



2021-2022

# Annual Report

Inclusive, Innovative HIV Services

## Funding Acknowledgements

Queensland Positive People (QPP) is primarily funded by Queensland Health.

Several photographs in this report have been selected from QPP's archive library. The inclusion of a person's photograph in this report implies nothing about their sexuality or HIV status.

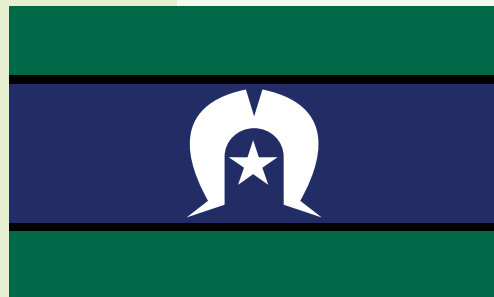
## Acknowledgement of Country

QPP acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the many lands on which we work and live, including but not limited to the Turrbal and Jagera (Brisbane), Yugambah (Gold Coast), Gubbi Gubbi (Nambour), Yuwi (Mackay), Yidinjdji (Cairns), Bindal and Wulgurukaba (Townsville), and Darumbal (Rockhampton) people.

QPP recognises that this land is unceded and has always been under First Nations custodianship. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and emerging community leaders.

QPP also acknowledges the important role of First Nations people within our organisation and the communities we work alongside.

As part of our reconciliation commitment, QPP is working closely with Reconciliation Australia to develop and implement a Reconciliation Reflect Action Plan. We understand this is a commitment to an ongoing framework and process and are committed to building sustainable and respectful relationships with First Nations communities. We do so to break down any organisational barriers that First Nations people living with HIV (PLHIV) may experience while involved with QPP and our services.



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# About QPP

QPP was established in 1989 and incorporated in 2003 as a community-based and peer-led organisation to provide peer and social support and advocacy for people living with HIV (PLHIV).



We are now a multi-disciplinary team committed to improving the quality of life of PLHIV and reducing new infections of HIV and STIs across Queensland with the vision of delivering whole of life programs to meet unmet needs in the community.

QPP attained Queensland Health Services Quality Standards accreditation in 2021. QPP is largely funded by the Queensland Department of Health and has recently signed a service agreement until 2026.

QPP currently employs 32 staff in two office/clinic sites in Brisbane and in regional centres and provides outreach services across Queensland

Left to right: Glenn, Simeon, and Luke

QPP provides a growing range of programs and services including:

-  Peer-led HIV/STI point of care testing;
-  HIV self-testing
-  Peer navigation (i.e. assistance navigating the complex environment of HIV diagnosis, disclosure, treatment and care);
-  Case management support for PLHIV with complex needs including practical assistance and referral to other essential services (clinical care, mental health, food and housing);
-  Emergency funding for PLHIV experiencing financial hardship;
-  Legal assistance and referral for HIV stigma and discrimination; and
-  Advocacy, policy development, public health campaigns and research.
-  The annual World AIDS Day Awareness Campaign.

QPP is an active participant in HIV research, advocacy, and policy development on topics such as HIV prevention, testing, treatment and care; HIV discrimination and the law; and social stigma and isolation. We champion peer models of care and human rights principles.

# Strategic Plan



Queensland Positive People  
STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2025

**Queensland Positive People's mission is to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV, and help reduce new infections of HIV and STIs**

## Delivering whole of life programs

**Delivering whole of life programs/services including:**

- Peer HIV/STI prevention and point of care testing
- Peer support and navigation
- Community development and education
- HIV treatment and management
- Links to other health and social/community services
- Mental health support
- Ageing and disability
- Stigma and discrimination

## Inclusive & innovative services

**Ensuring that our services are:**

- Informed by people living with HIV
- Empowering and strengthening resilience
- Compassionate
- Equitable
- Committed to reconciliation
- Inclusive - ensuring no one is left behind

## Enhancing relationships

**Enhancing relationships with our:**

- Clients
- Members
- Staff
- Volunteers
- External stakeholders
- Connections with our diverse communities

## Best practice standards

**Observing and developing standards across QPP that are:**

- Best practice
- Accredited
- Innovative
- Aspirational
- Measurable
- Safe and deliver quality services

## Strengthening funding

**Strengthening funding so that it is:**

- Diverse
- Robust and sustainable
- Meets unfunded service gaps

[www.qpp.org.au](http://www.qpp.org.au)



# QPP Patron's Statement



I send felicitations on the achievements this year:



That QPP has reached this significant milestone of 40 years since HIV/AIDS was first identified;



The fact that QPP has reached 32 years since it was established and has written new and exciting chapters in the latest annual report;



The commencement of the year with the adoption of fresh QPP strategic plans for the period 2021-2025 as well as a new five-year service agreement with Queensland Health;



The work behind the scenes, continuing to cooperate in earnest with many contributors to QPP. I wish specially to afford felicitations on obtaining accreditation and certification under the Queensland Services Quality Framework;



Provision of exceptionally high levels of client satisfaction across all of QPP's programs; and



Attaining empowerment in knowledge about mental health and feeling well including provision of emergency funds for those in need.

The QPP engagement survey for 2021-2022 captured valuable insights of QPP's community members. The hope of QPP is to extend official support, peer networking, educational programs and more visibility of community advocates. Special attention to regional Queensland is timely.

I send best wishes to all participants in QPP and to community members and clients who have benefited from QPP's outreach. To those who participate in co-designing, developing and implementation of improvements always attempting to expand the outreach and service.

I am proud of the achievements of QPP. I look forward to its service in the RAPID and Life + Programs.

I congratulate all of the friends of QPP who have taken part in activities on World AIDS Day and in innovative client outreach in the past year.

# President and CEO Message



While 2021/2022 marked the significant milestones of 40 years since HIV/AIDS was first identified, and 32 years since QPP was established, it was a year of new and exciting chapters for QPP in many ways.

Following approval by a Special General Meeting in November, QPP has been investigating options for future areas of growth and how to meet the unmet needs and service demands identified by PLHIV across Queensland. The QPP Engagement Survey 2021/2022 captured the valuable insights of QPP's community members and clients.

The message is clear - people living with HIV in Queensland want expanded social support, peer networking, educational

programs and more visibility of community advocates – especially in regional Queensland. We are incredibly grateful for the time QPP's community members and clients take to provide feedback and we look forward to co-designing, developing and implementing the recommendations with community over the next 12 months. A Future Innovations Committee has been formed from respected community members to help oversee and guide this change.

Whilst final decisions are still to be made about how to meet the wide range of challenges identified, behind the scenes work has continued in earnest and we are incredibly proud to have obtained accreditation and certification under the Health Services Quality Framework. Associated operational reforms and capacity building have continued, with developments in human resources, governance, financial management and quality systems – all critical infrastructure steps as we pursue new and emerging service challenges.

Associated operational reforms and capacity building have continued in preparation for this work, with developments in human resources, governance, financial management and our quality systems. All critical infrastructure steps as we pursue new and emerging service challenges.

We started the year with a fresh QPP Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and a new five year service agreement with Queensland Health – reflecting exceptionally high levels of client satisfaction across all programs alongside improvements in knowledge, well-being and health. Please see to your right for some of the key highlights for 2021/2022.

## RAPID Program

- ✦ The RAPID HIV and STI point of care testing program delivered 6,587 occasions of service through the Brisbane clinic and outreach at sex on premises venues and university campuses.
- ✦ 405 HIV home testing kits were also distributed.

## Life+ Program

- ✦ The Life + Program continued to provide peer navigation and case management support to over 400 people living with HIV across Queensland. This included emotional and psychological support, assistance with treatment access and adherence, housing, mental health, substance use, and stigma and discrimination.
- ✦ The Peer Navigation Program has continued to expand its scope and activities and includes emotional and social support; peer connection, education, navigation; and community development:
  - ✦ QPP coordinates and hosts a number of in person and online social groups. In person social groups in Brisbane and on the Gold and Sunshine Coasts had over 120 regular attendees. There were also 14 on-line social groups and 10 national online chat and information sessions on mental health and the moving landscape of COVID-19.
  - ✦ The Community Advisory Group continued to meet regularly and contributed to the development of QPP grants and submissions including the Queensland Review of the Anti-Discrimination Act.

- ✦ QPP participated in the Human Library at the Queensland State Library and attended at a number of community events including PRIDE and NAIDOC celebrations.
- ✦ Planning is well underway for the 'Digital Health Connect' Grant, which is coming to regional Queensland from September 2022. Peer navigators will travel across Queensland and deliver digital literacy workshops to PLHIV including the provision of computers to eligible participants.

## Stigma and Discrimination Program

- ✦ The HIV/AIDS Legal Centre (HALC) supported 58 QPP-referred clients for immigration, discrimination, privacy and insurance matters. Our client referral pathway with HALC has allowed greater hope for better legal outcomes for clients, as well as contributing to more equitable access to justice.
- ✦ The program has also expanded services to include:
  - ✦ HIV legal literacy workshops and webinars
  - ✦ Legal clinics for people living with HIV
  - ✦ Additional education training for QPP staff.

## Advocacy and Policy

It has been another year of significant advocacy and policy reform including submissions and briefings for the:

- ✦ Decriminalisation of HIV and law reform with the Queensland Government Office of the Attorney-General. QPP is advocating for vital changes to the Queensland Criminal Code Act, to ensure that the law recognises the science associated with undetectable = untransmissible (U=U).
- ✦ Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into Social Isolation and Loneliness in Queensland, including attendance at the public hearing as a witness.
- ✦ Review of the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 by the Queensland Human Rights Commission.
- ✦ Queensland Law Reform Commission on the Consultation Paper: A framework for a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland.

The Operational Team continued to lead a number of key areas including:

## Emergency Funds

- ✦ QPP administers four funds that aim to alleviate the impacts of financial hardship for people living with HIV. Over \$55,000 of funding was provided to 170 people.

## World AIDS Day

- ✦ A significant World AIDS Day campaign was celebrated in 2021 - "It's been 40 years of HIV and who would have thought...?"
- ✦ The HIV positive voice informed the digital campaign, Candlelight Vigils in Brisbane and Cairns and media engagements. Four regional World AIDS Grants were distributed across Queensland.

