



Western Australian  
AIDS COUNCIL



# 2018-19

## ANNUAL REPORT





# Our Values Position

WAAC was born from a desire to end the trauma, fear, stigma and isolation caused by HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. We exist to provide support options to people who are living with HIV, or who may be at risk of infection, and to encourage the community to adopt a healthy approach to sex and relationships.

We deliver on our belief by providing counselling, assistance with case management, clinical services, education, and community engagement. We bring people together in a safe environment to increase awareness and enable informed decisions about sexual health and wellbeing.

To build on our success, we need to:

- Partner with the community and health network
- Increase the awareness in the wider community of our relevance
- Ensure awareness of, and access to, the advancements in treatment options for everyone living with HIV
- Serve through engaging with people and building trust



Our values guide our actions, interactions and decisions in our work at WAAC. We:

- Act in a way that actively promotes what is right and just
- Are accountable for our actions
- Strive to be the best version of ourselves that we can

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# A Message from our Chairperson

## It is a pleasure to report on behalf of the members of the WA AIDS Council Board of Management on the 2018 / 2019 financial year.

I believe the WA AIDS Council team can reflect on the last 12 months knowing that a great deal has been accomplished in a year where we have continued to face a very challenging funding environment.

Significantly, we have undertaken a major organisational restructure – which has been challenging on many levels – but which has been aimed at guiding our direction and sustainability for the next five years.

Indeed, some of the challenges that we have encountered were unforeseen and have required urgent action. Pleasingly, the initiatives implemented have resulted in a financial surplus which, given the financial issues we have encountered, is a positive outcome.

Further, WAAC has secured an extension to our core funding agreement which will enable us to continue to provide a range of high quality services to our diverse range of consumer groups.

During the year we have also commissioned a report on our buildings and we have pursued economies in our leasing arrangements. This is a continuing project that will carry on into the next financial year.

We have also been involved in a recent accreditation process, which has been successful, in addition to conducting a high-level CEO appraisal. A wide-ranging review of our brand has also been conducted, which will inform an important conversation about our name in 2020. We will also shortly commence work on a cultural survey that will be rolled out in the coming months. Further, we continue to seek collaborative partnerships and closer relationships within the sector.

In 2020, we shall reach the end of our current strategic plan, and an important body of work will get underway in relation to our next strategic plan. This priority will see the WAAC Board engage once again in a collaborative discussion with our valued stakeholder groups and the community generally.

I would like to acknowledge and thank my fellow board members for their hard work during the year. The Board's Vice Chair, Emma Jarvis, has been an invaluable source of advice and wise counsel over the last three years. I am deeply grateful for her support. After three years on the Board, Emma will be standing down at the end of this Board term. She will be greatly missed.



Dr Ian Woolley, Deputy Director Infectious Diseases at Monash Medical Centre, will also be stepping down after three years of service on the Board as a Community Representative. Based in Melbourne, Ian has regularly travelled to WA to attend Board meetings. We are incredibly grateful for his commitment to WAAC.

I would also like to thank my other fellow board members who have volunteered their time over the last 12 months - their enthusiasm and commitment has been very greatly appreciated. This year has required extra effort and many more hours of time spent planning and considering new possibilities for our future and I have greatly appreciated the confidence they have invested in me as Chair. I look forward to continuing working with the Board in the year ahead.

My sincere thanks also goes to CEO, David Kernohan, for his day-to-day leadership of WAAC and for his ongoing dedication and commitment to our organisation, in addition to our staff and our management team for their magnificent work.

In closing, this report provides a snapshot of the many highlights, successes and accomplishments that WAAC has achieved throughout the financial year - a year in which an increased number of West Australians have continued to benefit from our range of quality services.

As in previous years, the board has been required to take some difficult decisions and has risen to the challenge. In the future, there will be further challenges to surmount and tough decisions to reach but the staff, volunteers and the Board of WAAC will do their utmost to ensure that our vision for healthy, inclusive and safe LGBTIQ communities throughout WA is always our focus.

**Asanka Gunasekera**  
WAAC Chair



WAAC has secured an extension to our core funding agreement which will enable us to continue to provide a range of high quality services to our diverse range of consumer groups.



