

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS *Victoria*

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

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VICTORIA'S PEAK BODY FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS  
AND AFFECTED COMMUNITIES FOR 21 YEARS



# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

## MISSION STATEMENT

The primary purpose of People Living With HIV/AIDS is to provide services and relief from suffering, alleviating poverty, distress and financial hardship for people living with HIV/AIDS, with the aim of improving their life expectancy and also their quality of life.

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## Paul Kidd

In 2009, people with HIV are living longer, healthier lives than ever before – but are they living well? And what does this change in the lived experience of people with HIV mean for organisations like PLWHA Victoria?

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We are told repeatedly about the successes of HIV treatment and, indeed, over the last decade-and-a-half the number of people dying or becoming seriously ill from HIV-related causes has fallen dramatically, while the proportion who are able to keep working has steadily risen. The spectacular success of these treatments has saved countless lives and turned HIV from a life-threatening illness into a chronic, manageable condition.

But despite all the good news about treatments, we know there are still significant challenges facing people with HIV in Victoria. Fewer people are dying from AIDS, but the incidence of heart disease, lipodystrophy, diabetes and some cancers is rising, so there are still real and significant treatment challenges ahead of us.

In this context, some people are asking what the role of advocacy and support organisations like ours is, or even whether we need to exist at all. Increasing numbers of people with HIV tell us they are doing well, remaining healthy and getting on with their lives, and these people have little need for the kinds of services that used to be the mainstay of HIV support organisations.

But not everyone is doing equally well – a significant minority of people with HIV still struggle with treatment failure, side effects, and social isolation. For many of these, HIV is just one part of a bigger picture that can include other chronic diseases and mental health issues. Positive women, children, heterosexual men, people in

regional areas and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities may have different needs to gay men living in inner-city Melbourne.

Our challenge as an organisation that represents all positive people is to be responsive to and representative of that diversity of lived experience without losing touch with the community of gay men from which our organisation was founded 21 years ago. Celebrating diversity and building partnerships between HIV-affected communities strengthens and energises our cause.

HIV remains a highly stigmatised condition, and many of us have experienced the kind of insidious stigma that remains all too common in our communities, our families and our society as a whole. Stigma is a malignancy: it attacks our sense of self-worth and limits our participation in society. Unlike systemic discrimination, which can and has been legislated against, combating stigma means changing people's perceptions, providing education, and asserting our right to dignity and respect.

In coming years, combating stigma, building social inclusion and focusing on wellness will be increasingly central to the work that we do at PLWHA Victoria. We have already commenced the development of a new Strategic Plan to guide our work in these and other areas, building on the capacity and experience we have developed over the last 21

years. We will be seeking input from our members, partner organisations and all positive people on this Strategic Plan and hope that you will be part of helping shape our organisation into the future.

The last year has been a period of growth and consolidation for us, and there is much to be proud of. The Positive Education program, Speakers' Bureau and Connect Line have all grown in scope and impact, and we have recently commenced a new health promotion project aimed at sexually adventurous men. Treatment Interactive Events continue to be well regarded and attract a lot of interest, and we have re-framed Planet Positive as a joint effort by PLWHA Victoria, Positive Women, Straight Arrows and VAC/GMHC.

All of this has happened under the leadership of our Executive Officer, Sonny Williams, whose professionalism and commitment continue to be an invaluable asset to the organisation. The work we do would not be possible without the enthusiasm and dedication of our team of staff and volunteers, the strategic guidance of our volunteer Board, the collaborative spirit of our partner organisations, and the continued support of our major funder, the Victorian Department of Health, and our sponsors and donors.

In 2009, PLWHA Victoria is a strong, resilient and evolving agency with a long and proud history of advocacy, activism, care and support. It is an organisation I am honoured and privileged to lead.



Paul Kidd

# EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

## Sonny Williams

I am happy to report on the activities of PLWHA Victoria over the last financial year 2008 - 2009 which has seen the agency make contributions on a number of levels within the HIV sector, building collaborative partnerships, bringing others on board and allowing time and space for relationships to develop. As the lives of PLHIV change we must be seen to be keeping pace and at the same time move and continue to meet the needs of the community we work with.

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I would like to provide a quick snap shot of some of the programs delivered by the organisation:

- 200 people accessed the agency seeking financial assistances
- 300 plus members accessed Planet Positive, a social space for PLHIV to meet, socialise and make connections
- 150 members took advantage of the Treatment Interactive Events held 3 times a year
- 52 members accessed the Positive Education programming
- 32 newly diagnosed made use of Phoenix workshops, held 4 times a year to provide information, referrals and support
- 166 individual talks were carried out to 5845 people via the Positive Speakers Bureau
- 890 calls were made to the HIV and Sexual Health Connect Line.

PLWHA Victoria is still developing. We continue moving forward with the ongoing realignment of resources as the organisation has evolved and grown and expectations of the agency have changed and the experience of people living with HIV has altered. We've grown significantly both in terms of our annual budget, staff levels, partnerships and program delivery; we anticipate this growth to potentially

continue into the near future and bring us more challenges.

The increasing reputation of PLWHA Victoria as a professional, capable and well-managed organisation opens up opportunities for us to develop even more new programs, partnerships and methods of service delivery that support our mission and help build a stronger HIV community for Victoria. However as our reputation increases as an organisation, and as we expose ourselves to a wider audience, this creates the added risk and test of retaining staff who are offered roles in other areas which provide not only economic but leadership growth for individuals.

Professional development, a commitment to evaluation and quality control of programs or projects delivered remain cornerstones of PLWHA Victoria. Evaluation and feedback processes enable us to:

- Identify changing needs of target communities
- Monitor the extent to which target communities access programs and services appropriate to their needs
- Analyse how well programs and services are meeting the needs of target communities and what can be done to enhance this usage

- Analyse where programs and services are not meeting the needs of target communities and ways to address the reasons for this
- Link these reviewing processes to on-going programs and services development
- Contribute to retaining a high level of quality control without affecting the integrity of the work the agency performs with an emphasis on outcome and sharper definitions of outputs

Sitting beside everything we do is the need to retain a position in partnerships equal to and as relevant as others. Over the recent years the PLHIV sector capacity has continued to develop and that process will continue, but at what expense without increased enhancements?

With ongoing continued funder interest in health promotion, prevention strategies and outcomes, HIV is just one element of a broader framework of the management of blood borne viruses. Certain funders see potential in programs of interest; the question then is to ask if there is another way of shaping this work to open up other opportunities for funding. It is something we will have to look at and address when we may have little or no enhancements.

Looking forward, we are heading into a new period for PLWHA Victoria as we reflect at where the agency has come from, its growth in the last four years and begin the process of developing a new strategic plan. Our current plan expires in June 2010, and over the next few months, the board and staff of PLWHA Victoria will be considering the direction we want to take the organisation. However this requires the participation from our members, community and partners. A strategic plan exists to identify the goals and objectives the organisation strives towards, and the path we need to take towards achieving the goals and objectives identified. A new strategic plan will set the framework for business plans and budgets for PLWHA Victoria for the period up to 2013.



Sonny Williams

# TREASURER'S REPORT

## Greg Iverson

The financial year ending 30 June 2009 has once again attested to our increased activity in the sector. We are in a good position to continue the work of PLWHA Victoria Inc.

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### INCOME

The Operating Grant received from the Department of Human Services BBV/STI continues to be the main source of funding for PLWHA Victoria. Total income received for the financial year was \$721,254, a drop in revenue by \$90,997 compared to the previous year's income of \$812,251. The drop in this total was due to a drop in expended grants from the Department of Human Services BBV/STI, bank interest and sponsorship. There was an increase in income from Speakers Bureau fees and the Emergency Distress Fund.

### EXPENDITURE

There was a decrease in Administration costs, Campaigns, Telephone Line and Health Promotion though staff numbers remain as per previous financial year.

### BALANCE SHEET

The balance sheet illustrates the net worth of PLWHA Victoria for the financial year 2008-2009.

Current total assets are \$464,293. This is made up largely of unexpended Grants

Liabilities for the period are \$435,476. This is made up largely of unexpended Grants that will be expended in F2010.

The results are net assets of the organisation for the financial year end totalling \$28,817.

In summary, the activities of PLWHA Victoria saw a paper decrease in the capital funding to the organisation due to the unexpended grants. The main obligation continues to be the costs of the day-to-day-operation through an increasing range of activities being produced by the agency. PLWHA Victoria ended the year with a net loss of \$2,055.

# BIG PICTURE, Personal Consequences

ROBERT MITCHELL, NAPWA PRESIDENT

2009 is the year in which the Sixth National Strategy for HIV in Australia is being developed with completion due by the end of the year. Why do we need another National Strategy and what do we hope it can achieve? In writing this article I hope to relate this rarefied policy document to the impact that it has on the individual person with HIV.

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The why can be answered by reflecting on the history of the epidemic and the enormous changes that have occurred since Australia's first HIV strategy in 1988 and what previous strategies have achieved. What must also be considered is the context in which this strategy is being developed; particularly the current health reform and preventative health agendas. While these processes often seem far removed from concerns of people as they carry out their everyday lives, ultimately they can have a very direct impact on the way in which we live our lives.