## 2022-2023: What lies ahead...

Our commitment to delivering enhanced and additional peer and multi-disciplinary services across the life span of people living with HIV will continue tenaciously. This includes building relationships and pursuing funding opportunities with several Queensland Government Departments, Primary Health Networks, industry and philanthropy. QPP is also engaging with a consultant to develop a series of business cases to explore providing services to improve PLHIV experiences of Aged Care, and services through the NDIS and the Medicare Benefits Scheme.

NAPWHA (National Association of People with HIV Australia) and QPP have also been successful in securing funding to deliver a national HIV home testing program. The program will enable anyone in Australia to order an HIV home test online, which will be delivered via post to any address in Australia, free of charge. People living with HIV have always been at the centre of prevention, and QPP has now been delivering HIV home testing for over 4 years.

Queensland will also be hosting the International AIDS Society: HIV Science Conference in July 2023. QPP's vision is that this conference will be deeply nourished by the voices of people living with HIV. This is an important opportunity for the Queensland HIV + community and allies to influence the strategic direction of research by shining lights on where the gaps are and generating interest and commitment from the research community to fill the gaps. We need to keep shining a light on stigma and discrimination, and how it permeates every level of living with HIV and exacerbates personal, social and structural barriers for well-being, health and access to services.

However, we are really excited to work with NAPWHA, all of our HIV peer led sister organisations, the LGBTIQ and AIDS Councils, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multi-cultural community controlled organisations, clinicians, researchers and the government to make testing for HIV as easy and comfortable as it can be and ensure people testing positive are able to access community and clinical support and services with ease.

We hope you will join us for our AGM on Thursday November 10th at 6pm to find out more.

We would like to thank the QPP community, staff and board for their gracious support, dedication and commitment as we continue to nourish our foundations and grow together.



Melissa Warner  
CEO



Mark Counter  
President

# Delivering

# Whole of Life Programs

# RAPID

The RAPID program provides a supportive sexual health testing experience for those at risk of HIV or who are living with HIV, in a peer-led, community-based setting.

This year, RAPID had **6878** occasions of service

The service uses point of care testing for HIV and syphilis using immunochromatographic testing devices, as well as testing for chlamydia and gonorrhoea using nucleic acid amplification testing at the point of care. These tests enable results to be delivered on the same day.

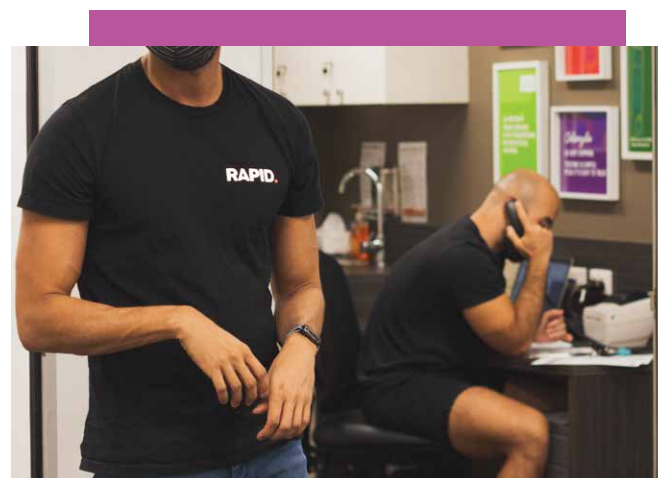
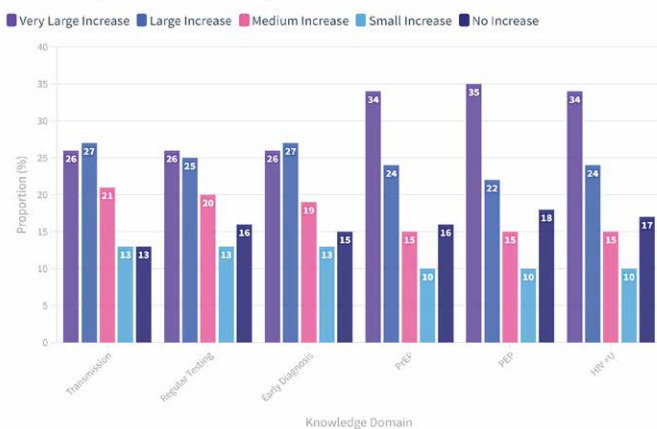
By design, the service seeks to address and mitigate known barriers to testing uptake and engagement, aiming to increase the proportion of PLHIV who are aware of their status.

As a constituent program of QPP, the service is informed by – and imbued with – the lived experience of PLHIV, and the service undertakes significant work to address HIV-related stigma through education and health promotion in each consultation.

RAPID Clients: Gender and Sexual Preferences

	I am attracted to individuals	I am attracted to men	I am attracted to women	I choose not to participate
I choose not to participate	14	19	1	15
I experience a female gender	516	1282	55	23
I experience a male gender	643	2140	1741	59
I experience an Indigenous gender	12	30	12	2
I experience gender as an individual	87	39	5	1

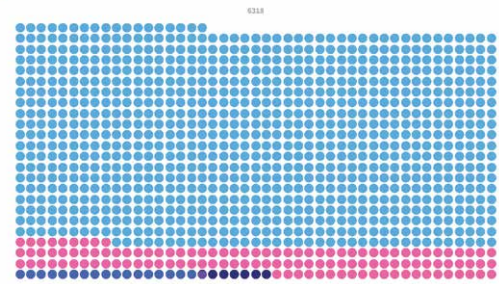
RAPID: Reported Knowledge Increase, Jul 21 - Jun 22





### RAPID: Client Satisfaction, Jun 21 - Jul 22

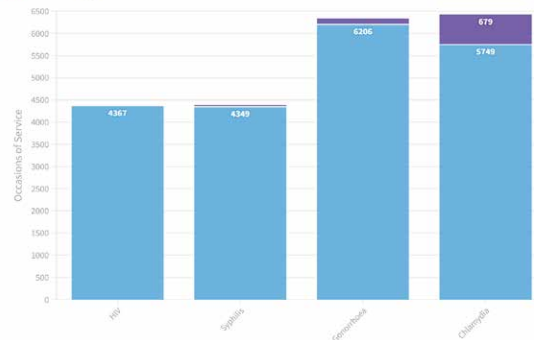
● Strongly Disagree ● Disagree ● Neither Agree or Disagree ● Agree ● Strongly Agree



Clients responses when asked if they were satisfied with the services that they received from RAPID

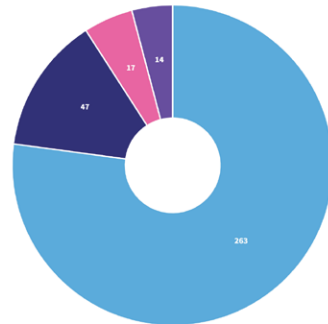
### RAPID: Test Results, Jul 21 - Jun 22

■ Non-reactive ■ Reactive

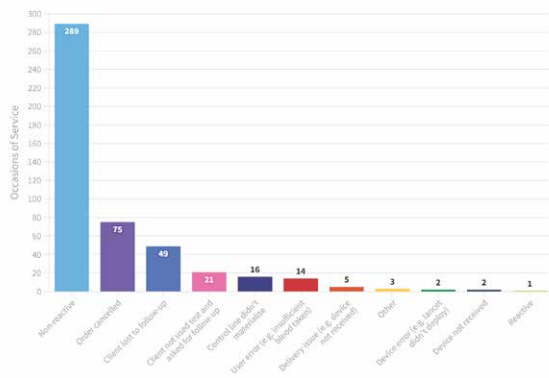


### RAPID: Occasions of Service for First Nations People, Jul 21 - Jun 22

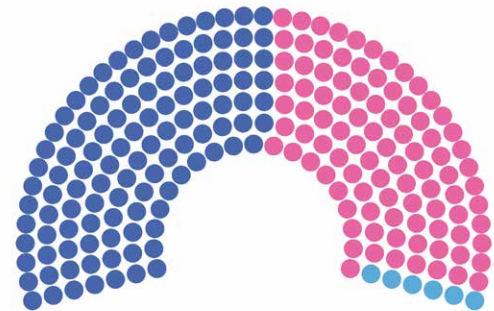
■ Aboriginal ■ Non-Australian First Nations ■ Torres Strait Islander ■ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander



### RAPID: Summary of Atomo Orders, Jul 21-Jun 22



### RAPID: Outreach Testing Locations, Jul 21 - Jun 22



Venue	Occasions of service
● RAPID (UQ)	113
● Wet	94
● No. 29	6

# Peer Navigation

At QPP, we recognise the powerful benefits of peer social connection to support PLHIV.

Following an internal evaluation of the program and community feedback, QPP has redeveloped the Peer Navigation and training program to expand the scope of the role of Peer Navigators and the program itself. In early 2022, we also welcomed 3 new Peer Navigators to the team. Our team of peer navigators are PLHIV, using their lived experience and professional training and skills to support other PLHIV. The focus of the peer navigation program is to provide:

- emotional and social support to facilitate peer connection;
- support people to navigate health systems; and
- promote HIV health literacy to navigate a diagnosis.

Social and emotional support and opportunities for peer connection continue to be strengthened by our social groups.

online chat portal OLARK, and warm phone line staffed by our peer navigator team.

The team continues to support people newly diagnosed with HIV. Last year, we saw an increase in people being referred to the program, which was likely due to the emotional and physical toll that the COVID-19 pandemic placed on our community.

This year, numbers of people accessing peer navigation returned to pre-pandemic levels with our Peer Navigators supporting

**126**  
**PLHIV**



QPP's Peer Navigation Team continued to engage and educate PLHIV about HIV, STI prevention and sexual health, mental and physical health, resilience and stigma and other important topics. There are three core modules that are delivered to every Peer Navigation client and these are:



### **The virus – what you need to know**

This module covers basic HIV knowledge including HIV transmission, progression, understanding pathology results and health markers and how to take control of your diagnosis.