# Chief Executive Officer's Overview

**It is with pride we reflect on the last twelve months, knowing that we have accomplished a great deal this year on behalf of Western Australia's LGBTQI+ communities.**

During the reporting year, WAAC has continued to evolve and progress in response to client needs and the expectations of our supporters and the WA community. Our own expectations to continually improve client outcomes also drives us to seek new approaches to how we operate and deliver our services.

Highlights for the reporting year include the implementation of Social Suite evaluation software, which will enable us to build a strong evaluation framework to develop social impact measurements for all our target priority populations and associated programs. Due to a great deal of hard work by our staff, and Alison and Melissa from Collective Action with whom we have been working, we've now implemented the foundation stage and will be in a position to gain accurate data in the following 12 months. This will enable us to assess the impact of our services and make future improvements.

Our new online people management system - H Factor - was also implemented during the reporting year. Designed to enable team members to take ownership of their tasks, procedures, and accountabilities, and to give leaders the confidence that their people are contributing to meaningful business objectives, WAAC has become one of the first not-for-profits in WA to implement the innovative system.

We have also launched a number of successful sexual health awareness campaigns, using both social and traditional media, to reach priority populations. Campaigns over the reporting year have included those targeted at

international students, women and HIV, and the importance of STI testing in the midst of rising STI rates in WA. These campaigns have succeeded in raising awareness within the WA community and have also resulted in a number of newspaper articles and radio interviews.



At WAAC, our key to success is our people and our strong team of staff, volunteers and Board members who have contributed to our success during the year. I would like to thank the Board, in particular, for their unwavering support. I would also like to acknowledge our new management team – Kristina Mitsikas, Alan Martin, Gill Walker and Mick Pierce for their commitment and dedication. In addition, during the year several staff members who departed from our organisation also deserve recognition, namely Lisa Tomney, who was the Manager of Clinical Services, and Mark Reid, our previous peer support worker. Their contributions to our organisation were greatly valued.

Huge thanks too to our valued stakeholders, partners and supporters, particularly Lotterywest. Indeed, many of the initiatives outlined in this report have been possible as a result of Lotterywest funding, and we thank the organisation immensely for its support. Our other valued stakeholders, partners and supporters are listed on page 14.

In closing, I look forward to building on the work we have established during this reporting year. As a team, we are focused on developing stronger partnerships in rural and remote areas and to continuing to raise awareness within the general community for HIV and STI issues.

Finally, heartfelt thanks to the entire WAAC team which continues to show dedication and untiring commitment to the people in the community whom we support.

**David Kernohan**  
*CEO*





**FREEDOM** Centre  
**LIBRARY**



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# Key Achievements and Highlights

## Grants

In October, WAAC was successful in receiving a grant from Lotterywest. This provided the opportunity to carry out a much-needed IT upgrade, a branding review and the implementation of Social Suite Evaluation Software - all of which will have a positive impact on WAAC's future.



## World AIDS Day - *Light the City Red Initiative*



WAAC created a new initiative called *Light the City Red for WAD*. This involved partnering with some of Perth's most iconic landmarks, buildings, structures and sporting arenas which were lit up in red on the evening of Saturday 1 December. This successful initiative was focused on raising awareness of HIV, promoting World AIDS Day, commemorating those who have passed away and showing support for people living with HIV in 2018.

## Digital Campaigns

This year WAAC has been focused on an integrated digital marketing strategy to grow our online presence and support communication and awareness objectives. As a result, a number of sexual health campaigns were launched, including:



- **'Get yourself tested'** - Targeting men aged 18-55
- **World AIDS Day** - Targeting the general community, men and women aged 18-60
- **Summertime** - Targeting West Australians travelling overseas
- **Safe Travels** - Prompting men and women to get tested for STIs & HIV over the summer period
- **Studying? Be smart stay safe** - Educating international students on where to find sexual health information in WA
- **Women & HIV** - Encouraging women to get tested for HIV

These campaigns have elicited strong engagement across Google, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook, demonstrating that WAAC's messaging is reaching and being digested by our target audiences.