In 1988 the Commonwealth Government produced the confronting 'Grim Reaper' campaign which had as part of its message that there was the potential for 50,000 deaths from AIDS. As a direct result of this campaign the Australian response to the HIV epidemic gained momentum and a coordinated non partisan partnership approach to all aspects of the epidemic was implemented.

In retrospect, while there was a lot of concern about the campaign at the time for its alarmist approach, Australia has a lot to be grateful for. Primarily the campaign ensured that we did not reach the number of projected deaths as a result of contracting HIV; in fact the total number of HIV infected people is just over half that number and less than one quarter have died. For this alone, the strategies that proceeded from that time should be rated as being successful although not always

ideal. However there have been many other benefits that have resulted in a world leading response to the HIV epidemic.

A fundamental principle underpinning the national HIV strategies has been a non partisan partnership model; that is the government, medical and community sectors working together to equally contribute to combating the epidemic. Central to this model is the role that people with HIV have to play in all aspects of addressing this disease; after all we have a very direct interest in ensuring that HIV has the least impact possible on our lives and our communities.

The partnership approach has the benefit of maximising the efforts and outcomes at all levels and makes the most of the resources used. Australia has also been able to lead the world in research into the disease despite the relative small epidemic in Australia, with our HIV population working with the medical community and researches to better understand the virus and treatments and the effects that that they have on us.

The development of the national strategies has resulted in many programs and changes that we now take for granted, but which may not have occurred had there not been a coordinated approach. An example of this is the development of needle and syringe programs throughout the country that have been affective in stopping Australia from having a major



epidemic in the injecting community similar to those experienced elsewhere in the world.

The availability of treatments for HIV in Australia is another example of the success of the response, with positive people able to easily and inexpensively access the drugs and treatments needed to combat the virus. Australia has an enviable record in providing access to the latest HIV treatments as they become available; in fact we have had one of the best publicly subsidised drug programs in the world resulting in an ever increasing life expectancy for HIV-positive people in this country.

The development of the next National HIV Strategy is occurring at a time when the cost of health care is increasing and our ability to afford it is not. This is the fundamental reason underpinning the Government's reform agendas; it is cheaper to prevent disease than to treat it. The current high profile issues are smoking, alcohol and obesity which will affect many HIV-positive people, but ultimately other preventable illnesses such as HIV will be targeted in the broad preventive health agenda.

For those of us with existing conditions, earlier intervention in the course of the disease will be promoted and for HIV this means that a greater focus will be placed on treating, maintaining and improving our health. Already many positive people experience health mainstreaming and more of our health care in the future will be provided by people who may not be specialists in HIV health care. If this leads to a reduction in the level of knowledge of HIV in the people who are providing our health care, then this could have a major impact for the quality of the health care that we receive in the future.

The next HIV Strategy is not being developed in isolation from those broad

reform agendas and it must be noted that similar strategies are also being developed in the same process for Viral Hepatitis (B&C) and STIs as well as an Indigenous Sexual Health Strategy. The issues that need to be addressed in the next strategy not only cross over between these other strategies but also are impacted upon by many other areas outside of health. Some of the most obvious are the areas of welfare support, criminal justice and immigration, all of which also have their own guiding strategies and principles and are subject to their own review and reform processes. It is therefore important that the next strategy endeavours to appropriately engage and influence these other sectors that have an impact on the HIV response.

While the HIV response has not been perfect, the previous strategies have laid a solid foundation on which to build the next strategy. The major challenge will be to adequately address the issues facing the growing population of HIV-positive people in this country, that is living longer with the disease and consequently addressing the issues of long term treatments and an accelerated ageing process. A major element of previous strategies has been to maintain and improve prevention efforts, treatments options and care and support for HIV-positive people. This is an ongoing process of identifying issues and examining solutions that must continue in the next strategy.

The development of the strategy is but the first part of an ongoing process in the response to HIV; equally important is the way in which the issues identified in the strategy are implemented and evaluated and that this will form part of a continual cycle of improvement of the HIV response in this country. Australia is fortunate to have a robust HIV research sector that plays a vital role in evaluating and monitoring the effectiveness of the strategies and their impact across all infected and affected communities.

The strategy will guide that direction for the whole of the HIV partnership in setting policy and influencing services that ultimately are delivered to people living with HIV. This is the reason that consumer organisations such as NAPWA, the peak community organisation for HIV-positive people in Australia, engages in the HIV National Strategy processes and indeed is the ultimate function of the organisation. NAPWA's mandate to undertake this work is driven by its member organisations which are the state based positive people associations such as PLWHA Victoria, and through our membership consultation processes we set the advocacy agenda for the organisation on behalf of all HIV-positive people in Australia.

State based organisations also have a more direct link into setting the agenda for how these national strategies are implemented, as each state has a state strategy that links to the national one and it is at this level that many of the resources are allocated. State based organisations have a very direct role in acting not only as systemic advocates for issues of broad concern but also on an individual basis and in so doing have a direct understanding of those issues that affect the personal experience of living with HIV. Ultimately each individual who is a member of a state based organisation can influence the development of the National Strategy through participation at a state level. It is in this way that the big picture is influenced by the experience and needs of the individual.

# SPEAKERS BUREAU

## Patron's Message

JO PEARSON

It can be argued that the true measure of a person is what it takes to upset them. There are those who snap under the slightest pressure or irritation, and then others who will demonstrate calm, endurance and good grace under even the most trying circumstances. Speakers Bureau team members were put under the sort of pressure that has been known to reduce otherwise stalwart communicators to bundles of nerves - and I am happy to report that, without exception, they rose to the occasion with grace, courage, and as always, great professionalism.

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The occasion was the filming of individual speakers' stories for the redeveloped PLWHA Victoria website. The objective of the personal vignettes is to promote better understanding of living with HIV, extend online resources, and encourage website visitors to book presentations by positive speakers.

Now, it's one thing to stand up in front of an audience, or a class of students, and talk about your life, your experiences and your positive status; it is quite another matter to face the up-front-and-personal scrutiny of a broadcast television camera, in the glare of lights and crew.

The television or film studio is quite an 'unnatural' and unforgiving environment. The lights are hot, bright, and unblinking. The camera lens is constant in its glare, positioned just a metre or so from the speakers' face and there is something inquisitorial about its presence. Each speaker had to undergo the application of studio make-up before filming, as the camera and lights drain colour and character from natural skin tone and features.

And then there was the waiting.

If you have ever had anything to do with a commercial shoot, or perhaps helping out with a friend's short film project, you will know just how much waiting around you will have to do, before you take your place in front of the camera. These long waits - sometimes a couple of hours - involve vast quantities of coffee, tea, biscuits and the compounding of anxiety over your impending performance.

In spite of the always efficient and thorough efforts of the Speakers Bureau Coordinator, in producing a highly professional 'Call Sheet' for the day, there were still the inevitable unforeseen technical delays for our speakers to deal with.

In spite of freely giving up their time, once again, to help promote the Bureau and its great work, not one word of complaint was to be heard during the long and arduous day (a lesson here for professional television presenters, I think).

If you have ever tried telling your life's story to another person, you will probably understand how easy it is to get tied up in chronological knots and meander off into mires of pointless detail. Our speakers had prepared themselves with great insight,

skill and discipline though, and their stories were succinct, clear and powerful. They can all be very proud of their level of skill and quality of presentation.

I encourage everyone reading this article, to visit the PLWHA Victoria website and listen to the stories of Sonny Williams, Max Niggel, Jeffrey Robertson, , Susan Paxton PhD, Eric Glare PhD, Deanna Blegg, Sandy Porter, , Michelle Wesley, Glenn Filbin and talented new young speakers, Darren Kane, Glenn Ryall and Patrick Colville. I defy anyone not to be impressed and deeply moved by the experience.

The motto of People Living with HIV/ AIDS Victoria is Education, Information, Representation, and it is important that we are always providing information that is accessible and relevant. Online video clips are part of the Positive Speakers Bureau's forward-thinking and innovative approach.

Our target audiences of secondary school nurses, student health & well-being coordinators, teachers, principals, tertiary student services, non government organisations and corporate trainers will no doubt be encouraged by the quality and value that they see and hear in our speakers' personal stories.

I would love to share some of the powerful quotes delivered on the day – quotes that are insightful and profound. But without hearing and seeing the speakers themselves, words on this page couldn't possibly do them justice.

Once again, our speakers have done the Bureau, the positive community and themselves very proud indeed.



Jo Pearson

# SPEAKERS BUREAU

In 2008-2009 the Bureau delivered a record number of talks with 166 individual talks to 5845 people by 81 male speakers and 85 female speakers. Congratulations to all speakers for their outstanding commitment in delivering highly professional talks and as a result our repeat business continues to build. Our commitment to female speakers means that their voices are well and truly heard in schools and the broader community with them delivering more than 50% of our talks year after year.