### **Treatment – it's your choice**

This module provides information about the basics of HIV treatment, the importance of starting treatment early and adherence, the overall goals of treatment and myths and misconceptions.

### **Navigating the health system – you're in control!**

In this module clients learn about how to choose a doctor that is right for them, the importance of their HIV health care team, other supports and where to access HIV treatment.

**This year QPP Peer Navigators have delivered these core modules, along with many other elective modules to 126 clients across Queensland.**

# QPP Social Groups

QPP understands the importance of connection for all members of our society, and we also know that peer connection is especially important for PLHIV.

In the last two years, it has been more difficult than ever for people to come together and connect, and this has meant that the need for QPP to support PLHIV to stay engaged and socially connected has been even more important.

QPP has continued to operate social groups this year and adapted modes of delivery to the changing environment of the pandemic. This year, in-person social groups were prioritised over online settings, as the community showed increasing eagerness to connect in-person.

QPP facilitated **32** in-person social groups this year to ensure the continuity of community support for PLHIV. We achieved this whilst recognising the ever-changing health environment we experience due to COVID-19 outbreaks – for this reason, some groups were cancelled or postponed throughout the year.



The following QPP social groups are monthly in person meetings in Brisbane:

- + Saturday Brisbane BBQ - 149 attendees
- + Mature-Aged and Long-Term Survivors - 81 attendees
- + Multicultural Social Group - 39 attendees

# Multicultural Social Group's Museum Tour

The Multicultural Social Group joined in a First Nations artist tour which included a visit of the Legacy: Reflections on Mabo exhibit and artworks at Queensland Gallery of Modern Art.

Some of the Indigenous artwork included:

**Tow Row by Judy Watson** - referencing woven nets used by Aboriginal people of the area, acknowledging the traditional owners of the site and their everyday fishing activities on the river and local saltwater waterway.

**MAIWAR Yunggulba by Megan Cope** - recreation of a sense of place and identity by overlaying topographical military maps with Aboriginal place names revealing alternative historical narratives.

**Kurilpa Country by Lilla Watson** - reflection of Indigenous perception of the relationship between its land and its people.

**Coolamon by Laurie Nilsen** - beautifully carved, extra-long coolamon used to catch rain, which is displayed in the Talking Circle in kuril dhagun.

The group also enjoyed other activities happening that day including partaking in an Indigenous opening ritual ceremony and art workshops, which were all part of the Queensland State Library's 120th founding anniversary entitled 'Your Story is Our Story'. The First Nations artist tour was facilitated by The Black Card in partnership with the state library.

We had some really good feedback from the Multicultural Social Group members especially from those who have recently moved to Australia as it was their first time connecting more deeply with our First Nations history, art and literature.



## New QPP Social Groups:

The **Sunshine Coast Social Group** has been re-established at the Maroochydore Neighbourhood Centre and meets monthly.

The **Gold Coast Social Group** is also recommencing in the near future.

**Women's Group** - Consultation and planning has been commenced to reconnect the network of women living with HIV.

QPP is also planning on hosting a number of gatherings across **Regional Queensland**.

QPP would like to thank our social group coordinators and peer navigators for their support in facilitating in-person and online social groups.

If you would like to be more involved or set up another group anywhere across Queensland, please get in touch with our PN team.

# Community Development and Education

## Community Advisory Group

As a peer-based organisation, QPP centres positive voices and values the importance of the lived experience of HIV.

Everything we do is underpinned by the principles of meaningful involvement of people with HIV (MIPA). MIPA principles recognise that PLHIV are integral and central to the HIV response. MIPA values PLHIV as a resource providing lived experience and knowledge to help inform the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs and services.

In recognition of MIPA and the need to engage with Queensland PLHIV communities, QPP established a Community Advisory Group (CAG) in 2020. The CAG seeks to engage PLHIV from diverse communities across Queensland and provide a platform for individual and collective voices. The CAG assists QPP to identify current and emerging community needs and informs its strategic priorities in service delivery, advocacy, health education, and information.

In the last 12 months the CAG met regarding the following topics:

- ✦ Discussion and building of funding submission for the re-establishment of the Queensland Positive Speakers Bureau
- ✦ Discussed the benefits of a private opt in QPP Facebook page for community to connect
- ✦ Reviewed Peer Navigation modules
- ✦ Provided discussion on the benefits of production "info brochures"
- ✦ Provided advice on QPP and NAPWHAs submission into the review of the anti-discrimination act in Queensland
- ✦ A CAG member moved on to join the QPP Board
- ✦ The CAG also welcomed 2 new members



*"Participating with QPP's CAG this year has been a great opportunity to reconnect with other positive people and to continue to 'live the journey' as a positive person. Having been diagnosed over 30 years ago, it is only natural (in my opinion and experience) to at times need to draw close and engage, yet other times just getting on with one's life is the priority. Recent events with the COVID-19 pandemic reminded me to be my own health-advocate first and foremost, and to finally make amends to deal with my own diagnosis and self-stigma. And so here I find myself... still here, but getting much older and still learning and relearning what being positive means in my life, and to what it may mean for others too."*

## Digital Health Connect

In the latter half of the 2021/2022 financial year, a grant was awarded to QPP through the ViiV community grants round, for a project titled 'Digital Health Connect'. This project is a peer-based and will deliver digital health literacy workshops to PLHIV in regional, rural and remote areas across Queensland.

The primary aim of the project is to improve the digital health literacy of PLHIV through the delivery of in-person group-based workshops and individually tailored support.

Education and support will assist participants to build their skills, knowledge, and confidence in using digital technology to improve their ability to source reputable health information and increase their engagement with Health Care Providers utilising telehealth. The project will also build participants skills to utilise platforms that foster social connection and create a sense of belonging.

The project will be led by two Peer Navigators (PN's) and will leverage QPP's well established and reputable peer navigation program. PNs will develop digital literacy workshop content based on the Commonwealth Government's initiative 'Be Connected' through a co-design process with QPP's Community Advisory Group.

Eight workshops will be co-facilitated by PN's and will focus on skill-based development within a communal context, thereby cultivating engagement with peers and the HIV positive community and creating social and support networks. Tailored and individualised support will be provided to participants who experience barriers to support engagement.

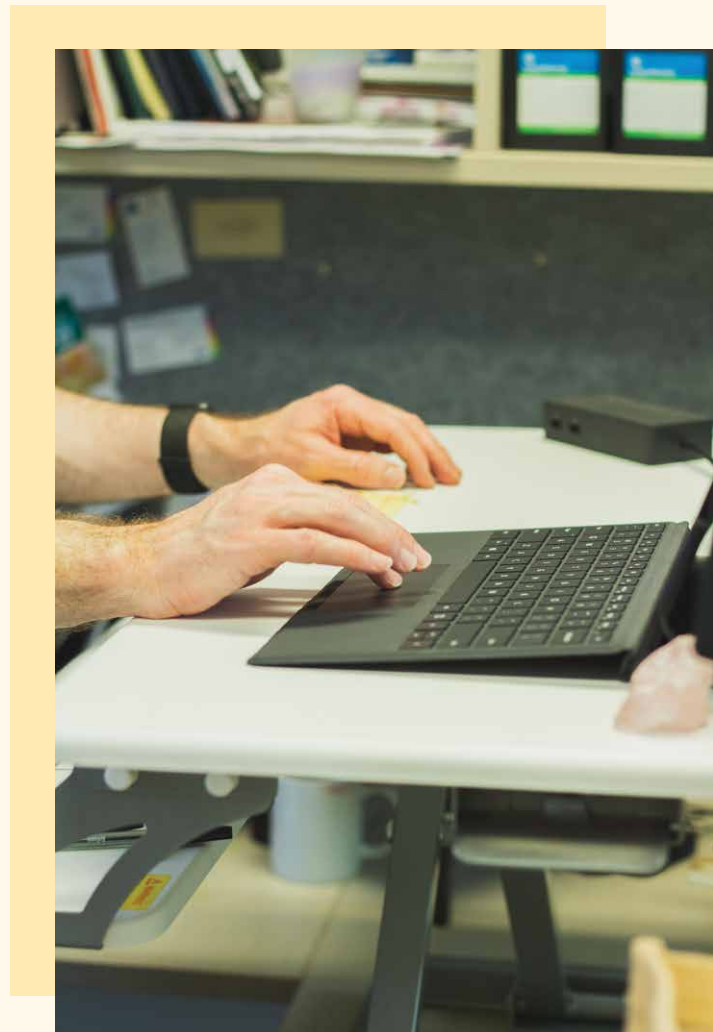
QPP Digital Health Connect participants will be provided with a laptop or computer to enable participation in the workshops. Eligible Digital Health Connect participants will be keep these computers after graduation from the workshop to support ongoing digital literacy development and participation in monthly online meetings.

The project will be integrated into QPP's suite of peer services for ongoing implementation beyond the life of the project grant and content developed and other resources will be offered to NAPWHA and other HIV organisations to support PWHIV across Australia for adaption to their jurisdictions.

## Positive Living Development Institute Course

The Positive Leadership Development (PLDI™) offers people living with HIV the opportunity to develop skills for leadership and resilience. The program originated in Canada and Living Positive Victoria brought it to Australia, in response to local demand that was evident in the first Australian Stigma Audit (NAPWHA, 2012). PLDI™ identifies and builds the personal sense of agency and capacity of people with HIV fostering resilient leadership practices and strengthened community outcomes

This year, QPP have reconnected with the Positive Life Development Institute (PLDI) and have funded opportunities for Queensland PLHIV to attend the course and strengthen post training pathways of opportunities.





## Mansfield State Highschool

In early 2022, QPP was invited by Mansfield State High school to speak to the senior students about HIV for a unit they were undertaking on epidemics and the impacts of widespread illnesses on populations. QPP's Community Engagement and Education Officer and a Peer Navigator, spoke about the timeline of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, including when it emerged and also noted on major milestones for our community such as, the emergence of effective treatment and Undetectable = Untransmissible (U=U).

This event was also used as an opportunity to discuss sexual health with students in a safe space. The group discussed the benefits of regular sexual health testing and also spoke briefly about PrEP. Additional information about testing was also provided including the location of RAPID and the services provided at the clinic.



