



Health

SNAPSHOT

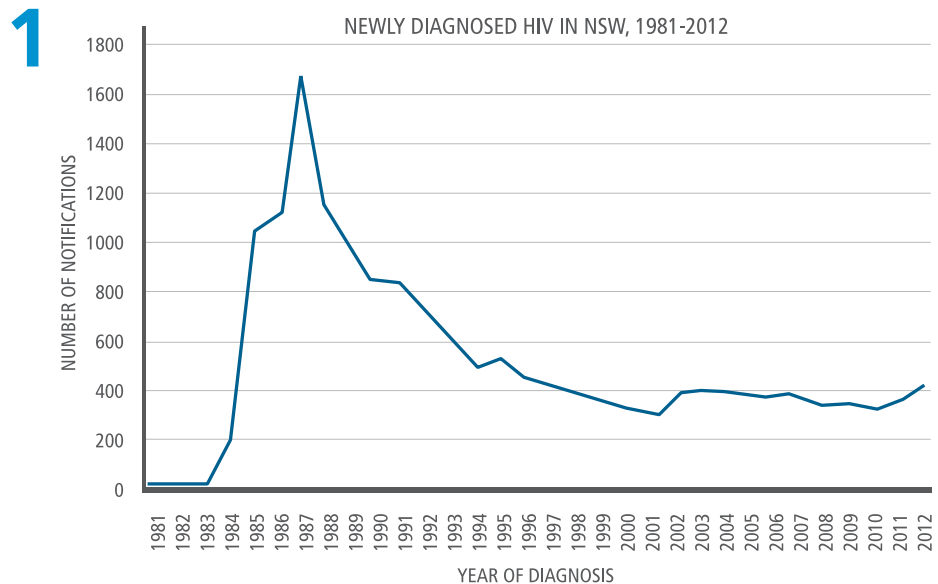
JUNE 2013

HIV STRATEGY 2012-2015

A NEW ERA

NSW has a strong track record of achievement in preventing the spread of HIV. In the past fifteen years HIV notifications stabilised (fig 1). However in 2012 there has been a concerning increase in HIV notifications.

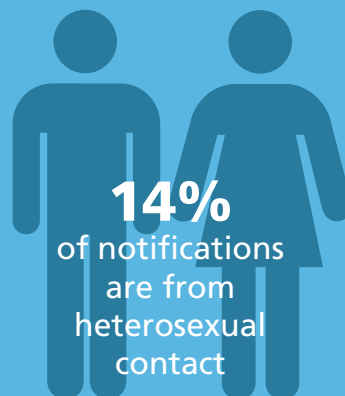
NSW released a new HIV strategy on 1 December 2012 which refocussed efforts to dramatically drive down the number of new HIV infections by increasing testing, treatment and safe sex practices. The increase in notifications in 2012 reinforces the need for this approach. We need to strengthen the safe sex culture in our communities, while making the most of advances in testing and treatment to reduce the transmission of HIV and maximise the health of people living with HIV.



It is estimated that between 12,500 and 15,000 people are living with HIV in NSW. In 2012, 409 people in NSW were newly diagnosed with HIV infection, compared to 330 in 2011. Most infections were reported among gay and homosexually active men (81%) with heterosexual contact accounting

for 14% and injecting drug use 2% of notifications (fig 2). HIV related deaths have fallen dramatically in NSW because of effective HIV treatment, and international research shows that the lifespan of people living with HIV is now not much different from the average population life expectancy.

2012 HIV STATISTICS IN NSW



RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT FOR EVERY \$1 INVESTED IN HIV PREVENTION, THE NSW GOVERNMENT HAS SAVED \$13 DOLLARS IN CLINICAL CARE COSTS.*

* The National HIV Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (2007)

KEY PROGRAM ELEMENTS AND STATUS



HIGH RISK GROUPS

PROMOTE HIV TESTING & MAKE IT EASIER TO GET TESTED¹

Making testing for HIV easier will improve the frequency and regularity of HIV testing. Early diagnosis is important for reducing onward transmission. Programs are underway with Local Health Districts, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and Medicare Locals to remove testing barriers, introduce rapid tests, and make it easier to have a test and get results.

Rapid HIV testing is now provided from 7 sites: ACON, Sydney Sexual Health Centre, Albion Centre, Parramatta Sexual Health Centre, Clinic 16 RNSH, Kirketon Road Centre and Short Street Centre. A further 9 sites will soon follow.

Reduce the average time between HIV infection and diagnosis from 4 ½ years to 1 ½ years

TARGET 2015

STATUS 2012

Over 391,000 HIV tests were done in 2012², including 1716 rapid HIV tests³.

54% of newly acquired homosexual HIV infections were identified at an early stage of infection.

² Data from 14 public and private labs in NSW

³ Data from Sydney HIV rapid test study, Kirby Institute

¹ Improved HIV testing rates may initially result in a rise in the annual number of HIV notifications.

TEST AND TREAT APPROACH



PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

Combination antiretroviral (ARV) treatment can improve the health and life expectancy of people with HIV and help prevent the transmission of HIV. The 'test and treat' approach prioritises the scale up of HIV testing, linking individuals to care, and offering early initiation of ARV treatment to all who test positive.

The new HIV Support Program will enhance support for doctors of people newly diagnosed with HIV by providing access and links to a range of services that can be tailored to the needs of the individual including counselling about risk reduction and contact tracing, and benefits of early treatment.

Increase to **90%** the number of people living with HIV on antiretroviral treatment

Sustain the virtual elimination of HIV related deaths

54 - 70% of people who know they are infected receive ARV treatment (fig 3).