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In 2008 we delivered a creative writing workshop pilot project over six weeks made possible through funding from Oz Showbiz Cares - Equity Fights AIDS (OSCEFA). Speakers who participated were interested in both the creative writing process and being able to tell their stories in a non linear way to different audiences. The workshop was facilitated by Angela Costi, a lecturer in Creative Writing at RMIT, and a professional creative writer, playwright, performer and dramaturg who has worked on performance projects since 1993. Peter Davis was the volunteer Project Coordinator. Thank you to Peter and Angela for making the workshops so successful. A chapbook of speakers' stories will be published in late 2009 and will be featured in Poslink

## **OZ SHOWBIZ WHO CARES - EQUITY FIGHTS AIDS**

In 2008 the Oz Showbiz Cares - Equity Fights AIDS Board decided to donate the proceeds to the Shalom Centre in Banz in the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea. The centre offers respite care for those living with and affected by HIV and delivers support, medication, good food and a variety of workshops to assist in the

development of a sustainable income. Over A\$9000 was donated. Sister Rose-Bernard Groth who has driven the HIV response in her missionary work since the mid 80s has been instrumental in developing a unique support model utilising street kids, orphans and volunteers to educate their communities about HIV. The model is being emulated around PNG.

## **SPEAKER TRAINING**

We continue to attract new trainee speakers and training is the focus of our program. The HIV/HEP/STI Education & Resource Centre at the Alfred provided our speakers with additional professional development.

This year we delivered both the Basics of Public Speaking workshop and the Advanced Communication workshop.

We also worked collaboratively with trainee speakers from Hepatitis C Victoria. Using a partnership model, PLWHA Victoria will provide additional logistical, administrative and training material support to Hepatitis C Victoria to keep the momentum going and support the HCV speakers as they develop their own Bureau.



Over the past financial year, PLWHA Victoria has been able to provide assistance to other PLWHA agencies around the country to develop speakers bureau programs to the next level. This has been in the form of workshop preparation, resource development, training day development and post workshop evaluation to a number of organisations including Positive Life NSW, TasCAHRD and PLWHA SA.

#### **DOH PSB FUNDING SUBMISSION FOR HIV & SEXUAL HEALTH IN RURAL VICTORIA**

The Speakers Bureau will pilot a rural speakers road show providing HIV-positive speakers to rural schools and community health centres. The pilot program is a partnership with County Awareness Network, and the Education Department's Secondary School Nurses program.

Planning commenced with the formation of two steering groups who met in April. Implementation will be guided by these groups and the consultative frameworks will help overcome hurdles in the recognition of our PSB program. The first steering group consists of representatives from 10 agencies who have crucial links into rural areas and will provide strategic, logistical and policy frameworks. The speakers steering group is six speakers who will be part of the project providing expert advice on additional professional development, key messages and further development of personal narratives.

#### **ASIA PACIFIC POSITIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

Through contact with the Speakers Bureau, Red Cross and Oxfam requested that PLWHA Victoria provide a full day professional placement for a group of nine HIV-positive people from the Asia Pacific. All PLWHA Victoria staff participated in supporting the delegates and presented on each staff member's program. Of note were the delegates'

presentations on the challenges they face in HIV health promotion and advocacy in their countries and the exchange of ideas and program constructs. Evaluation of the day's presentation highlighted the professionalism of the agency's work and our ability to share resources and work collaboratively.

#### **POSITIVE SPEAKERS BUREAU WORKING RELATIONSHIPS**

We continue to build an extraordinary network of collaborative partnerships that support the work of our speakers.

We work with 18 Victorian sector agencies, two government departments, two universities, four interstate PLHIV sector agencies, national and international PLHIV agencies and Victorian parliamentarians.

#### **WORLD AIDS DAY 2008**

Now in its fourth year, PLWHA Victoria and the Health Minister Daniel Andrews launched World AIDS Day (WAD) at the Victorian Parliament Gardens in front of more than 100 people. The WAD theme was *'Enjoy life, take control and stop HIV/AIDS.'* Dr Jon Willis and Stefanie Christian spoke eloquently about the WAD theme and what it meant to them. Morning tea was held after the launch and people enjoyed the sunshine in the gardens and the opportunity to catch up and reflect on the day.

Of the many comments we receive each year, most are about the impact of our PLHIV speakers who talk honestly about the realities of dealing with HIV every day of their lives and how they have rebuilt their lives after being diagnosed. With so many HIV-positive people just getting on with life without being public about their status; our speakers are the human face of HIV in Victoria and they make substantial contributions to reducing HIV stigma and discrimination for everyone else.





# HIV & SEXUAL HEALTH Connect Line

The HIV & Sexual Health Connect Line commenced operation at PLWHA Victoria in July 2007. The service provides telephone information, support and referral to any caller from Victoria who has questions or concerns in relation to HIV and other sexually transmissible infections (STIs). The HIV & Sexual Health Connect Line provides appropriate referrals to support, medical and counselling services.

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As well as the direct phone number, callers with a hearing or speech impairment can contact us through the telephone typewriter relay service (TTY) and a telephone translation service is available for those who speak a language other than English.

The service is staffed using a partnership model of health educators from PLWHA Victoria and the Victorian AIDS Council/ Gay Men's Health Centre (VAC/GMHC) and is designed as an initial point of contact that provides timely, accessible and flexible assistance in a non-judgemental and confidential manner.

In 2008, the service was extensively advertised through the gay press and promoted through community service announcements on Joy 94.7FM. In addition, over 2000 safe sex packs featuring the Connect Line cards were distributed at Big Day Out, Midsumma Carnival, Chillout Festival and Pride March. In the forthcoming year we will pilot advertising in local metropolitan newspapers.

Following an internal review of the service, recommendations were implemented to improve service delivery; as a result the service was relocated from the Positive Living Centre in Commercial Rd to the Peter Knight Centre in Claremont Street, South Yarra where the main office of PLWHA Victoria is located. This move better

integrated the service into the agency and allowed improved support for workers. At the same time there was also a change to the operating hours and the HIV & Sexual Health Connect Line now operates from 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

The HIV & Sexual Health Connect Line website ([www.connectline.com.au](http://www.connectline.com.au)) became operational in October 2007 and provides links to testing, counselling and support services. The website also allows visitors to the site to ask questions on-line and receive responses from the coordinator.

As a state wide service we receive a wide variety of calls. Providing an anonymous and confidential telephone service creates an opportunity to speak candidly with a health professional. We realise that some people may be reluctant to discuss their sexual health concerns in a face to face environment.

As a Victorian wide service we receive calls from:

- men who may not identify as gay or bisexual but are having sex with other men (MSM) and are seeking information about HIV/STIs
- people newly diagnosed with HIV or their family/friends
- rural callers seeking HIV/STI and/or other medical services

- people who have some anxiety after visiting sex workers
- people with concerns or symptoms of an STI
- PLHIV seeking medical/treatment advice and/or social support services
- partners and family of PLHIV
- those who speculative about being infected with HIV

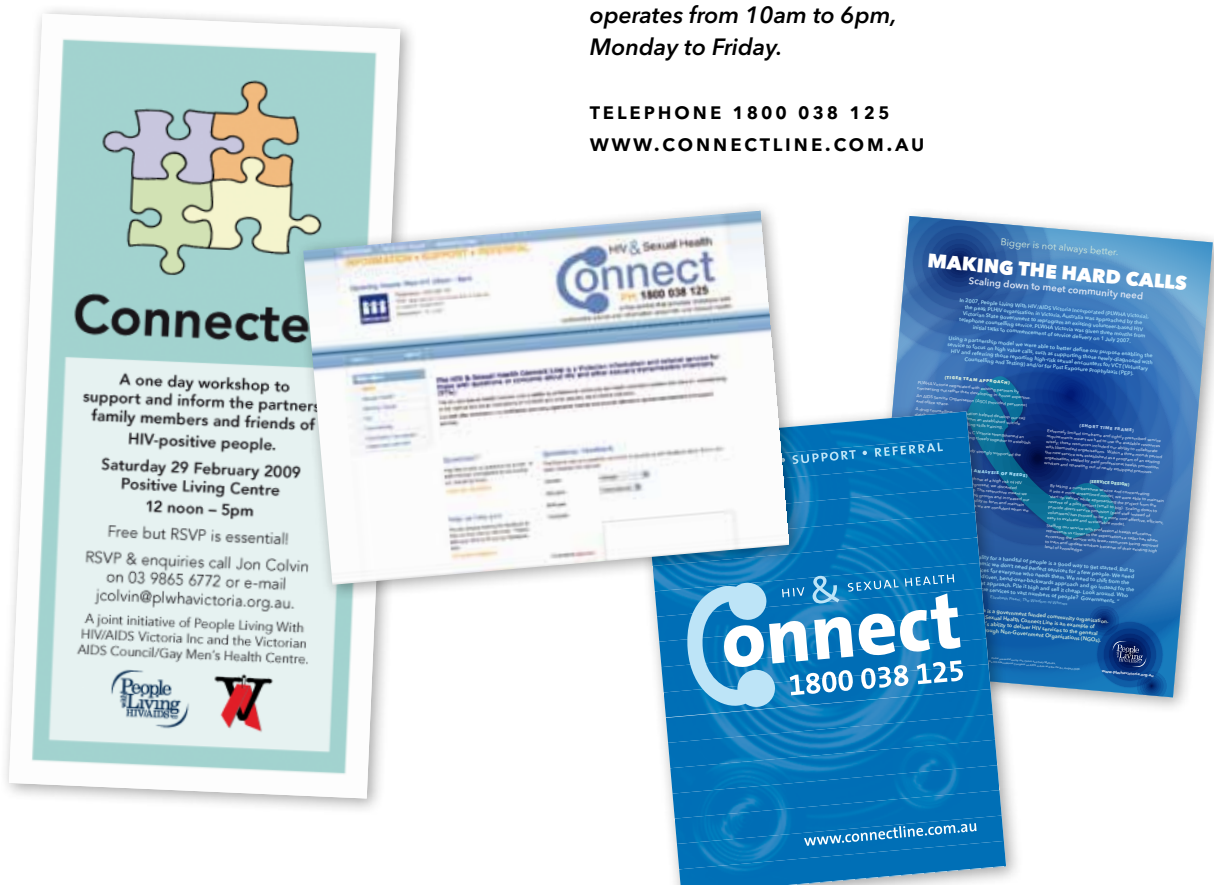
The majority (74%) of callers are men, who may be more comfortable seeking telephone based rather than face-to-face sexual health information. A number of MSM access the service which shows the effectiveness of the model as it is often difficult to communicate sexual health and HIV prevention messages to this group of men. We have been able to speak openly with many MSM regarding STI/HIV transmissions, sexuality, beat safety, and regular testing.