## The Human Library

The Human Library was started in 2000 by brothers Ronni and Dany Abergel, and colleagues Asma Mouna and Christoffer Erichsen at Roskilde Festival, Copenhagen. They belonged to a local NGO group called Stop the Violence and conceived this idea after their friend was killed.

The main goal of the Human Library consisted of three main objectives; to bring different social and ethnical groups of society together, to challenge (and overcome) prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination in society, and to learn, educate, and change attitudes.

Two peer navigators presented their "books" to talk about living with HIV and answering questions from members of the general public. The event was held at the Brisbane City Library where 12 different books were presented.

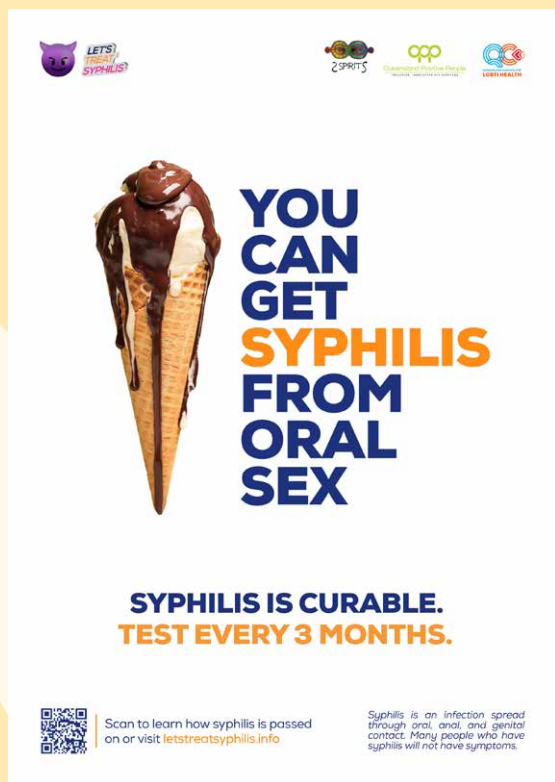
It was a great way to interact with the community and talk about living with HIV.



# Syphilis Awareness

In late 2021, QPP received funding to review and re-run the Let's Treat Syphilis campaign in collaboration with the Queensland Council for LGBTI Health (QC).

This campaign aims to improve awareness of the continuing rising rates of syphilis diagnoses being recorded in Queensland.



## Partners in promotion.

The project team has consulted with numerous stakeholders and community members to ensure that the redeveloped promotional materials are relevant to priority populations.

Let's Treat Syphilis has partnered with 2 Spirits and True Relationships and Reproductive Health who are also running similar campaigns in order to ensure that all at-risk community members are reached.

# Case Management Support

This year, the QPP case management team have continued to provide support to assist PLHIV to address the many issues that impact our health and wellbeing.

This program aims to support people to overcome barriers to engaging with HIV care and treatment, while empowering them to build on their existing strengths and skills to effectively self-manage life with HIV.

Our team of 9 case managers are based in Cairns, the Sunshine Coast, Brisbane, and the Gold Coast. They provide outreach services for people across the state, including in rural and regional locations.

Our case management framework uses a planned approach, tailoring interventions and support to individual needs and circumstances. QPP's highly skilled case management team works with people to identify issues, explore options, and jointly develop goals to address concerns.

Common areas for support include treatment access and adherence, housing, mental health, substance use, financial stress, and stigma and discrimination. Demand increased this year from people experiencing COVID-19-related emotional and psychological distress, and HIV- or COVID-19-related immigration issues. Further, more people experienced homelessness and a lack of available and affordable housing after the cessation of Department of Housing COVID-19 support.

QPP case managers continue to work closely with the HIV Public Health Team. Together, we support people with complex challenges that impact their ability to engage with HIV care. Our collaborative coordinated care approach achieves great outcomes for people.

We would like to acknowledge and thank our highly skilled, committed, and passionate team who continue to work hard to realise QPP's vision of creating a better future for PLHIV. We appreciate their efforts in what has been a challenging time for all our community as we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

**QPP supported  
285 PLHIV  
through the  
case management  
program this year**

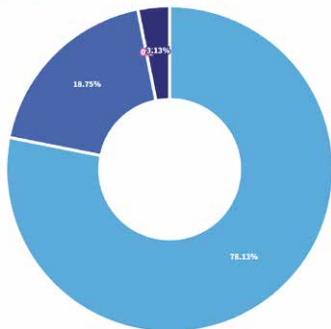


# Life+ Highlights:

Medication adherence increased from **86.54%** to **96.48%**

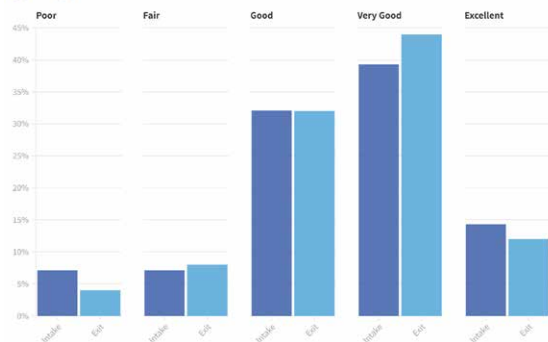
Life+: Reported Client Satisfaction - 2021/2022

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree



Life+: Reported General Health of Clients - 2021/2022

Intake Exit



# Funding Relief for PLHIV

QPP administers four funds that aim to support PLHIV who are experiencing barriers to engaging with HIV treatment and care or financial hardship:

- + The Hope Fund
- + HOPE Fund+
- + Emergency Treatment Fund (ETF)
- + Fund for Clients with Complex Needs (CCF)

## The Hope Fund

The Hats Off Positive Endeavour (HOPE) Fund was established on 1 February 2006 by co-founders David Bermingham and Simon O'Connor to support PLHIV in need in Queensland. The Fund provides small grants for goods and services to PLHIV who are experiencing financial hardship, have a demonstrated material need, or are looking to improve their lives.

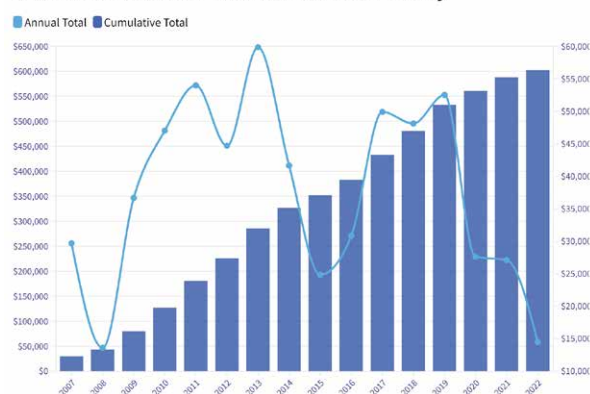
The Fund is an initiative of Oz Showbiz Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and QPP, in partnership with the Queensland Council for LGBTI Health, formerly known as the Queensland AIDS Council. The grants committee, comprising a representative from each organisation, decides the outcome of each application.

**As of 30 June 2022, there was \$97,763.95 remaining in the HOPE Fund.**

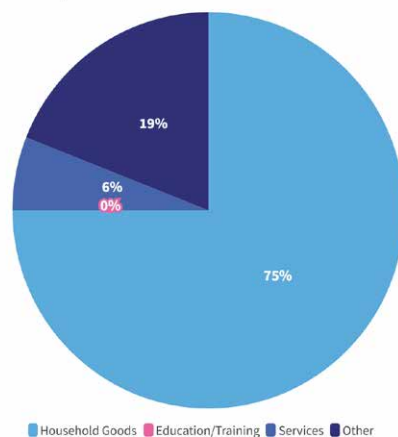
16 PLHIV were supported through The HOPE Fund in 2021/2022 with the total amount awarded being \$14,473.14.

Please see the graph to the right and the table on the next page for a breakdown of these grants.

**Total HOPE Fund Grants Awarded to the Community**



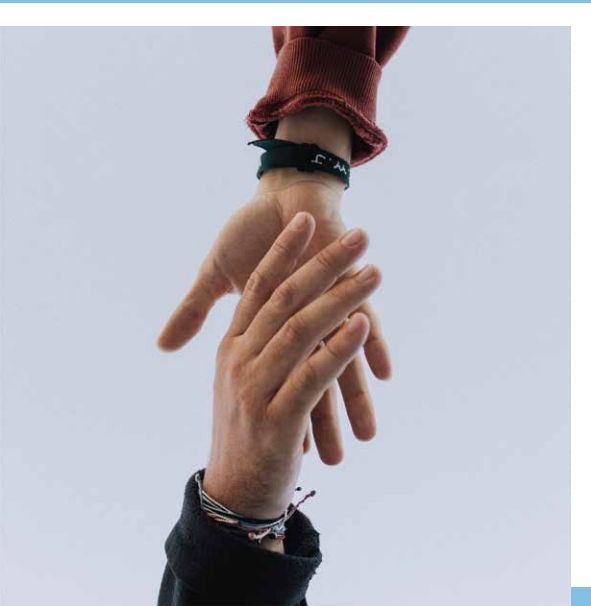
**The HOPE Fund Expenditure**



# The HOPE Fund

## Applications and Grants

	2020/21	2021/22
Number of applications received	33	18
Successful applicants	29	16
Total amount awarded to individuals	\$27,110.17	\$14,473.14
Average amount awarded to individuals	\$934.83	\$904.57



## The HOPE Fund Income

### 2021/2022

Donations	\$222.45
Interest	\$273.84
Total Income	\$496.29

## Thanks from The HOPE Fund Recipients...

"Can I just say without The HOPE Fund and also definitely the assistance of [Case Manager]... Let's just say nobody had any idea what we would have to be living through over the last couple of months. Being stuck in isolation would have really been almost intolerable without the assistance of The HOPE Fund with getting the refrigerator and the bed. Those two items were essential when it came to building myself a safe and peaceful environment to live in. Even [Organisational Administrator] was a great help getting it all organized and answering any follow up questions. Now I'm starting to build a savings buffer account and my next goal is to acquire myself a sofa for the lounge room. I can't thank you guys enough for the assistance you provided me a little over 2 months ago. I hope everybody is staying safe and washing their hands. And don't forget to tell the ones you love that they matter to you every now and then, during these tough times."

