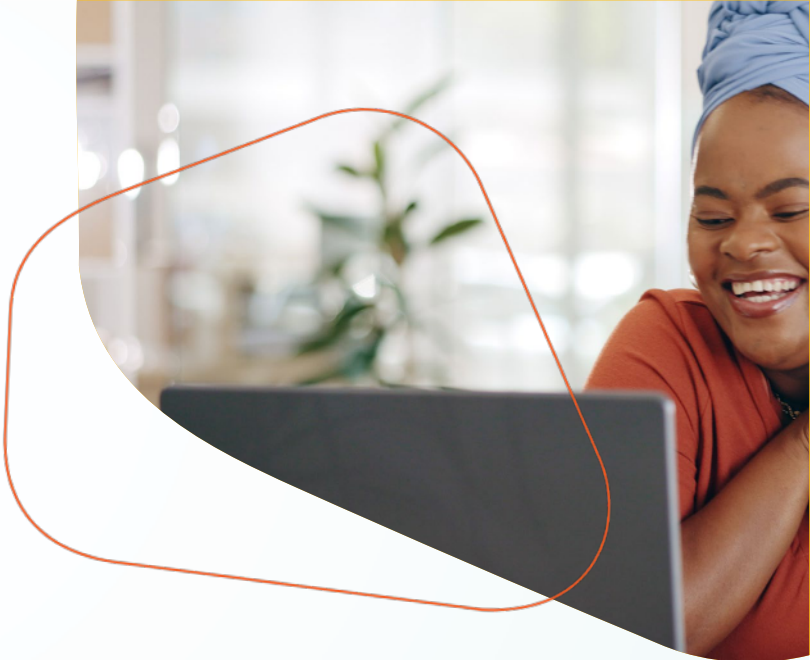
Our in-clinic Peer Navigation Program works collaboratively with the staff at the clinics to increase health literacy, improve health outcomes and the quality of life of all people living with HIV (PLHIV) by strengthening an individual's capacity to self-manage their HIV and their engagement in health services.

In 2024-25, we have worked with 56 individuals who have been referred to us from the in-clinic programs across the three sites in Greater Western Sydney, and our Peer Navigators have provided over 400 occasions of service to community members in-clinic, with an engagement rate of over 80% across all three clinic sites.

## Women and HIV

The Positive Life NSW Women's Support Program provides women living with HIV with tailored peer support delivered by other women with lived experience, in a safe, welcoming, and judgement-free environment. Throughout the year, the program offered opportunities for connection, shared learning, and mutual support – recognising the unique experiences, strengths, and challenges of women living with HIV.

We continued to collaborate closely with HIV service providers, clinicians, and community partners to ensure that women in NSW receive high-quality, gender-responsive care and







*"I just wanted to acknowledge the incredible support you've provided to [Name] and her family this week. We are truly fortunate to have organisations like yours, and people like you, who go above and beyond to help others."*

– HIV Specialist Clinician

support. Our work prioritises women's voices, promotes empowerment and wellbeing, and strengthens pathways to services that meet their health, social, cultural, and family needs.

### Regional and Rural Outreach

In 2024-25 we travelled to a number of regional areas across NSW to offer outreach sessions, provide peer navigation and referral pathway options and to listen to the experiences of people living with HIV in these communities. We visited Batemans Bay, Wagga Wagga and Albury and this was carried out in partnership with Southern NSW, Murrumbidgee and Northern NSW Local Health District HARP units, sexual health services, and state-wide services.

### Community Development

In The Know is Positive Life's HIV Treatments and Research evening event for all people living with HIV, where we bring together specialist presenters to provide our community with the latest developments in treatment and research updates.

Following on from our NHMRC research submission on anal cancer, we invited a leading clinician and researcher in the field to present on the latest anal cancer research findings, updates on screening guidelines and treatment options, and past and proposed Australian research studies.

The second In The Know event for the year focused on the impact of gut health on ageing and wellbeing for all people living with HIV.

### Community Consultation and Engagement Forums (CCEF)

Positive Life NSW holds regular Community Consultation and Engagement forums to facilitate engagement, collaboration and coordination with our community, government and our sector partners to identify HIV-related emerging strategic priorities of importance to all people living with HIV. These forums also serve as a way of providing advice to the organisation around improving our engagement, communications, activities and initiatives and ensuring that the contributions of all people living with HIV are central to the NSW HIV response.

In 2024-25 we consulted with our community around the new electronic Single Digital Patient Record (SDPR) that NSW Health is introducing to provide a real-time, holistic and integrated view of the care a patient receives across the NSW Health system. Because this new system will impact a wide range of people who access NSW public health services, we created a collaborative partnership with a diverse group of sector partners and stakeholders including ACON Health, the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF), the NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA), Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP), Hepatitis NSW, Health Consumers NSW and BEING- Mental Health Consumers. The forum created an opportunity for the audience to provide feedback and ask questions around the implementation of the SDPR, but also for NSW Health to listen to and understand the perspectives of a wide range of communities and health consumers.