This year the service has seen a marked decrease in the number of irrational anxiety related calls. These calls are from those who are at no risk of HIV infection yet experience high levels of anxiety and fear about HIV. We believe the decrease in the number of irrational anxiety calls is due to staff explaining the purpose of the HIV & Sexual Health Connect Line and encouraging the caller to seek appropriate mental health services rather than relying on staff from the HIV & Sexual Health Connect Line to calm their anxiety.

The service continues to be a source of support for those who have recently received a positive HIV diagnosis. We have been able to assist many callers to gain perspective and discuss suitable medical and support options.

**The HIV & Sexual Health Connect Line operates from 10am to 6pm, Monday to Friday.**

**TELEPHONE 1800 038 125  
WWW.CONNECTLINE.COM.AU**





# CAMPAIGNS

Over the past financial year we have had several opportunities to work in partnership with event organisers, agencies and individuals to produce a range of sexual health messages and resources, and to expand our network of contacts to work mutually for the benefit of PLHIV.

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## CALD MSM FORUM

In collaboration with the Multicultural Health & Support Service, ARCSHS, Melbourne Sexual Health Centre and VAC/GMHC, PLWHA Victoria hosted a consultative forum about non-Anglo men who have sex with men in Victoria. People attending the forum comprised workers from community organisations, health clinics, universities, local councils etc. who were interested in finding out how they can do more for men who have sex with men from different cultures and family backgrounds. Participants were asked to share knowledge and experience on a range of topics including:

- Sexual racism, internalised racism and homophobia
- Obstacles to health and barriers to service access
- Sexual practice and spaces
- Negotiation of family, community, personal and social networks

Initial feedback has suggested that the forum provided an excellent starting point to gather information to support further funding submissions and research to improve health outcomes for CALD MSM.

## THE PLEASURE AND SEXUAL HEALTH STUDY (PASH)

In a partnership with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR), PLWHA Victoria assisted with the recruitment for a new study called PASH! - the Pleasure and

Sexual Health Study, being undertaken by Garrett Prestage and Michael Hurley in collaboration with a wide range of organisations. PASH was conceived to find out how gay men really think about sex, pleasure, and their health - not just as rational autonomous individuals making calculations of risk. The study included a 30 minute interview, and at the end, participants could offer to be contacted for a follow-up interview. Findings of the study will be made available in late 2009.

## BAREBACKING FORUM

In partnership with Sircuit Bar, PLWHA Victoria hosted a community forum called *Ifs and Butts - The Raw Truth about Bareback Sex*. Gay porn director Chi Chi La Rue and TitanMen Exclusive star, Marco Blaze, fired up as an all-star panel discussed the meaty issues of barebacking in gay porn and its impact upon HIV prevention in our community. Fellow guests included Fiona Patten, CEO of the Eros Foundation and convener of the Australian Sex Party, Mike Kennedy from the Victorian AIDS Council, and Dean Beck, marketing coordinator at adult wholesaler Calvista. Moderator Tim Newton from JOY Melbourne's current affairs program 'The Spin' kept the questions coming and there was enthusiastic crowd participation.

The forum provided an opportunity to discuss an issue that has divided the porn industry in the United States and aroused huge debate in our community. The skyrocketing popularity of barebacking as





a market “niche” has coincided with rates of unprotected casual anal sex increasing from 13% to 19% over a six year period in the gay community periodic survey, with Melbourne reporting increased HIV infection rates in that time. A highlight of the event was participation by audience members who disclosed their HIV-positive status, raising important issues for the panel to discuss. Educators also took this opportunity to remind positive gay and bisexual men to ask their doctors for syphilis testing every three months with t-cell and viral load counts.

The event was broadcast live on JOY Melbourne and is now available as a podcast on their website [WWW.JOY.ORG.AU](http://WWW.JOY.ORG.AU)

#### NEW SEXUAL ADVENTURISM PROGRAM

PLWHA Victoria submitted a program and funding proposal to DoH (formerly Department of Human Services) to strengthen the reach and quality of health content in community media circulating among sexually adventurous gay/bisexual men in Melbourne.

The program follows the principles of community development and will begin consulting with key informants and stakeholders to develop a mix of priorities and strategies meeting their needs and wishes. There will also be a sponsorship program for community media projects conceived and produced by men who play in sexually adventurous cultures, with two goals:

- expanding and enhancing our communication channels for targeted health promotion
- addressing the patchy distribution and limited accessibility of expert knowledge within the sexually adventurous community of practice

The impetus for a project about sexual adventurism arose during the implementation of another campaign, *Syphilis Rising*, which targeted sexually adventurous men due to the increased prevalence of syphilis among them. The campaign contained a strong community engagement component, with two community forums, one titled *Ready for Action* and the other called *Ifs and Butts - The Raw Truth about Barebacking*. Further evidence came from 3 main sources:

- service users and partners, who expressed concerns about particular practices, which we routinely capture in our contact tracking
- published research including the Three or More Study, Seroconvertors Study, and Garrett Prestage and Michael Hurley’s work on Intensive Sex Partying suggested a strong correlation between sexual adventurism, syphilis infection, and new seroconversions as well
- community based, ‘action’ research, consisting of in-depth interviews completed with key players, organisers, communicators and gatekeepers within the sexually adventurous scene in Melbourne.

The ‘*Something Borrowed, Something Blue*’ Gay Men’s HIV/STI Action Plan for Victoria identifies intensive sex partying as a priority for action. Given that aspects of sexual adventurism are present in over 60% of new HIV diagnoses, and it had been a while since the development of health promotion targeting sexual adventurism specifically, it was both timely and cost efficient to undertake new work in this area.



# RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES

**poslink**  
World AIDS Day 2008

The President of People Living with HIV/AIDS Victoria Inc. Information, Education & Representation  
100 St. Albans St. St Albans VIC 3021  
Tel: 03 9472 1111  
www.plwha.org.au

Activities:  
- HIV/AIDS Awareness  
- HIV/AIDS Testing  
- HIV/AIDS Counselling  
- HIV/AIDS Support Groups  
- HIV/AIDS Education  
- HIV/AIDS Research  
- HIV/AIDS Advocacy

**GET FREE! QUIT IN '09**  
A free course to help you quit smoking.

- Give your lungs and heart a break
- Free up some extra spending money
- Look and feel great in '09!

Everyone's doing it... People Living with HIV

HIV made me realise I had to treat my body right. I started to exercise once a week, then twice. The benefits quickly became clear.

Sharon R. P. (40) HIV/AIDS

**poslink**  
PLWHA Victoria Celebrates

The President of People Living with HIV/AIDS Victoria Inc. Information, Education & Representation  
100 St. Albans St. St Albans VIC 3021  
Tel: 03 9472 1111  
www.plwha.org.au

I take the dog for a walk every morning, then I meditate. It's the best part of the day.

Managing HIV. It's about balance.

**WHAT THE F\*@K!**  
AN EVENT FOR GAY AND BISEXUAL MEN LIVING WITH HIV

The healthcare on the 1st of February!

Be an entrepreneur but don't forget your own self!

I and Steven Owen Jr. Do in Group 2008. All in a row in every round!

For more information, visit the event page on the PLWHA website.

Smoking was killing me and my pocket. After a couple of attempts, I managed to quit for good. I knew that if I was to improve my lifestyle, I had to make changes.

Managing HIV. It's about balance.

**POSITIVE Speakers Bureau Victoria**

People Living with HIV/AIDS Victoria Inc.

**EDUCATION Information & Representation**

People Living with HIV/AIDS Victoria Inc.

**Adopt a Bear**  
THE TEDDY BEAR AUCTION

Supporting the PLWHA Victoria Inc. HIV/AIDS Support Group

What does your patient really want to know?

Workshops for participants from newly diagnosed gay men

People living with HIV deal with many issues and their doctors are a vital source of advice and support. Finding a suitable doctor is particularly important for someone who has recently been diagnosed.