## Who is eligible to apply to The HOPE Fund?

To see if you are eligible to apply, please visit the QPP website and click on "The HOPE Fund", email [hopefund@qpp.org.au](mailto:hopefund@qpp.org.au), or call **07 3013 5555**.

### The Hope Fund +

In 2017, the HOPE Fund made a one off donation to establish the HOPE Fund + in response to unmet needs that other emergency funds were not able to meet. In the past year, HOPE Fund+ has provided \$1,291.41 in financial support for three PLHIV around Queensland.

### The Emergency Treatment Fund

The HIV Emergency Treatment Fund (ETF) is a QPP-managed program that is funded by Queensland Health annually. The ETF provides short term financial assistance for all PLHIV residing in Queensland (including people ineligible for Medicare) experiencing financial hardship to support early and ongoing engagement in HIV-related treatment and services.

Support includes clinical consultations for Medicare-ineligible PLHIV, medication costs, food costs, communication costs (e.g., phone credit), travel costs, and emergency accommodation costs. Other miscellaneous costs that may affect medication adherence can also be applied for.

During the last two years, in the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, occasions of access to the ETF increased. Expenses relating to medication and accommodation were frequent due to the changes occurring within our population's everyday lives.

Throughout the latter stages of 2021 and early 2022, the number of applications to the ETF have tapered off slightly, however they remain constant.

Support includes clinical consultations for Medicare-ineligible PLHIV, medication costs, food costs, communication costs (e.g., phone credit), travel costs, and emergency accommodation costs. Other miscellaneous costs that may affect medication adherence can also be applied for.

This year, the ETF provided **\$14,863.26** of support to PLHIV across Queensland.



## The Fund for People with Complex Needs

The fund for people with complex needs or commonly referred to as the 'CCF' is a special fund provided by Queensland Health to OPP to support people with complex needs.

To be eligible to access the fund people need to be referred to OPP by the HIV Public Health Team (HPHT). The primary aim of the fund is to support people with practical assistance to address barriers which are impacting their ability to engage in HIV treatment and care.



Applications to the fund are made by HPHT and OPP case managers for people who are collaboratively supported. A committee comprising of representatives from QPP and the Communicable Diseases Unit assess applications to the fund.

Over the past year **59 PLHIV** were supported by the CCF in **216 cases** for supports such as medications, housing, transport, accommodation and communications.

A total of approximately **\$26,701.46** was expended to support people with complex needs.

# HIV Stigma, Discrimination & Adovcacy

QPP recognises the difficulty that our PLHIV community face with stigma and discrimination on a daily basis.



Modern medicine and scientific strides in understanding and treating HIV have allowed many PLHIV to manage their health successfully and achieve improved health outcomes.

However, a continued lack of widespread understanding of HIV means stigma and discrimination remains one of the most significant pervasive final barrier for the community.

## Legal Support & Referral with the HIV/AIDS Legal Council

QPP has continued its partnership with the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre (HALC), providing legal advice and representation to PLHIV experiencing HIV-related legal issues.

HALC supported **58** QPP-referred clients this year, including for immigration, discrimination, privacy, and insurance. The support provided by HALC has proved invaluable for QPP clients.

Our client referral pathway has allowed greater hope for better legal outcomes for clients, as well as contributing to more equitable access to justice.

# Legal Clinics and HIV and the Law Webinars

This year, the QPP and HIV/AIDS Legal Centre's partnership continued to grow with additional projects being conducted. Some of these project were legal literacy workshops, a legal clinic for PLHIV and QPP staff education and training.

This year saw delivery of 2 full-day legal clinics: 1 in-person at the QPP Manilla Street office and 1 virtual. The face-to-face clinic was well-subscribed, with the provision of on-the-spot legal advice to 5 PLHIV. Each appointment was followed up with written advice and information.

Additionally, HALC delivered 1 evening webinar on Legal Issues Facing PLHIV, with a focus on immigration law, followed by a question-and-answer session which reflected that attendees were in need of HIV-specific immigration advice tailored to their circumstances.



# Inclusive and Innovative Services



# QPP Engagement Survey

QPP acknowledges the importance of listening to the diverse voices of PLHIV to help shape the development, implementation and evaluation of our prevention, treatment and support programs.

While QPP has implemented community engagement initiatives in the past, QPP felt it was time to embark upon a significant community engagement survey to assess how well we are engaging with the diverse community of people with HIV across the state. In 2021 QPP engaged QThink Consulting to design the QPP Engagement Survey (QPPES) that sought to capture the perspectives of PLHIV in Queensland.

This project focused on the range and quality of positive people's engagement with QPP programs and services. The project also included a quality of life tool (i.e. PozQoL) to gain further insights into the social, functional, psychological and physical health needs of PLHIV across the state. The project collected over 170 survey responses representing more than a dozen priority groups and communities. Nine qualitative interviews were also undertaken with a small sample to gain deeper insights into community perspectives. A project report including key findings and recommendations has been developed and soon to be released.

Key findings include:

- Most PLHIV in Queensland believe that QPP generally involves community members in its work; advocates for a diversity of PLHIV; values their lived experience, works to empower community members; and brings positive people together.
- PLHIV in Queensland report a generally good quality of life compared to national averages.

However, inquiring into agency engagement also revealed that positive people in Queensland:

- Who are women, heterosexual or regionally located find overall agency engagement and service options could be improved.
- Want expanded social support, peer networking and educational programs.
- Report lower-than-average quality of life concerning their relationships and sense of belonging.

The findings and recommendations of the QPPES report provide invaluable insight and will help inform QPP's strategic and operational planning and service delivery priorities to ensure they align with community needs. On the basis on the eight recommendations QPP has developed a draft implementation plan. QPP will consult with the Community Advisory Group (CAG) and other PLHIV representative groups to discuss the report recommendations and draft implementation plan help inform service development and ensure that services align with community needs.

QPP will provide updated information on the actions and progress in relation to each of the recommendations detailed in the report. It is important to QPP that community are informed of progress and that we remain transparent and accountable. We want you to know your voices have been heard.

QPP would like to thank the many people in our community who took the time to provide survey responses or participate in interviews. QPP would also like to extend our appreciation to Brent Allan and Joshua Badge from QThink Consulting for implement QPP's engagement project.

# Reconciliation Action Plan

QPP has committed to the process of implementing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as part of our strategic vision and as an acknowledgement that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australia's colonial history is characterised by devastating land dispossession, violence, societal and systemic racism.

With this understanding, QPP is committed to working towards becoming a reconciled, just and equitable Australia and eliminating the gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples and non-Indigenous peoples.

The RAP is an ongoing commitment to structural, professional and personal change for reconciliation. In view of this recognition, throughout the stages of the RAP, QPP is committing to review the potential barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in accessing our services and employment. This will require a critique of all relevant policy, systems and processes.

Currently, QPP is embarking on the Reflect stage of a RAP. This is a process of 12 -18 months.

We have a working group with representation across the organisation. This includes the board, leadership team and all teams within QPP on the RAP Working Group (RAPWG). This is to ensure change is sustained and integrated across all levels of the organisation.

QPP has commissioned an artist, Nigooli to undertake the artwork for the QPP RAP.

Nigooli is a Wuthathi woman and gifted painter. Her family heritage on her grandmother's side is from Shelburn Bay Cape York Peninsula and from her grandfather's side from Darnley Island in the Torres Strait Islands. She lives with her family in Meanjin. Nicky possesses a natural strength in her desire to paint and the themes within her work reflect culture, spirituality and life experiences. Nigooli Designs is a unique and dynamic fusion of traditional and contemporary themes, often encompassing the spirit of saltwater and deep ocean themes and reflections upon culture and life as taught to her by her grandfather.

# Parliamentary Inquiry Into Social Isolation and Loneliness

After meeting with the Minister for Communities and Housing in mid-2021, QPP prioritised making a submission to the Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry on Social Isolation and Loneliness.



The submission was made with letters of support from both NAPWHA and UQ. QPP are proud to announce that the submission was overwhelmingly and positively accepted by the Commission.

QPP attended as a witness to the public hearing and was represented by Mark Counter, Melissa Warner and Chris Howard.

Government are analysing and considering the 14 recommendations and a final response to the report was provided to the Legislative Assembly in June 2022 as required by the Act.

# Become a QPP Member!

## We need you!

We rely on our members for engagement and feedback to assist in the planning and development of appropriate services.

Our members are vital to this process, and this year, we aim to increase our member numbers to ensure that we are effectively reaching new audiences. We want to be challenged and embrace new perspectives and we want to continue to grow into an increasingly diverse and connected organisation.

Joining QPP as a member might just be one of the most rewarding and valuable decisions you make. Anyone, regardless of their HIV status, can join us.

There are two types of FREE membership:

-  Ordinary – people living with HIV
-  Associate – allies and associates of people living with HIV

As a person living with HIV and an Ordinary member, you will gain additional benefits such as:

-  Gain voting rights at our Annual General Meeting
-  Attain eligibility to be a sitting board member of QPP
-  Be kept informed on all the latest national and international news about HIV
-  Have more opportunities to meet and connect with other PLHIV and much more.

To become a member, just give us a quick call on 1800 636 241, or email us at [memberservices@qpp.org.au](mailto:memberservices@qpp.org.au) and ask for a membership form to be sent to you today.

### Whats in it for you?

You will add a voice to a leading, innovative HIV organisation alongside similarly passionate people

Your voice will be heard – you will help make a lasting impact. You will hear the impactful voices of others too.

You will build new connections, create a valuable support network, and may even make new friends.

Gain health benefits! Members of organisations often feel good about their involvement and there is incredible pride in giving back meaningfully to a cause you care about. Evidence suggests that self-esteem increases during these types of activities along with our sense of purpose.