# Our Impact

## Social Inclusion Programs

We strengthen social connection, reduce isolation, and support the mental wellbeing of people living with HIV through a range of peer-led social inclusion programs. These initiatives actively bring community members together, create opportunities for meaningful connection, and provide safe spaces for shared learning and support across diverse identities and life experiences.

In the financial year 2024-25 we did this through our following programs:

### **[+Connect] and [+Connect] OutWest**

We delivered 10 social inclusion events that bring together people living with HIV, their partners, families, and friends to build connection, community, and belonging.

### **The Social Club**

We facilitated 10 peer-led support and discussion group events for heterosexual people living with HIV, creating space to share experiences and build confidence.

### **The Women's Room and For Women**

We ran 10 dedicated online support groups for women living with HIV - The Women's Room for women aged under 45 years, and For Women for those over 45 offering age-specific spaces to foster connection, resilience, and peer support.

### **The Men's Room**

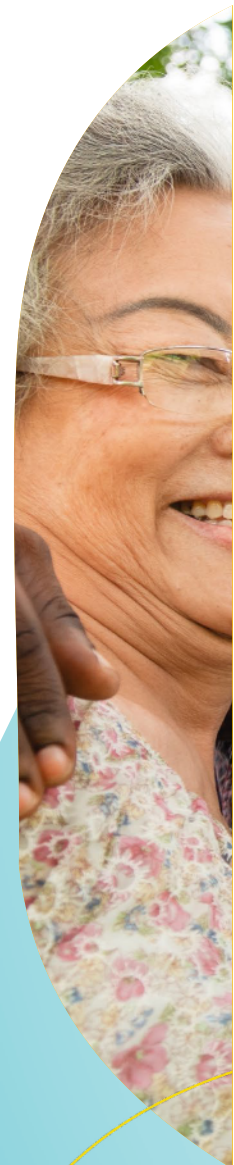
We ran 4 online discussion group for heterosexual men living with HIV, designed to build confidence, connection, peer support, and reduce social isolation.

### **Positive Conversations**

We hosted 10 informative and inclusive online health promotion sessions open to all people living with HIV, regardless of gender or sexuality, encouraging open discussion and shared learning.

### **Peer2Peer**

We delivered six peer-led support groups for gay and bisexual men living with HIV, focusing on connection, wellbeing, and mutual support.







*"I wanted to thank you all for how instrumental you have been in my life this year and basically for the last 5 years. I always tell people that I have found my tribe/ people at Positive Life, and I really mean that. You have given me a voice to speak and be unapologetically me. Thank you for always making my family feel comfortable when they attend events with me too."*

– Community Member

# Our Impact

## Representation and Advocacy

### Boards

Health Consumers NSW (HCNSW) Board

### Consumer Advisory Groups

Albion Centre Consumer Advisory Group

Central & Eastern Public Health Network (CESPHN) Community Advisory Group

European AIDS Clinical Society (EACS) Women Against Viruses in Europe (WAVES) Menopause & HRT Group

HCNSW Consumer Organisations Taskforce

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) PLHIV Advisory Group

South Western Sydney Mental Health Consumer Carer Community Committee

### Government/HIV Sector Committees and Advisory Groups

414 Close the Gap Advisory Group

ASHM Anal Cancer Screening Guidelines and Writing Committees

Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing World AIDS Day Coordinating Committee

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Sexual Health and HIV Action Group (CALD SHAG)

HIV/ID Pharmacy & Nurses Education Team NSW (HIPNET) Executive Committee

HIV Geriatric Nurse Practitioner Working Group

HIV Housing Interagency

Inner West Aged Services Interagency

LGBTI Ageing Network

Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS)

Multicultural Advisory Group

NSW Health Bloodborne Virus & Sexually Transmitted Infections (BBV & STI) Aboriginal Reference Group

NSW Health BBV & STI Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Advisory Group

NSW Health HIV Data Advisory Group

NSW Health HIV Molecular Epidemiology Group

NSW Health HIV Strategy Implementation Committee

NSW Health MyTest Advisory Group

NSW Health STI Data Advisory Committee

NSW Safework BBV Advisory Group

PlaySafe Program International Students Consortium

Positive Life NSW Anal Cancer Advocacy Group

Positive Life NSW Complex Care Working Group

Positive Life NSW HPV Working Group

SESLHD HIV & Sexual Health Steering Committee

Social Workers HIV Advisory Group

South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) HIV & STI Implementation Committee

Yaralla House Management Advisory Group

### Research Committees and Advisory Groups

ACCESS: The Australian Collaboration for Coordination Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance of Sexually Transmitted Infections and Blood-Borne Viruses Reference Committee