**THE PRODET WORKSHOP**  
HIV/AIDS Victoria Inc. (HIV/AIDS) workshop for people who have been diagnosed HIV in the past two years. In one compound we will participate in the usual HIV/AIDS support group with a focus on finding a doctor to help them manage their HIV.

**Participants' questions for doctors**

- Do you have other HIV patients?
- How long have you been treating HIV?
- How do you keep up with updates in treatment?
- How often do you work with a patient who has untreated HIV?
- How do you work with a patient who has untreated HIV?
- What do you think of combination therapy?
- What if there are alternative treatments to the one you recommend?
- What arrangements do you have in place to protect our privacy?
- What happens if I need to see you in a hurry?
- What happens if you get not available?
- How much time are you prepared to spend with an individual patient?

**Questions for participants**

- Do you have confidence in the patient or seeking information?
- Is the clinic easily accessible?
- Do you like the clinic atmosphere?
- Does my doctor use language or make things easy to understand?

**Discussion**  
Participants consider a broad range of issues in making the decision - not just their doctor's experience and expertise. Participants will be encouraged to share their own experiences and understand their own and their doctor's expectations. The aim of the workshop is to help participants to understand their own expectations and to understand their doctor's expectations. The aim of the workshop is to help participants to understand their own expectations and to understand their doctor's expectations.

**Background information**  
The workshop is a chance for people to prepare an opportunity for PLWHA to build their confidence in dealing with the issues arising from their health. The workshop is a chance for people to prepare an opportunity for PLWHA to build their confidence in dealing with the issues arising from their health. The workshop is a chance for people to prepare an opportunity for PLWHA to build their confidence in dealing with the issues arising from their health.

**poslink**  
Same Sex Laws and Centrelink - The Facts

The President of People Living with HIV/AIDS Victoria Inc. Information, Education & Representation  
100 St. Albans St. St Albans VIC 3021  
Tel: 03 9472 1111  
www.plwha.org.au

**MAY YOUR FAMILY PROSPER IN 2009**

Whenever you return from overseas travel, ask your doctor for a check-up including an HIV test.

**VIC PERRI**  
Health Promotion Officer  
People Living With HIV/AIDS Victoria Inc

6 Clarendon St, South Yarra 3141  
www.plwha.org.au  
vicperri@plwha.org.au  
Phone 03 9863 6772

Assisted by Christopher Mitchell, PLWHA Victoria Volunteer

Special thanks to Jeffrey Bond, Senior ACON, for providing valuable information and support in the development of the PRODET workshop.



# RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES



# HEALTH PROMOTION

PLWHA Victoria's Health Promotion Team continued to deliver programs to enhance the physical and emotional health and well being of the HIV-positive community throughout 2008-2009. We do this by following Health Promotion principles as set out in the Ottawa and Bangkok Charters including developing individual capacity through workshops and courses as well as creating supportive environments at a community level.

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The **Phoenix** workshop - for those newly diagnosed with HIV - continues to provide an opportunity to obtain information, meet others to share their experiences and generally learn how to manage HIV. The workshop continues to be well recognised as an important tool among workers in the HIV sector with newly diagnosed clients.

Further, it provides participants with an opportunity to build confidence as well as capacity in dealing with their new HIV diagnoses. The six-month follow up workshop reinforces the overall value of the program in terms of outcomes, with participants citing increased confidence and coping mechanisms in dealing with their HIV diagnosis.

The PLWHA Victoria Phoenix model has also been well recognised by other interstate HIV organisations and we have been consulted to assist them in adapting all or some components of our model for their use. The success and recognition of the workshop had also seen it evolve into a program that had been readily adapted to meet the needs of other demographics of the HIV population as well as affected communities. For example, in partnership with Straight Arrows, we were able to adapt, design and deliver the program as a retreat for heterosexual men living with HIV.

The foundation of this workshop was also helpful in developing a new one day forum called **Connected** to respond to the information and support needs of partners, family and friends of PLHIV. In partnership with the Counselling Services Program of VAC/GMHC we piloted the new program earlier this year. The first workshop was well attended and explored HIV bio-medical and treatment information as well as discussing social issues such as disclosure and stigma. The aim of the workshop was not only to provide information but to also build participants' capacity in supporting the people they were close to living with HIV. Participants commented favourably on the usefulness of the information provided and on the value of meeting others in similar situations. As a result the Connected workshop will run again later this year.

The partnerships that have flourished from the development, implementation and evaluation of the Phoenix workshop have included the involvement of the HIV Peer Support Group facilitators of the HIV Services Program of VAC/GMHC. Partnerships have also included assistance in the delivery of the program. Various sessions in the program have been delivered by doctors from the Centre Clinic of VAC/GMHC, Prahran Market Clinic and



Carlton Clinic. Sexual health nurses from the Melbourne Sexual Health Centre have also been involved as well as counsellors from the Counselling Services Program of VAC/GMHC.

Addressing the wider health needs of our members remains a major priority; we ran 3 **QUIT Fresh Start** smoking cessation courses (developed by QUIT Victoria) this year to assist people who wish to stop smoking. Smoking remains a significant contributory co-factor in developing cardiovascular disease for PLHIV and the course assists and supports those who wish to stop smoking and reduce their risk.

Building on the success of previous community workshops, 'What the F@#k!' was held earlier this year at the Laird Hotel and provided another opportunity for HIV-positive gay men to get together in a safe space to discuss the many issues around sex particularly in a casual and anonymous context. As expected, disclosure continued to be a key and ongoing issue.

In order to enhance our engagement with our members, we continued our one day a week **Outreach** service at the Positive Living Centre, where we have increased the opportunity for face-to-face contact improving awareness of our services among the clients and contributing to the numbers participating in our workshops and attending our events. A presence also enabled us to enhance our delivery of Peer Support as well as advocacy in a confidential environment. **Peer Support** was a significant component of our health promotion work for 2008/2009. Whether via phone or face-to-face, this involved the delivery of information and advice on treatments, travel, legal issues, health/life insurance and immigration and provided an opportunity to speak to someone as a peer. Peer Support is a concept where there is more than just empathy with the client. The worker can speak from their own personal experience of living with HIV and

therefore the client's feelings of validation can be enhanced.

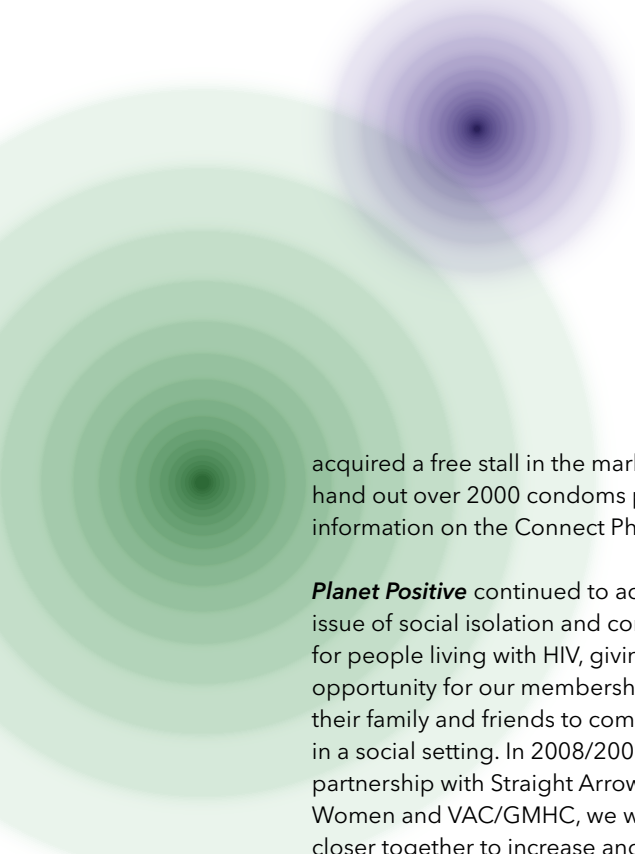
Our popular **Treatment Interactive Events** again maintained focus on the issue of HIV transmission and the law and we hosted a second forum this year at Dantés Restaurant in Fitzroy. Speakers included Dr Jim Hyde (DoH), Mike Kennedy (VAC/GMHC) and David Scamell (AFAO), and each emphasised the parallel but separate nature of the legal regimes covering HIV transmission from an organisational, legal and public health perspective.

Outreach programs further extend to our presence at the monthly *Bootclub* event at Circuit Bar. Our regular involvement provides us with an opportunity to raise the organisation's profile as well as raise funds. In June 2009 Circuit generously hosted the 'Adopt-A-Bear Auction' which raised over \$10,000 for PLWHA Victoria's Emergency and Distress Fund and the Lesbian and Gay Switchboard.

PLWHA Victoria maintained its presence at this year's Midsumma Festival and at the Daylesford Chillout Festival, distributing over 3000 resources including jellybeans (as part of our *Eat More Jellybeans* campaign) and safe sex packs promoting the Connect Phonenumber and other programs. Pride attracted over 50 members to march in the parade and our tent at Carnival Day in the Alexandra Gardens encouraged members to take advantage of the chillout area to relax and recharge.

We extended our reach and visibility further this year by also having a presence at The Vietnamese Lunar Festival in Footscray where PLWHA Victoria were invited by the Multicultural Health and Support Service to share an information stall with them and offer information about our services - and indulge in a bit of face-painting for kids! A few weeks later, we made our first trip to the Big Day Out music festival where we





acquired a free stall in the marketplace to hand out over 2000 condoms packs and information on the Connect Phonenumber.