You might receive a few other fun member perks along the way too as we gain more sponsorship! e.g. members only events – online chats with CEO and President, training sessions and outings

# Enhancing Relationships







# World AIDS Day

Held on 1 December, World AIDS Day is the longest-running awareness initiative of its kind. Since 1988, World AIDS Day and the iconic red ribbon raise awareness about issues surrounding HIV/AIDS and commemorate those lost to the pandemic. While fundraising is no longer a primary focus, funds raised for World AIDS Day across Queensland are donated to The HOPE Fund.

This year, a strong key message from the community was that, although treatment and support has changed for the better, PLHIV still experience extreme stigma and discrimination in Queensland. QPP in partnership with Queensland Council for LGBTI Health (QC) and the Queensland World AIDS Day Alliance (QWADA), led by the HIV+ voice, developed messaging to get this point across.


The curated messages explored five areas where there had been substantial changes in the response to HIV or more work was required. These were:

## "It's been 40 years of HIV and who would have thought.....?"

-  Now, most people on treatment, cannot pass on HIV to their partners.
-  People living with HIV are still treated differently by others.
-  You can get help to live with HIV.
-  You can now prevent HIV with a simple medication, Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, or PrEP.



## Social Media Analytics Totals

 **26,831** Impressions

 **17,750** People Reached

 **1000** Engagements

 **163** Shares

 **789** Likes

 **48** Comments

 **671** Clicks



## World AIDS Day awareness was promoted in the following ways:

**Large colourful digital billboards at five sites** throughout Queensland. This was a two-week campaign, running from 22 November to 05 December 2021. The Digital Billboard Campaign had approximately **2.8 million views**.

A **press release** was distributed using a PR Agency to **1193** press contacts, including national news agencies and contacts throughout Queensland, enabling us to reach newspapers, radio and television and of course our social media network.

The **Brisbane Candlelight Vigil**, held in Newstead, was attended by at least **100 community members**, including council dignitaries with more attendance online.

The **Cairns Candlelight Vigil**, held at the Cairns Esplanade, was attended by at least **80 community members** with more online.

Both candlelight vigils included an **inaugural reading of lives lost** to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, to commemorate those the community have honoured and remembered throughout the 40-year history. Both vigils included a **community gathering** afterwards.

**Red Commemorative Lighting at 23 sites across Queensland.** Even more buildings and structures around the state were illuminated in red throughout World AIDS week and on World AIDS Day, as more councils were contacted and agreed to support.

**Four World AIDS Day grants awarded** to community groups across regional Queensland. OPP and QC worked collaboratively to implement and promote the Regional Grants Program. Through this program we were able to raise awareness and amplify the HIV positive voice through the following events:

- World AIDS Day Community BBQ - Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal & Islander Community Controlled Health Service (CRAICCHS)**
- World AIDS Day BBQ and candlelight vigil with speaker - Gold Coast Rainbow Communities**
- World AIDS Day Herbert Street Family Medical Centre Bowen**
- Townsville Sexual Health candlelight vigil including remembrance walk, red themed dinner with a positive guest speaker.**

Many other regional events were held around the state, including those for the **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HIV Awareness week**. WAD merchandise were distributed for use at the event.

# CWC

For more than three decades, the Citizens Welfare Committee (CWC) Charity Cabaret, has helped to raise much-needed money for those impacted by HIV/AIDS in Queensland. Each CWC Cabaret has wowed audiences with a unique cavalcade of performers who donate their time, talent, and enthusiasm to one of the most anticipated events on the Brisbane drag calendar.



With the amazing talents of the CWC master of ceremonies, performer, and organiser extraordinaire Betty Nature, CWC Charity Cabarets were held in November 2021 and March 2022 at the home of Brisbane drag, The Sportsman Hotel who are longstanding supporters of our events. Both events included an array of drag identities from all Brisbane queer venues, as well as some of Queensland's best-loved performers from years gone by.

Despite being impacted still by COVID-19 restrictions on venue capacities, the November and March events raised a total of \$3,935.00. Both events were at capacity, often with a line of eager patrons waiting to get inside to enjoy the atmosphere and shows. We would like to thank The Den Fortitude Valley for their always generous support of the CWC raffles. Their contributions, together with the other sponsors help us raise funds that make a substantive impact to the quality of life of people living with HIV in Queensland today.

We thank Betty and all the performers, sponsors, and patrons for their continuing support of CWC. The proceeds help provide peer support events and activities that foster empowerment and resilience by enhancing self-esteem and social connectedness among our diverse, and sometimes isolated, PLHIV community.



# Pride

On the 30 October 2021 the Brisbane Pride Rally & March alongside the Brisbane Pride Fair Day went ahead, on a warm sunny day. A group of QPP and RAPID staff, QPP board, alongside members of QPP's community advisory group strolled down Brunswick Street, proudly waving the QPP banner, alongside approximately 2000 members of the LGBTIQ+ community and their allies.

QPP and RAPID, with the support of ATOMO Diagnostics, had an information stall the at Brisbane Pride Fair Day, which was held in New Farm Park, the conclusion of the 2021 March and Rally. Our stall was staffed members of both the RAPID and QPP teams, helping to inform the community about RAPID's HIV Home Test Kit program, and QPP's services. We also handed out free water, condoms, carry bags, World AIDS Day ribbons, and delicious rainbow lollipops to the over 150 fair patrons who visited us.



# Communications

We are delighted to announce the new QPP's website with renewed feature and more focused information and resources for people living with HIV, their allies, and health providers. It also includes a redeveloped events page, which gives users the ability to search easily for an event near them, add it to their own calendar and more. We are really proud of the new site, but are always keen to improve so we welcome your feedback. Reach out to us via [feedback@qpp.org.au](mailto:feedback@qpp.org.au)

The QPP website has been slowly growing its readership, and now with the new sites more focused and searchable content it is accessed by over 3000 visitors each month. Our pages and articles on HIV Testing, Cost of HIV Treatment, Monkeypox (MPXV) and HIV and the law in Queensland are some of the most utilised.

Our QPP Facebook page reached 18,876 people, which is a 173% increase on the previous year. We had 1,223 page visits, up 5% on the previous year, with 76 more followers to our page, which is nearly a 30% increase from the previous year.

QPP creates newsletters, social media and promotions for QPP, health and education, community events and opportunities of interest. Planning is also underway to reinvigorate our membership program.

QPP Plus is our monthly community newsletter – it delivers an easy to read, colourful approach on everything QPP is engaged in at the time. It also provides links to the latest health information and social events that may interest our community.

QPP is also working closely with our community and government partners to ensure we have the most up to date information on the response to MPXV, including developments on transmission and vaccination program roll outs.

# NAPWHA Update

NAPWHA's mission is to improve the health and quality of life for all people living with HIV (PLHIV) in Australia. Over the past 12 months we have worked across a range of projects to realise this. Our work includes advocacy, policy, research, health promotion, effective representation, and outreach across a range of health and social issues including treatments, ageing with HIV, testing, criminalisation, stigma and discrimination. Partnership is paramount in all our work, and we continue to work closely our members and networks to deliver work which connects us with PLHIV around Australia and improves their quality of life. Below are some highlights from the past 12-months.

## Health Literacy Framework

The Health Literacy Framework project (2019-2021) concluded its three-year initiative with a showcase at the NAPWHA members forum in June 2022 and a comprehensive report and evaluation. The project continues NAPWHA's tradition of ground-breaking work for and with PLHIV, striving to ensure that all PLHIV have the best supports available to them in terms of appropriate, affordable, and accessible treatment and care. The project focused on engaging diverse cohorts of PLHIV who have not benefited equally from recent successes across the HIV care continuum and aimed to address the role of HIV health literacy in improving HIV-related health care and quality of life outcomes for all PLHIV in Australia.

## Networks

The legacy of the health literacy framework project is how NAPWHA engages with our members, and the establishment of three additional NAPWHA networks: the Positive Asian Network Australia (PANA), the Positive Latinx Australian Network (PLAN), and the Heterosexual Men's Advocacy Network (HetMAN). These networks join the National Network of National Network of Women Living with HIV and Positive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network (PATSIIN).

## Finding Joy and Beyond Resilience

The Beyond Resilience Congress was Australia's first-ever virtual congress bringing together the body positive from across Australia in a three-hour Zoom webinar. Topics included how we support emerging leaders and build the capacity of the positive community to advocate for improved quality of life.











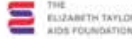










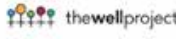



Finding Joy, held in a hybrid format (in-person and online) as part of the Members Forum. Over three hours, panellists explored what enables moments of joy and happiness that give us energy for life and focused on techniques for improving quality of life.

## Home Testing Project

At the end of 2021, NAPWHA and QPP were successful in winning a grant to provide a national home HIV testing service. The home testing project will be a distribution service for up to 12,000 home HIV tests for up to 3000 individuals, free of charge to the consumer, posted to any address in Australia. People will be able to go to the website, register and automatically be sent two HIV home tests in one parcel – so that they can test either side of the window period. They'll be prompted to re-order a second pack six month later if they forget. The home testing project will start taking orders early 2023.

# U=U Global Summit at AIDS 2022

QPP was a proud partner for the U=U Global Summit at AIDS 2022. The current partners and sponsors are listed in the graphic below.

SUMMIT ORGANIZER		SUMMIT SPONSORS				
						
						
SUMMIT COORDINATING PARTNERS						
						
SUPPORTERS						
						

# Best Practice Standards






# Accreditation

As part of the service delivery requirements held within the Service Agreement 2021-2026 between Queensland Positive People and Queensland Health, QPP became certified in the Human Service Quality Standards (HSQS) -January 2022. QPP welcomed accreditation as a means to meet best practice standards and to demonstrate accountability processes to our communities and the people we work with.





## What is accreditation and why do we need it?

It is the independent acknowledgment that QPP meets the requirements of governing industry standards and:

-  Recognises our commitment to best practice, quality, high performing systems and processes, and continuous improvement.
-  Reassures QPP clients and stakeholders that we are committed to providing safe and quality service provision.
-  Assists QPP to grow, expand and solidify our future sustainability.

The Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) is the assessment tool within the Human Services Quality Standards and is used by many organisations in Queensland.