MOTHER TO CHILD TRANSMISSION

MOTHER TO CHILD TRANSMISSION

The risk of transmission of HIV from an HIV positive mother to her child is high. However, it can be almost entirely eliminated with treatment and prevention strategies. The specialist HIV paediatric services of Sydney Children's Hospital have increasingly focused on the prevention of transmission to babies where mothers have HIV.

Sustain the virtual elimination of mother to child HIV transmission

There were no mother to child HIV transmissions in 2012.



GAY & OTHER HOMOSEXUALLY ACTIVE MEN

MAINTAIN HIGH LEVELS OF SAFE BEHAVIOUR

The transmission of HIV in NSW continues to occur overwhelmingly among gay and other homosexually active men (fig 2). NSW Health, ACON, Positive Life NSW, the NSW STI Programs Unit, and Local Health Districts, will continue to promote condom use, voluntary HIV testing, and treatment, through social marketing campaigns.

Reduce transmission of HIV among gay and other homosexually active men by **60%**

66% of gay men with casual partners report practicing safe sex (condom use or avoid anal sex).⁴

⁴ National Centre for HIV Social Research (2012)



PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS

NEEDLE AND SYRINGE PROGRAM

In 1988, NSW was first to introduce a Needle and Syringe Program.

The NSW Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) has proven to be highly effective in preventing the transmission of HIV and other infections through injecting drug use.

The NSP distributed over 11 million units from 1021 outlets in 2012.

Sustain the virtual elimination of HIV transmission among people who inject drugs

Infections related to intravenous drug use remain low and stable. In 2012 there were ten people diagnosed with HIV who reported injecting drug use.



ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

ABORIGINAL PROGRAM

Aboriginal people's vulnerability to HIV and other sexually transmissible infections is exacerbated by factors such as poorer access to primary health care, homelessness and overrepresentation within the Australian prison system. Programs are in place to support the skills of the Aboriginal health workforce and HIV workforce to prevent HIV, increase testing rates among at risk populations and support Aboriginal people living with HIV.

Reduce HIV and transmission among Aboriginal populations by **50%**

Aboriginal transmission rates are low. In 2012 there were ten diagnoses.



SEX WORKERS

SEX WORKER PROGRAM

Sex workers in NSW have been very successful at protecting their own and their clients health, as evidenced by the extremely low prevalence of HIV and STIs. Peer education and outreach by the Sex Workers Outreach Project have played a central role in achieving this. Sex worker programs need to be maintained, as half of the sex industry workforce turns over every year.

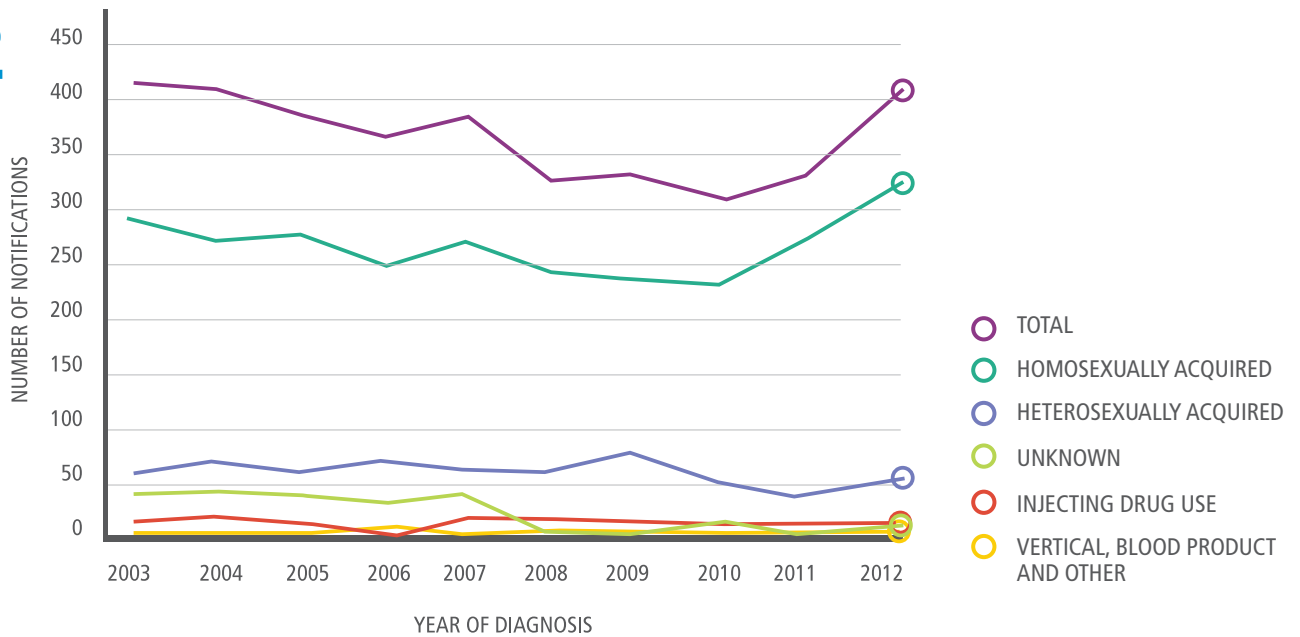
Sustain the virtual elimination of HIV transmission in the sex industry

Surveys show almost universal condom use and **83%** report regular sexual health checks.⁵

⁵ Donovan et al (2012)

NEWLY DIAGNOSED HIV INFECTIONS BY EXPOSURE AND YEAR OF DIAGNOSIS, NSW, 2003-2012

2



THE NSW "HIV TREATMENT CASCADE"

3