**Planet Positive** continued to address the issue of social isolation and connectedness for people living with HIV, giving an opportunity for our membership as well as their family and friends to come together in a social setting. In 2008/2009 and in partnership with Straight Arrows, Positive Women and VAC/GMHC, we worked even closer together to increase and diversify the participation of Planet Positive.

For many PLHIV who have to spend the holiday period in hospital or alone at home without family or social support, our **Christmas Hampers** provide a bit of warmth and festive spirit to about 40 people every year. Filled with a huge range of clothing, food and other gifts, the hampers continue to attract a growing number of supporters and sponsors wishing to donate products and their time. We gratefully acknowledge their ongoing commitment and generosity.

In partnership with the Country Awareness Network and the ALSO Foundation we presented **Rainbow Rodeo**, as part of the Chillout Festival in Daylesford and hosted by Kaye Sera and Luke Gallagher. Set as a trivia quiz, it delivered information around HIV and sexual health in a fun and entertaining way.

The Health Promotion Team continued to play a role in assisting in research. In partnership with the National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research (NCHECR), we were active in recruiting for the Sero-conversion Study - a survey for men who have sex with men who have recently been diagnosed with HIV. The Health Promotion Team was also active in assisting the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society (ARCSHS) for their Futures survey. This comprehensive survey covers a whole range of issues for people living with HIV.

The Health Promotion Team continued to be represented on a variety of national and state based reference groups and committees.

- Health Promotion and Education Reference Group (AFAO))
- Treatment Officers Network (NAPWA)
- Positive Living Magazine Reference Group (NAPWA)
- Interagency World AIDS Day Working Group (cross HIV related agencies)
- BBV/STI Multicultural Working Group
- Diversity Reference Group (ALSO Foundation)
- HIV Interagency Group (cross HIV agencies)
- HIV Balance Implementation Group (AFAO/NAPWA Education Team)
- 'Next Steps' Development and Implementation Group (AFAO/NAPWA Education Team)
- 'Top Tips' Development Group (AFAO/ NAPWA Education Team)

Our membership as well as the rest of our constituency and other affected communities continue to be informed via our bi-monthly magazine, **Poslink**. Starting off as a black and white newsletter produced in-house, it has been transformed into a colour magazine of enhanced quality that promotes HIV services and activities and reports on salient issues about living with HIV. Poslink is not only delivered to our individual membership but also many HIV related agencies such as clinics where we are able to reach that part of our constituency not connected or involved in the HIV community.

The Health Promotion Team continues to empower people living with HIV and assists them in developing the capacity to improve their physical and mental health and well being.



# POSITIVE Women

KERRILIE RICE - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

In 2009, Positive Women celebrates 21 years of support by HIV-positive women for HIV-positive women.

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It has been an exciting year as we continue to respond to needs identified from both within our membership, and more broadly to the growing evidence, of the issues faced by women living with HIV in our community.

For example, HIV surveillance data demonstrates the increasing number of diagnoses in people from high HIV prevalence countries. We were very pleased then to have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Multicultural Health and Support Service at the Centre for Ethnicity and Health. This formal partnership will allow us to achieve better health outcomes for women in culturally and linguistically diverse communities in relation to BBV and STI issues. As many of us working in this sector are small organisations, partnerships such as this enable us to best serve our communities while ensuring that the strengths of our individual organisations are not lost.

We are also pleased to have worked over the last year with the (now) Department of Health, People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) Victoria and Straight Arrows to strengthen the voices of positive people across the state. A very successful collaboration between Positive Women, PLWHA Victoria and Straight Arrows has been the education program for people living with HIV/AIDS that was funded by the Department of Health last year. As part of this, Positive Women have run a fantastic facilitated group program offering support and information to our members. We are currently in the process of rolling out the next components of the program. On the strength of early evaluation outcomes, we are also considering how to improve and broaden the reach of such work into the future.

As well as providing support, Positive Women continue to be active in both the HIV sector as well as in the wider community in raising awareness of the impact of HIV on the lives of so many women. This work ranges from speaking engagements at schools and community groups to talking to the media, contributing to the knowledge on committees and reference groups and participating in conferences. The capacity of our board, members, supports and staff to do this amazes me. They regularly and actively promote the interests and talk about the lives of women living with HIV from the local level to the highest of international representations.

And this year, Positive Women took the opportunity to come together, celebrate and thank all those involved in the organisation since its inception in 1988 when we were fortunate enough to have the Hon. Maxine Morand, Minister for Women's Affairs, launch the Positive Women History Book. As we move into the next decade of the organisation, this passage from the History Book reminds us of the importance of our work and helps ensure that Positive Women continues to use its voice and work toward improving the lives of women living with HIV.

*"HIV-positive women are from all walks of life, with many different experiences. The only thing they have in common is that they are HIV-positive. The support that they have given and received has led them to feel connected, less isolated and has contributed towards them living longer lives."*





# STRAIGHT Arrows

REBECCA MATHESON - EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The last 12 months have been a time for critical reflection for the whole organisation. Straight Arrows has struggled as a small organisation committed to the principles of peer based care and support while other organisations and the Department of Health (formerly Department of Human Services) work within the structures of health promotion. This is not to say that we don't embrace the principles of health promotion, but we do believe it is important to retain peer based services and believe there are synergies between the two models of service delivery and reporting.

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Through the support of PLWHA Victoria and particular committed staff at the Department of Health (DoH), Straight Arrows have been able to maintain the unique peer support services and incorporate health promotion activities to compliment the support program. As we move into this dual system of funding and program delivery we expect to engage with more heterosexual people living with HIV and expect to increase resources to accurately reflect the number of people we work with.

The Board has continued to work hard to govern the organisation and identify new ways in which we can encourage members to access services and activities. Many Board members have attended and participated in a range of training and development opportunities to ensure they are updated on all things related to HIV and support. These have included the ASHM Short Course in HIV Medicine, HIV conferences, board and governance workshops and pre & post test counselling.

Board members have represented Straight Arrows across the sector on the PLWHA Victoria board, PLC Reference Group, Speakers Bureau, and advisory groups for the DoH. This representation ensures that heterosexual men and women are on the

agenda at all levels of planning, advocacy and implementation. The Board is made up of heterosexual men and women who are committed to strengthening our support services and health promotion activities as well as our place in the HIV sector.

We have worked hard at strengthening and developing new relationships with key stakeholders; this has produced some promising partnerships and collaborations. PLWHA Victoria, Positive Women Victoria and Straight Arrows are exploring the idea of a joint health promotion plan to document the areas that we partner in, identifying the health promotion activities that have potential for partnership.

The DoH has been working with the agencies to strengthen the voice of positive people in Victoria, as a commitment to this the Department have engaged the services of a consultant to work with the three agencies to explore a model of co-location that works; this is very exciting and we are hoping that we will have moved into shared premises by this time next year.

Care and support activities have included a range of social opportunities, workshops, retreats, outreach, dinners, bowling, movies and office drop-in. This year we ran our first ever men's only retreat with a

fantastic turnout heading off to Kalorama in the Dandenong Ranges. Through a partnership with PLWHA Victoria and the MensWorkshop we were able to run the Phoenix program that was adapted specifically for heterosexual men for an intensive three day program. One fantastic outcome has been the friendships and informal peer support networks that have grown, and an agreement to meet on a regular basis informally for a men's day.

Drop-in, phone support and referrals have been steady this year with many new members coming along to meet others and share their experiences, especially Camp Seaside where we had families coming for the first time, some overwhelmed by the chance to talk about HIV and kids just fitting in like they had been coming for years. The women's swimming group continues to attract new women with its flexibility that allows women to come along when they can, with different women coming at different times in the year with the opportunity to bring along their new born babies, children and on special occasions their partners.

Our new resource '*Sex Matters*' has proven to be very popular, stimulating some interesting conversation around relationships, disclosure and transmission which led us to run a workshop where our members could explore the myths and facts of HIV transmission. Since some of our members have never had the chance to talk openly and honestly about HIV, this workshop is always well received with men and women feeling safe enough to ask all those niggling questions. This is just the beginning of our health promotion activities that will be fun, interactive and give our members the tools for living with and managing their HIV.

Weekly outreach at Melbourne Sexual Health Centre (MSHC) and the Positive Living Centre (PLC) have attracted people that would not normally access support at our office or by phone. Support worker Stefanie has had regular appointments for peer support and referrals, with both men and women scheduling support to coincide with their medical appointments; this is especially convenient for those coming from outer suburbs and rural areas like Bendigo and Geelong. Vincent, our men's support worker has been steadily increasing the numbers of men that access support on a Friday at the PLC, providing group and one-on-one appointments when required. There is now a regular group of men accessing a range of services at the PLC and creating new networks of support. A quarterly BBQ has been established for all those who attend the PLC on a Friday. Having a presence at the PLC has strengthened our relationship with staff, volunteers and members creating a supportive environment for our members to access services.

