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Western Australia

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## **IMPACT OF A NON-OCCUPATIONAL POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS PROGRAM FOR HIV IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

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Since late 2001, the Department of Health (DOH) has monitored provision of non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis (NPEP) for HIV in WA. Up to 31 December 2007, 214 cases received NPEP.

Gay Community Periodic Surveys (2002 and 2004) showed that the Perth community awareness of NPEP availability was low.

In May 2005, the DOH and the WA AIDS Council commenced a targeted campaign to raise awareness of NPEP availability and to increase the level of appropriate treatment. The campaign is aimed at health care providers and people at high risk of HIV infection - men who have sex with men, people in sero-discordant relationships, people living with HIV/AIDS, people who inject drugs and people who have been sexually assaulted or had unsafe sex with a person known to have HIV, or to be strongly suspected of being HIV-positive. Strategies have included resource development and distribution (pamphlets, fact sheets, posters, press advertisements in gay press and banner advertisements on Gaydar), establishment of a 1300 phone line to triage cases, and provision of information for health care providers.

Since the campaign commenced, awareness of NPEP has increased. In 2006, a significantly higher percentage of Perth Gay Community Periodic Survey respondents was aware that NPEP was readily available compared to the two previous surveys (18.5% [2002], 26% [2004], 48.2% [2006],  $\chi^2$  test for trend,  $p < .001$  for both).

The average number of cases receiving NPEP per year increased by 16.6% since the campaign commenced (34.3 cases per year, May 2002 - April 2005; 40 cases per year, May 2005 - April 2007). Evidence from clinicians indicates that they receive appropriate referrals from the phone line and available data indicates that the proportion of patients receiving NPEP who met the recommended guidelines has increased from 50% (n = 34) during the period May 2002 - April 2003 to 96.7% (n = 30) during the period May 2006 - April 2007.

Initial concerns that a campaign might encourage inappropriate and over use of NPEP have not been realized.