Centre for Social Research in Health (CSRH) BBV & STI Research, Intervention and Strategic Evaluation (BRISE) Advisory Board Group

Kirby Institute Annual Surveillance Report Advisory Committee

Kirby Institute Clonal hematopoiesis and HIV Infection are Associate with Geriatric Outcomes



(ARCHIVE) Protocol Steering Committee  
Kirby Institute Cohort of Australian Women  
with HIV (CLIO) Protocol Steering Committee

Kirby Institute GoGoVax Protocol Steering  
Committee

Kirby Institute Glendonbrook Strategic  
Advisory Group

Kirby Institute HIV and HCV Sequencing  
(H2Seq) HIV Working Group

Kirby Institute HIV & STI Cascades Reference  
Group

Kirby Institute International NeuroHIV and  
Ageing Advocacy Group

Kirby Institute Pilot study of Anal Neoplasia  
Treatment in people with HIV-Evaluation and  
monitoring (PANTHER) Protocol Steering  
Committee

Kirby Institute NSW HIV Prevention Research  
Implementation Science Monitoring (PRISM)  
Partnership Protocol Steering Committee

Kirby Institute PRISM HIV Testing Working  
Group

Kirby Institute PRISM HIV Prevention Working  
Group

Kirby Institute PRISM HIV Treatment Working  
Group

Kirby Institute PRISM HIV Stigma Working  
Group

Kirby Institute Tracking our communities  
response to the mpox outbreak (TraX)  
Protocol Steering Committee

## Research Participation

**Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health  
and Society (ARCSHS), La Trobe University**

HIV Futures 11

Newly Positive Study

Peer/Lived Experience Project

PozQol

**Centre for Social Research in Health (CSRH),  
University of New South Wales (UNSW)**

BRISE3 Program

Gay Community Period Survey

HIV Stigma Complaints Portal

LGBTQ+ Health Data Project

PrEPARE Project

**Kirby Institute, UNSW**

ACCESS Study

ARCHIVE Study

CLIO Study

EACS-WAVE HRT Group

GoGo Vax trial

H2SEQ study

HIV Data Linkage project

NeuroHIV and Ageing research

PANTHER study

Positively Women project

PRISM Partnership study

Treatment with Antiretrovirals and their  
Impact on Positive And Negative men  
(TAIPAN) study

The Australian HIV Observational Database  
(AHOD)

The Third Australian Study of Health and  
Relationships (ASHR3)

TraX study

**Monash University**

HIV Cure research

**Sydney Local Health District**

Needs assessment of CALD Women living  
with HIV

**UNSW Ageing Futures Institute**

The Enhanced Advance care planning and  
life Review Longitudinal Intervention (EARLI)  
project study site

**UNSW**

Health+Law Legal Needs Study (LeNS) survey

Post-release care engagement (PiCs)  
research project

Reflective Medical Practitioner Curriculum  
teaching seminars

**University of Wollongong**

Striving for HIV Elimination: Is There a Role  
for PrEP Among Australian Women? study

# Our Impact

## Communicate and Inform

We amplify and provide a platform for our community of 11,000 people living with HIV across New South Wales. Through clear and impactful communication, we inform our community with vital information, drive awareness around emerging challenges, and advocate for solutions that enhance access to care, support, and resources for everyone living with HIV.





Over **8.2 million** hits were received by the Positive Life Website

**1500** blog hits across 9 published blog posts

Over **180** community electronic direct mails (EDMs) were sent to Positive Life NSW community subscribers

**41** speaking engagements delivered to approximately **2,200** people

**10** Life.mail bulletins were sent to community subscribers

**4** Talkabout magazine editions were published

**7** media releases were distributed

**1,600** community member received copies of the Talkabout magazine

*I really enjoyed the latest Talkabout – great articles and valuable information throughout. It's consistently well produced and informative, but I realised I'd never told you how much I appreciate it. Reading contributions from peers really puts things into context."*

– Community Member

# Our Thanks

At Positive Life NSW, we work to advance the rights, health, and wellbeing of all people living with and affected by HIV, and to ensure that our communities are heard, represented, and supported across the state.

We acknowledge the ongoing support of NSW Health, and extend our heartfelt thanks to all of our partners, supporters, peers, and contributors across every facet of the HIV sector. Your collaboration and commitment enable us to continue advocating, educating, and delivering programs that make a tangible difference in the lives of people living with HIV.

We also recognise the invaluable contributions of our Board, staff, volunteers, and members, whose passion and lived experience strengthen everything we do.

Above all, Positive Life NSW acknowledges the tireless and continued leadership, resilience, and participation of all people living with HIV, whose voices remain central to our work and purpose.

**2024/25 Audited Financial Report**





NSW Health



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Good Things Foundation



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 [positivelife.org.au](https://positivelife.org.au)