Strong relationships, partnerships and collaborations have helped Straight Arrows cement their place in the future response to HIV in Victoria. With these partnerships we are able to create a broader understanding of the issues faced by people who are heterosexual and living with HIV and to share the commonalities with other groups of people living with HIV.



# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

## ANNUAL AWARDS

### PRESIDENT'S AWARD

This is presented at the discretion of the President to an individual, group or organisation that has demonstrated visionary leadership in improving the quality of life for HIV-positive people. Often the recipient will have served over a long period and contributed to high level improvements in services for HIV-positive people and to an increased awareness of HIV issues.

**Jeffrey Robertson**

### EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD

This award is presented by the PLWHA Victoria Board to honour the service to the organisation or individual who have had such an important impact on the organisations work, on advocacy for HIV-positive people in this state and have shown exemplary leadership qualities. This award will only be given rarely and only to individuals who have given service to the organisation of such merit and duration that the Board considers them worthy of our highest honour.

**Ron Lucas**

### COMMUNITY ENDEAVOUR AWARD

This award is presented to an individual, group or organisation in the community who through their endeavours has made a substantial and important contribution to the recognition of the issues and needs of HIV-positive people.

**Peter Alexander**

### SPEAKERS BUREAU AWARD

This award is presented to an organisation, sponsor or individual that has made an outstanding contribution to the further development of PLWHA Victoria's Speakers Bureau.

**Dr Eric Glare**

### RESEARCH PROGRESS AWARD

This award is presented to an individual, group or organisation that has made an outstanding contribution to the positive community through research they have undertaken. General features of this award are the innovative, quality research that leads to a significantly enhanced understanding of the positive community that feeds the development of quality care initiatives or services.

**The Australian NeuroAIDS Brain and Tissue Bank**

### ENABLING SPONSOR AWARD

This award is presented to an individual, group or organisation that has given significant financial support to PLWHA Victoria enabling it to improve the breadth of its work. **Mercedes-Benz Australia/Pacific**

### VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT AWARD

This award is presented to an individual, group or organisation that has made an outstanding contribution and commitment to HIV-positive people through their volunteer work for PLWHA Victoria.

**Anna Georgiou**

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

## BOARD & STAFF

### BOARD

Paul Kidd - President  
Paul Baines - Vice-President  
Brett Hayhoe - Secretary  
Greg Iverson - Treasurer  
Jeffery Robertson  
David Stephens  
Bev Greet - Positive Women Rep  
Russell Varney - Straight Arrows Rep  
Suzanne Lau-Gooley

### Other members:

David Wain (*resigned May 2009*)  
Martin Pfeffer (*resigned March 2009*)  
John Daye (*resigned May 2009*)  
Jurgis Maleckas (*resigned July 2009*)  
Ken Mackie (*resigned October 2008*)  
David Menadue (*resigned October 2008*)  
Andrew Timmins (*resigned February 2009*)  
Semukele Mabuwa  
(*resigned February 2009*)

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### STAFF (PICTURED)



Sonny Williams  
*Executive Officer*



Suzy Malhotra  
*Health Promotion Manager*



David Westlake  
*Administrator*



Max Nigg  
*Speakers Bureau Coordinator*



Vic Perri  
*Health Promotion Officer*



Jon Colvin  
*Phoneline Coordinator*



Carlos Sepulveda  
*Health Promotion Officer*



Akke Halma  
*Finance Officer*

### Other staff: (NOT PICTURED)

Daniel Reeders  
*Campaign Coordinator*  
(*until July 2009*)

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

FINANCIAL REPORT REG NO A0039027B

## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

Your Board of Management submits the financial report of People Living with HIV / AIDS Victoria Inc. for the financial year ended 30th June 2009.

### Board of Management

The names of Board of Management members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Brett Hayhoe, Jeffery Robertson, Paul Kidd, Paul Baines *appt Aug 2009*, Suzanne Lau-Gooey, Greg Iverson, David Stephens *appt June 2009*, Bev Greet *appt February 2009*, and Russell Varney *appt July 2009*.

David Menadue *res October 2008*, Ken Mackie *res October 2008*, Andrew Timmins *res February 2009*, Semukele Mabuwa *res February 2009*, Martin Pfeffer *res March 2009*, John Daye *res May 2009*, David Wain *res May 2009*, Jurgis Maleckas *appt Nov 2008 res July 2009*.

### Incorporation

The association was incorporated in Victoria on 7th December 1999.

### Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year was to provide services and relief from suffering, alleviating poverty, distress and financial hardship, for people living with HIV / AIDS, with the aim of improving their life expectancy and also their quality of life.

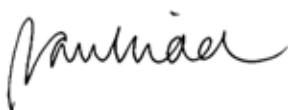
### Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

### Operating Result

The operating result for the year was a loss of \$2,055 (2008: \$732 profit) and no provision for income tax was required as the Association is exempt from income tax.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Management.



Paul Kidd  
**President**



Greg Iverson  
**Treasurer**

SOUTH YARRA, 19TH AUGUST 2009

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

FINANCIAL REPORT REG NO A0039027B

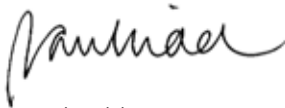
## STATEMENT BY THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

The Board of Management has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Board of Management the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 10:

- a) Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of People Living with HIV / AIDS Victoria Inc. as at 30th June 2009 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
- b) At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that People Living with HIV / AIDS Victoria Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Management and is signed for and on behalf of the Board of Management by:



Paul Kidd  
**President**



Greg Iverson  
**Treasurer**

SOUTH YARRA, 19TH AUGUST 2009

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

FINANCIAL REPORT REG NO A0039027B

## INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

	NOTE	\$ 2009	\$ 2008
<b>Income</b>			
Administration Income		-	55
Donations		2,777	271
Emergency Distress Fund		8,736	4,431
Grants Received	1(A)	639,713	718,260
Interest Received	2	4,932	9,199
Michael Masters Fund		-	564
Other Income		9,175	907
Speakers Fees		24,451	20,304
Sponsorship		31,470	58,260
		<b>721,254</b>	<b>812,251</b>
<b>Less: Expenditure</b>			
Administration Salaries and Superannuation		145,544	126,131
Administration		68,986	83,494
Board Expenses		7,671	12,932
Campaigns		75,042	95,535
Conferences		21,349	17,340
Depreciation	2	8,363	17,735
Employment Expenses		11,335	8,882
Entitlements and Provisions		26,574	26,830
Grants		4,800	5,609
Health Promotion		83,522	121,754
Health Promotion / Positive Education		98,062	45,202
Information Line		72,567	152,909
Other Expenses		250	-
Poslink		18,465	19,983
Publications/Marketing/Promotions		48	-
Speakers Bureau		79,831	77,183
Sexual Adventurism		900	-
		<b>723,309</b>	<b>811,519</b>

**Profit / (Loss) after income tax** 1(D) / 2 **(2,055)** **732**

**Retained profits at the beginning of the financial year**

**30,872** **30,140**

**Retained profits at the end of the financial year**

**28,817** **30,872**

*The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.*

## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2009

	NOTE	\$ 2009	\$ 2008
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	3	425,467	116,853
Trade and Other Receivables	4	29,387	10,363
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>454,854</b>	<b>127,216</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Plant and equipment	5	9,439	16,848
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>9,439</b>	<b>16,848</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>464,293</b>	<b>144,064</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Trade and Other Payables	6	373,680	77,970
Provisions	7	61,796	35,222
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>435,476</b>	<b>113,192</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>435,476</b>	<b>113,192</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>28,817</b>	<b>30,872</b>
<b>Members' Funds</b>			
Retained Profits		28,817	30,872
<b>Total Members' Funds</b>		<b>28,817</b>	<b>30,872</b>

*The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.*

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

FINANCIAL REPORT REG NO A0039027B

## CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

	NOTE	\$ 2009	\$ 2008
<b>Cash flows from Operating Activities</b>			
Receipts from sponsors, members, donations and fundraising		90,874	46,316
Operating grant receipts		888,581	462,689
Interest received		4,932	9,199
Payments to suppliers and employees		(674,729)	(807,834)
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	B	<b>309,658</b>	<b>(289,630)</b>
<b>Cash flows from Investing Activities</b>			
Purchases of plant and equipment		(1,864)	(20,671)
Proceeds on sale of plant and equipment		910	-
Net cash (used in) investing activities		(954)	(20,671)
<b>Cash flows from Financing Activities</b>			
		-	-
<b>Net increase / (decrease) in cash held</b>		<b>308,614</b>	<b>(310,301)</b>
<b>Cash at the beginning of the financial year</b>		<b>116,853</b>	<b>427,154</b>
<b>Cash at the end of the financial year</b>	A	<b>425,467</b>	<b>116,853</b>

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

### NOTE A Reconciliation of Cash

For the purposes of the cash flow statement, cash includes cash on hand and in banks and investments in money markets. Cash at the end of the financial year is shown in the cash flow statement reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows:

**Cash and Cash Equivalents** NOTE 3 **425,467** **116,853**

### NOTE B Reconciliation of net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities to profit / (loss) after income tax

Profit / (loss) after income tax	(2,055)	732
Non-cash flows in profit / (loss) after income tax:		
Depreciation	8,363	17,735
Changes in Assets and Liabilities:		
(Increase) / decrease in trade and other receivables	(19,024)	(7,776)
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	26,574	26,829
Increase / (decrease) in trade and other payables	295,710	(327,150)

**Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities** **309,568** **(289,630)**

The association has no credit stand-by or financing facilities in place.