The objectives of the HSQF are to:

-  To review our management system and processes
-  Determine our conformity with the standards
-  To validate that the management system complies with all applicable elements of the HSQS
-  To validate the organisation complies with its own policies and procedures.

The HSQS accreditation procedure is also designed as a continuous improvement framework to support QPP to achieve its commitment to on-going quality improvement.

The framework is designed as a continuous improvement framework to support QPP to achieve its commitment to on-going quality improvement. Certification against the Human Services Quality Standards (HSQS) is a three-year cycle with a mid-cycle maintenance audit.

# QPP Research Activities

QPP is an active participant in research with state and national research institutions, government, and other community-based organisations.

We value research that demonstrates the impact of the services we provide and builds an evidence base to assist us to better understand the needs of our communities. Summaries of the projects QPP is involved are presented below.

## HIV/STI Prevention and Testing

Throughout the 2021/2022 financial year, RAPID has continued undertaking several novel research projects that continue to innovate within the sexual health space.

This reporting period saw RAPID continue to broaden its geographical reach with a mail out self-testing program, distributing the Atomo HIV self-testing device across the state. The peer support component of the clinic was reworked to suit a telehealth modality, and peer testers provided sexual health education and health promotion messaging to clients over the phone. This program continued to be successful with targeting hard to reach populations, where a significant proportion of clients reported testing histories of greater than 12 months or not at all.

In regards to other projects, RAPID has continued with its chlamydia and gonorrhoea pooling research, operated our vending machine program that distributed Atomo HIV self-testing devices at a university campus and two sex on premises venues, continued to partner with Metro North Sexual Health and HIV Service to provide a bi-weekly treatment clinic at our Fortitude Valley site, and investigated male fertility outcomes from gonococcal and chlamydial upper reproductive tract infections.



# QPP Research Activities cont.

## HIV treatment and care – including research focused on the experiences of PLHIV – includes:

### ASHM HIV/STI Conference September 2022

QPP is proud to be involved in the 2022 Joint Australasian HIV&AIDS Conference. A group of QPP staff members will be attending the event and will partake in the following activities: 1. Invited guest speaker for ASHM/ViiV/ Gilead/RACGP National Roundtable  
2. Invited guest speaker – Retained in Care Living the Cascade  
3. Co-chair of the Social Political and Cultural session  
4. Invited as mentor of peer researcher in meet the expert's lunch

### ASHM Lived Experience Project/Policy

QPP has engaged with ASHM to support the development of a lived experience policy and has informed strategies on how ASHM can utilise lived experience in their work. The policy has been finalised and will inform ASHM's work in the future.

### Incorporating Quality of Life Into PLHIV Care

QPP continue to engage in the national working group to support the development of Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMS) through a developmental DELPHI method. A second DELPHI round of PROMS was conducted this year with an accepted poster being presented at the 2022 Joint Australasian HIV&AIDS Conference.

### HIV Online Learning Australia (HOLA)

Is a program by AFAO and NAPWHA to bring together cross-jurisdictional collaboration to increase the knowledge and skills of our workforce. QPP participates in HOLA through Education Managers Forums to provide project governance and advisory input. In the last year, HOLA delivered several eLearning modules. Additionally, QPP is working with HOLA on a webinar for social isolation/loneliness.

### CLIO (Cohort of HIV women)

QPP continues to participate in the advisory group through a community representative for the study which explores the needs of women with HIV.

### Exploring the relationship between HIV literacy, risks, and networks of newly arrived Asian-born gay, bisexual, and MSM

QPP is proud to announce that an application to the Sexual Health Research Fund was successful. This application is in partnership with the University of Queensland, Ethnic Council of Communities Queensland (ECCO) and Queensland Council of LGBTI Health (QC). This research will examine the HIV literacy and risks of Southeast Asian and Northeast Asian born gay, bisexual, and MSM (GBM) in Queensland; through the exploration of their networks post migration. With an increase in HIV diagnoses in this population group in Queensland, understanding the risks and literacy is a focus and priority for QPP.

QPP's PSC represents QPP on this research group and one of our PTFs is participating as a peer researcher.

### RISE

QPP continues to participate in the national advisory group in the RISE study (recently diagnosed). The largest NHMRC grant of its type involving every state and territory health department and HIV organisation. The annual national meeting occurred in August with presentations on the key findings. 12 publications have either been published or are in draft form - QPP has co-authored one of these journal articles. The published research articles (and QPP) were also featured in the RACGP online newsletter this year.

### Living Positive Queensland (LPQ)

During this reporting period QPP and UQ have finalised the Living Positive Queensland report and have subsequently developed 4 journal articles using the findings. QPP has completed the editing process and is meeting to finalise report recommendations; with a final publication date for the report to be set. An abstract for this report was submitted for the International HIV Ageing Conference in Boston in October 2022.



## **QUT CALD**

QPP partnered with QUT/ECCQ for a sub-study titled Reducing disparities for Australian culturally and linguistically diverse overseas-born people in relation to sexual health and blood-borne viruses. The Migrant Blood-borne Virus and Sexual Health Survey (MiBBS) was further distributed to QPP networks with significant numbers of QLD respondents. The report has been finalised and current papers are being planned.

## **LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl Brotherboy Ageing Research Working Group**

QPP partook in a working group comprised of key researchers from USQ and UQ and key community stakeholders that developed a survey to investigate the research priorities for ageing LGBTIQ+ populations. The survey was finalised earlier this year with survey period extended to June 2022. The initial data analysis has commenced with preliminary data demonstrating that 27 respondents of the survey respondents identify as PLHIV. QPP will assist this process further by donating to support a research assistant to assist with additional data analysis.

## **HIV Narratives Project – QPP & USQ**

QPP participates on a research group that has been exploring QPP's Talking About' series of films. The analysis has been drafted into an HIV narratives paper co-authored by QPP. QPP will be submitting this paper for additional journal publications.

## **Development of a National Curriculum for Peers**

The National PLHIV Peer Workforce Development Project comprises a national forum for the PLHIV peer workforce, establishing a professional development curriculum (through an online training portal/module) for PLHIV peer support workers. The project, funded by ViiV and led by NAPWHA, will engage all PLHIV organisations in development and implementation of the project. Training participants will be able to obtain RPL whilst working in peer roles. All QPP Peer Navigators and EPM will be enrolled. QPP's Peer Services Coordinator is representing QPP on this work and further development of the curriculum has continued throughout the year.

## **NAPWHA HIV101 GP Project**

QPP participates on the national reference group to support the development of an education/support module to assist GP's giving a HIV diagnosis. The project is designed to improve the experience of people receiving a diagnosis of HIV from a GP.

## **W3 Project (La Trobe)**

QPP is participating in the What W3 Project national working group to assist in the development of national key performance indicators for peer programs. A QPP co-authored paper on W3, titled "Tackling structural stigma: a systems perspective" was published this year, and a poster accepted for the 2022 Joint Australasian HIV&AIDS Conference.

## **POZQoL**

QPP have contributed to a co-authored journal article which was submitted during this reporting period titled: Assessing the sensitivity and usability of POZQoL, a short quality of life scale for people living with HIV, in Australian Community and Clinical Health Services.



# QPP Research Activities cont.

The following co-authored abstracts/reports/articles were published this period:

Title: "They're my go-to people": A qualitative study of support networks for people recently diagnosed with HIV in Queensland. Published in the **Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care.**

Title: 'Patient-centred approaches to providing care at HIV diagnosis: perspectives from healthcare and peer-support workers'. Published in **Journal of Sexual Health.**

Title: "Enduring stigma and precarity: A review of qualitative research examining the experiences of women living with HIV in high income countries over two decades". Published in **Health Care for Women International.**

Title: "Tackling structural stigma: a systems perspective". Published in the **Journal of the International AIDS Society.**

Title: "Peer Navigators role in supporting people living with HIV in Australia: qualitative exploration of general practitioners perspectives". Published in **Health and Social Care.**

Title: "Online HIV Self-Testing (HIVST) Dissemination by an Australian Community Peer HIV Organisation: A Scalable Way to Increase Access to Testing, Particularly for Suboptimal Testers". Published in the **International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.**

Title: "Belonging, social connection, and non-clinical care: Experiences of HIV peer support among recently diagnosed people living with HIV in Australia". Published in **Health & Social Care in the Community.**

Title: "The spiral just keeps on going': Cascading health and social issues for women living and aging with HIV". Published in **Women's Health.**

Title: "Views and Preferences of People Living with HIV about Smoking, Quitting and Use of Nicotine Products". Published in the **International Journal of Drug Policy.**

The following co-authored abstracts/reports/articles were published this period'



Co-designing system level indicators for strengthening the quality and impact of peer led responses



Achieving long term community and research partnerships: system level benefits, enablers, and barriers



Queensland PLHIV Community Engagement: Linking GIPA principles with Quality of Life (IAS and Asia Pacific Conference

## Abstracts/Posters Accepted for ASHM 2022:

**PLHIV Community Engagement Linking GIPA principles with quality of life** - accepted for an e-poster at Asia Pacific AIDS and Co Infections Conference 2022 (APACC) and a poster tour at ASHM 2022

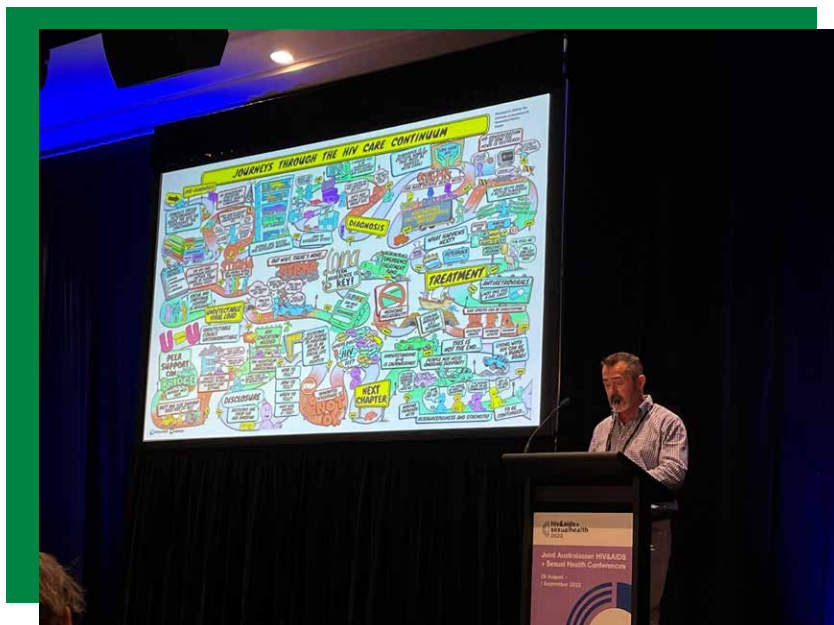
**HIV Associated Neurocognitive Disorder Screening and Diagnosis Pathways in Australia: A scoping review** - accepted for an e-poster at AIDS 2022

**Proving the power of peers: Creating a practical toolkit to enable peer/community-led organisations evaluate their work and better understand, demonstrate, and improve their impact.** Petrina M Hilton, Graham Brown, Chris Howard, Tim Krulic, Jane Dicka, Adam Bourne

**Incorporating Quality of Life Into Care for People Living with HIV (PLHIV): Developing a Consensus Tool of Health and Social Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) For Clinical and Community Services.** Olekalns A, Mai C, Lloyd J, Cifali D, Howard C, Hoy J, O'Reilly M, Rule J, Brown G.