There were no non-cash financing or investing activities during the period.



# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

FINANCIAL REPORT REG NO A0039027B

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

### 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic). The Board of Management has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic) and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 101	Presentation of Financial Statements
AASB 107	Cash Flow Statements
AASB 108	Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors
AASB 110	Events after the Balance Sheet Date
AASB 116	Property, Plant and Equipment
AASB 117	Leases
AASB 118	Revenue
AASB 1031	Materiality

No other applicable Accounting Standards, Australian Accounting Interpretations or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

#### a) Grants Received

Grants received have been allocated proportionately over the period covered by the grant and brought to account as income accordingly.

#### b) Membership Subscriptions Income

In accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for similar organisations, membership subscriptions are accounted for on a cash receipts basis.

#### c) Plant and Equipment

Each class of plant and equipment are included at cost less depreciation and impairment losses or at independent valuation.

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

FINANCIAL REPORT REG NO A0039027B

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by the board to ensure that it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets including capitalised leasehold improvements is depreciated on a diminishing balance value over their useful lives to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Class of fixed asset	Depreciation rate
Computer Equipment	33.33%
Office Furniture	16.67% - 40%

Leasehold improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains and losses are included in the income statement. When revalued assets are sold, amounts included in the revaluation relating to that asset are transferred to retained profits.

### **d) Income Tax**

The association has been granted exemption from income tax under Section 50-15 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, as amended.

### **e) Leases**

Lease payments under operating leases, where substantially all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

FINANCIAL REPORT REG NO A0039027B

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

	\$ 2009	\$ 2008		\$ 2009	\$ 2008
<b>2. Profit / (Loss) after Income Tax</b>			<b>6. Trade and Other Payables</b>		
Profit / (Loss) after income tax has been determined after:			Project Funds in Advance (Unexpended)	320,073	55,300
<b>Crediting as income</b>			Trade Creditors	50,657	20,270
Interest received	4,932	9,199	Accrued Expenses	2,950	2,400
				<u>373,680</u>	<u>77,970</u>
<b>Charging as expenses:</b>			<b>7. Provisions</b>		
Depreciation of plant and equipment	8,363	17,735	Annual Leave	26,889	19,760
Auditors' remuneration			Long Service Leave	34,907	15,462
Auditing the accounts	2,300	2,000		<u>61,796</u>	<u>35,222</u>
Other services	650	400	<b>8. Lease commitments</b>		
Auditing the accounts prior period	350	-	Operating Lease Commitments		
			Motor Vehicle & Photocopier		
<b>3. Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>			Payable - minimum lease payments		
Petty Cash	300	103	- not later than 12 months	9,480	4,935
Cash at Bank	357,093	23,726	- between 12 months and 5 years	6,986	3,492
Emergency Relief & Distress Account	17,299	13,141	- greater than 5 years	-	-
Interest Bearing Deposits	30,932	60,737	<b>Total Lease Liability</b>	<u>16,466</u>	<u>8,427</u>
Max-I Direct Account	19,843	19,146			
	<u>425,467</u>	<u>116,853</u>			
<b>4. Trade and Other Receivables</b>					
Trade Debtors	12,003	10,363			
Prepaid Conference Expenses	8,615	-			
Prepaid Salaries	8,769	-			
	<u>29,387</u>	<u>10,363</u>			
<b>5. Plant and Equipment</b>					
Office Furniture at cost	58,046	56,182			
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(51,256)</u>	<u>(40,594)</u>			
	6,790	15,588			
Computer Equipment at cost	39,091	40,000			
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(36,442)</u>	<u>(38,740)</u>			
	2,649	1,260			
	<u>9,439</u>	<u>16,848</u>			

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

FINANCIAL REPORT REG NO A0039027B

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of People Living With HIV / AIDS Victoria Inc. (the association) which comprises the balance sheet as at 30th June 2009 for the year then ended, the income statement, the cash flow statement, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the board of management.

### Board's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The board of management of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements which form part of the financial report are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic) and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The board of management's responsibilities also include designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies, and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion of the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee of management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS Victoria

FINANCIAL REPORT REG NO A0039027B

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the board of management's financial reporting under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic). We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

## Independence

In conducting our audit, we followed applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

## Qualification

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable for the associations to maintain effective systems of internal controls over donations and other fund raising activities until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, our audit in relation to donations and fund raising was limited to amounts recorded.

## Qualified Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion, except for the effects on the financial report of the matter referred to in the qualification paragraph, the financial report of People Living With HIV / AIDS Victoria Inc. presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of People Living With HIV / AIDS Victoria Inc. as at 30th June 2009 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic).

CLEMENTS DUNNE & BELL PARTNERSHIP  
Chartered Accountants

Andrew Wehrens  
**Partner**

MELBOURNE, 21ST AUGUST 2009

# PEOPLE LIVING with HIV/AIDS *Victoria*

## THANK YOU

Abbott Virology  
ACON  
Adria Sore  
AIDS Treatment Project Australia  
ALSO Foundation  
Andrew Henshaw  
Anthony McCarthy  
Andrew Wehrens  
Angela Costi  
Anna Georgiou  
Annika Priest  
Anthony Brownrigg  
Ashish Dhahreshwar  
Australian Federation of  
AIDS Organisations  
Australian Research Centre in Sex,  
Health and Society  
Bambis Import Co.  
Beng Eu  
Beyond Home Entertainment  
Big W  
Bill Gianoulas  
Bill O'Loughlin  
Boehringer Ingleheim  
Bristol-Myers Squibb  
Burnet Institute  
Calvista  
Carlton Mayne Clinic  
Centre Clinic  
Chi Chi La Rue  
Chris Mitchell  
Clements Dunne & Bell Partnership  
Club 80  
Colin Billing  
Colin Krycer  
Como Hotel  
Country Awareness Network  
Dane McManus  
Hon Daniel Andrews  
Daniel Brooks  
Dantes Restaurant  
David McCarthy  
David Menadue  
David Mitchell  
David Scamell  
David Westlake  
De and John Ayers  
Dean Beck  
Dean Murphy  
Deepak Malhotra  
Department of Health  
Department of Education  
DTs Hotel  
Dunlop Sport Footwear  
Eagle Leather  
Eleni and Rob @ Easy  
Eros Foundation  
Executive Edge Travel  
Family Planning Victoria BBV Program  
Fiona Patten  
Franz Kunz  
Garrett Prestage  
Gilead  
Glasshouse Hotel  
GlaxoSmithKline  
GoConnect  
Grey Searle  
Hares and Hyenas  
Hinny Tran  
Igat Hope PNG  
Instant Rockstar  
Jamie Ivarsen  
Jen Johnson  
Jeffrey Jones  
Jenny McDonald  
Dr Jim Hyde  
Jo Pearson  
Jo Watson  
Joy 94.9 FM  
Julia Fisk  
Katherine Grant  
Kathryn Sparks  
Keith Floyd  
Kevin Brown  
Laird Hotel  
Leader Newspapers  
Louise Naughton-Smith  
Mannhaus  
Marc Clancy  
Mariangela Galtieri  
Margarita Gregov  
Margo Duff  
Mark Hart  
Market Hotel  
Mark Whearem  
Martin Foley MLA  
Maryanne McDermott  
Matt Masiruw  
Media Strategies  
Melbourne Queer Film Festival  
Melbourne Sexual Health Centre  
Melvin Wong  
Mercedes-Benz Australia/Pacific  
Merck Sharpe and Dohme  
Michael Hall  
Michael Hurley  
Michael Scott  
Midsumma Festival  
Multicultural Health and  
Support Service  
National Association of People Living  
with HIV/AIDS  
Ography Design Consultancy  
Oz Showbiz Cares/Equity  
Fights AIDS  
Pat Garner  
Paul Bangay  
Peter Geer  
Peter Alexander  
PLWHA SA  
Positive Life NSW  
Positive Living Centre  
Positive Speakers Bureau Volunteers  
Positive Women Victoria (Inc)  
Pahran Market Clinic  
Pride March  
Prue Marks  
Q Magazine  
Queensland Positive People  
QUIT Victoria  
Rainbow Network  
Richard Poole  
Rishe Groner  
Robert Mitchell  
Royal District Nursing Service  
Sanyo Oceania  
Sarah Andrews  
Sarah Garner  
Sarah McConville  
Sarah P  
Sathish Poonath  
Shane Bell  
Shane Bridges  
Sibel  
Simon Johnson  
Sircuit  
Soenke Tremper  
Southern Star  
Spencer Franks  
Steven O'Connor  
Straight Arrows  
Subway Sauna  
Susan Markin  
TasCAHRD  
The Alfred Education and  
Resource Centre  
The Alfred HIV Services  
Tibotec (Janssen Cilag Pty Ltd)  
Titan Media  
Tony Lupton MLA  
VAC/GMHC Peer Support Volunteers  
Vanessa Wagner  
Victorian AIDS Council/Gay  
Men's Health Centre  
Wayout Kyneton