**PLHIV community engagement: Linking GIPA principles with quality of life (oral poster).** C. Howard, B. Allan, J. Badge. Queensland Positive People, East Brisbane, Australia, Othink Consulting, Malmesbury, Australia.

QPP would like to acknowledge our research partners across Australia and Queensland who partner and collaborate with QPP to build a better future for people with HIV.



# Advocacy

## HIV and the Law in Queensland

The scientific consensus of Undetectable = Untransmissible U=U and other medical progress is not yet well-understood or recognised in the broader legal system. QPP has continued important lobbying and education work for the decriminalisation of HIV.

## Review of the Queensland Anti-discrimination Bill

QPP met with the Queensland Human Rights Commission with HALC and NAPWHA as part of the initial consultation phase and submitted a joint submission for the review. We advocated for: extended, strengthened and clarified protections to ensure that PLHIV and everyone who needs protection under the Act was included;

- a shift of focus to prevention of discrimination and harassment before it happens;
- making the law easier to understand and apply by modernising the language and definitions; and
- streamlining the complaints process to make it more flexible and efficient.

The final report Building belonging: **Review of Queensland's Anti-Discrimination Act 1991** and recommendations have been tabled in Parliament and we await the Queensland Government's

## Framework for a Decriminalised Sex Work Industry in Queensland

The Queensland Government has committed to decriminalising the sex work industry. This means regulating sex work as work, not as a crime. The Queensland Law Reform Commission (QLRC) has been asked to recommend what the framework for a decriminalised sex work industry should be.

QPP, in partnership with NAPWHA and HALC made a submission to the welcomed review and advocated for the decriminalisation of sex work in Queensland including:

- a focus on the detriment that the criminalisation of sex workers poses to human rights and the HIV response in Australia;
- a repeal of chapter 22A of the Criminal Code 1899, the Prostitution Act 1999 and sections of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 and
- the necessary review of the current public health laws, which specifically discriminate against and criminalise people living with HIV engaging in sex work.

# Staff Training and Development

At QPP, we know that our team are able to provide the highest possible level of care to our communities and clients when they are engaged and informed.

To support this, we conducted the following training:

- ✦ Whole-of-organisational sessions on the Anti-Discrimination Act and Unconscious Bias with the Queensland Human Rights Commission;
- ✦ CALM Suicide Safety Training;
- ✦ Workplace Health and Safety and Quality Systems; and
- ✦ Team specific sessions such as clinical governance



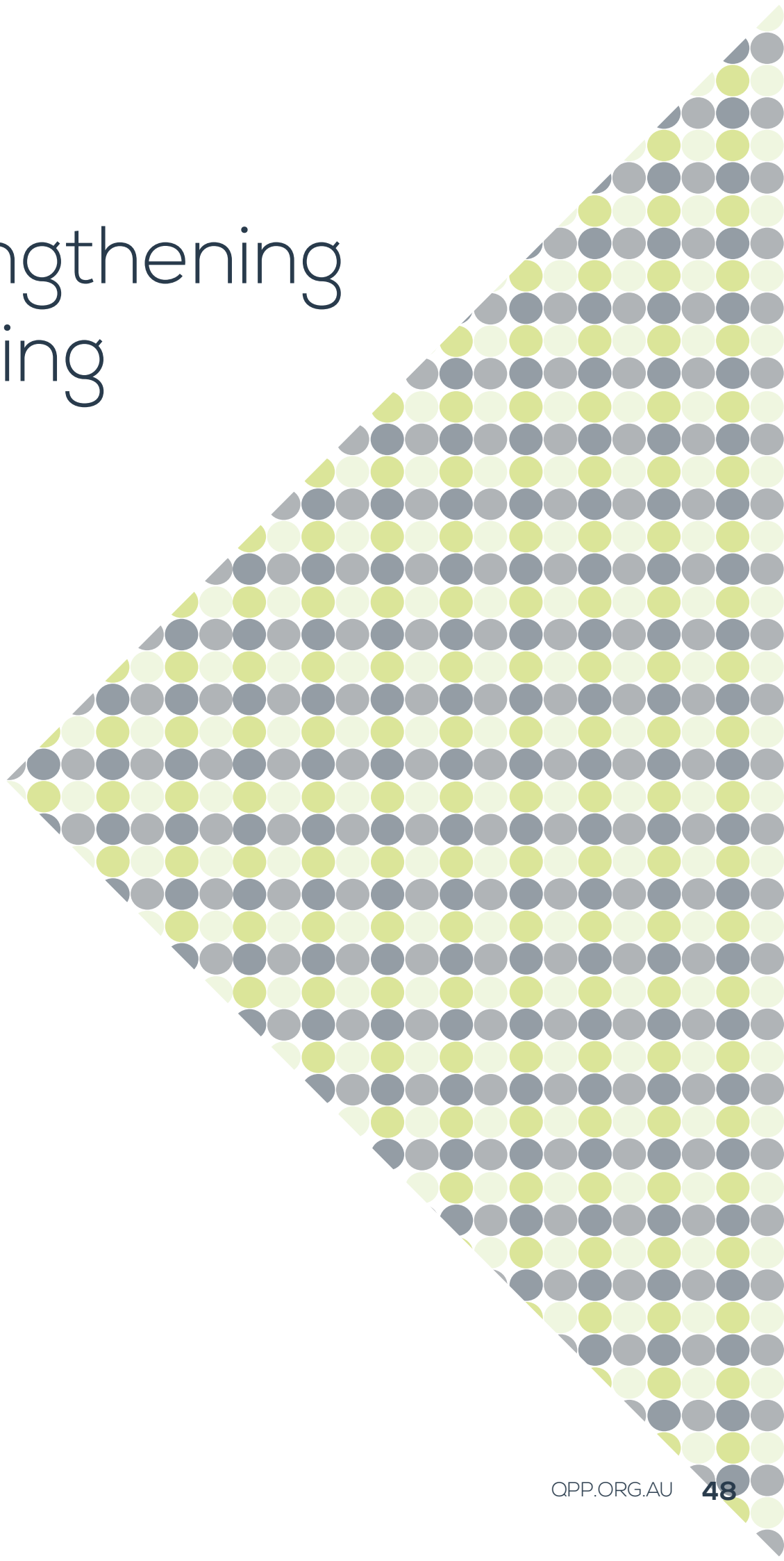
QPP will also support 21 staff and board to attend the Australasian HIV and Sexual Health Conference, which is being held on the Sunshine Coast for the first time. It is always a privilege to be able to attend these conferences, and our staff take the opportunity for professional development seriously.

The conference provides us with the opportunity to explore and engage with contemporary research and discuss all things HIV with clinicians, policy makers, funders and researchers from around the country. Several QPP staff will present their research and have been invited to speak at the conference.

We have also applied for a grant from Gilead pharmaceuticals to host an exhibition booth, where we hope to distribute lots of information, sell our HIV I am Human T-shirts and merchandise and demonstrate our new HIV self-testing kits machine. We all hope to make lots of worthy connections for future partnership opportunities. All monies raised from the QPP shop will fund our community services.



# Strengthening Funding



2021/2022 has been a new chapter for QPP in many ways. With the HIV positive voice guiding our direction, QPP renewed its mission, values and strategic plan for the next five years.

We also signed a five year Service Agreement 2021/2022 – 2025/2026 with Queensland Health to deliver the following services across Queensland:

- + Prevention and testing of HIV and STIs through RAPID
- + Online HIV self (home) testing
- + HIV Treatment and Management
- + World AIDS Day

We have continued on our journey to strengthen our funding as an organisation to meet the needs of the communities we serve in a diverse, robust and sustainable way.

With our mission to improve the quality of life for PLHIV and reduce the transmission of HIV and STIs, our key areas of focus to expand and enhance delivering whole of life programs are:

- + Community development and education/training
- + Social isolation
- + Mental health
- + Ageing
- + Disability
- + HIV and STI testing, prevention and treatment



QPP was successful in obtaining the following grants for implementation during 2022/2023:

- + Digital Health Connect – ViiV Healthcare
- + National HIV Self-Testing Program (NAPWHA and QPP) – Gilead

QPP is strengthening relationships with Queensland Health and other Queensland Government Departments including: the Queensland Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Technology; the Department of Seniors and Disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; and the Office of the Attorney-General. We are also pursuing Commonwealth Government funding opportunities through the Queensland Primary Health Networks.

QPP will also be engaging with Penny Knight from Baxter Lawley for professional support to assist QPP revise its business strategy and evaluate different options during the 2022/2023 period.



## Accounts and Audit

To download a copy of our financial statement for the 2021-2022 financial year, please go to:

<https://www.qpp.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/QPP-2021-2022-Audited-Financial-Statements.pdf>