## MIPA – Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV



The Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV (MIPA) report and action plan was released on December 1, 2018. The MIPA report provides a framework that allows people living with HIV to have meaningful participation and contribution in relation to the services they receive from WAAC. This included seeking involvement in policy development, in particular with the consumer engagement policy, the establishment of our World AIDS Day working group, organising branding workshops and inviting community participation and community consultation via surveys on establishing relevant topics for treatment forums.

## Accreditation



After 12 months of preparation, May 2019 saw WAAC complete its self-assessment stage for the QIC Health and Community Services Standards accreditation. Undergoing the self-assessment stage involved a thorough gap-analysis and an overhaul of our existing systems and practices to better improve service delivery for all target groups. We are also looking forward to the next stage of the accreditation process.







## Volunteer Program



Volunteers continue to be an important and integral part of WAAC's services, with 159 volunteers providing approximately 5,000 hours across the organisation.

The transition to the Better Impact volunteer management software was finalised this year and the March intake was the first cohort to use the software, which has streamlined volunteer management and increased compliance.

## Corporate Volunteering



Eight corporate volunteering sessions were held across the year at WAAC, with those involved helping to assemble more than 30,000 safe sex packs. In addition, during these sessions each corporate group was involved in a 'HIV - Getting the Facts Talk'.

This reporting year our corporate volunteers came from ANZ, PWC, Shell, Western Power, Modis, Beyond Bank and Accenture.

## LinQ Medical

Our new Prep Medicare-billing service opened in May 2019 and is funded through WAAC, providing PBS PrEP primarily to M Clinic clients previously engaged in the PrEP trial, in addition to clients who prefer the model of care provided by WAAC. The service operates for approximately 11.5 hours, three days a week, and since its inception has already seen 146 clients, a figure that continues to grow.



## Needle Syringe Exchange Program (NSEP)



This program continues to grow with a 20.3% increase of new clients across all sites. There has also been an increase of 28.4% of clients who identify as from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, accessing NSEP services against the same period in 2018. As well as the growth in new clients, there has been an increase of 25.09% in the overall total of short education sessions to clients.

## Mums & Bub's Group



In June, our new Peer Support Group for mums who are living with HIV was established. This group is peer led and provides a safe and engaging space for mums and their children to meet on a monthly basis.

## Safe sex packs



A total of 90,633 safe sex packs were distributed this year, an increase from last year of around 4,000.

## AIDS Line

WAAC received 114 calls this year, an increase from the previous reporting year. The majority of calls involved discussions around HIV anxiety, and transmission and testing issues, with the remaining calls involving discussion on prevention, referrals and treatments.





Counselling services continue to grow and provide invaluable support to people living with HIV and those affected.

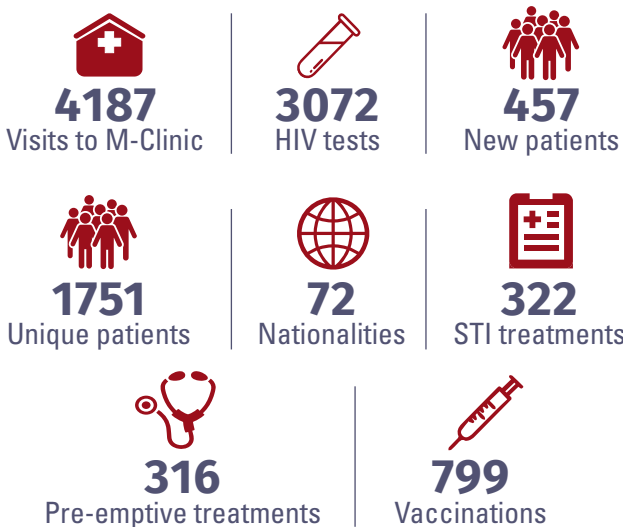
# WAAC Services

## HIV Testing

### M Clinic

In a new initiative, HIV Self-Testing Kits became available in June this year at the M-Clinic, with 20 sold in the first month. All M-Clinic staff have been appropriately trained according to TGA standards.

During the reporting year there were:



## HIV Support

### Counselling

Counselling services continue to grow and provide invaluable support to people living with HIV and those affected, and for people from LGBTIQ+ communities who are experiencing issues regarding living with HIV, sexuality, gender, relationships, grief and trauma.

### SHAPE

This outreach program provides support and advocacy for People Living with HIV (PLHIV) who are facing complex and challenging issues.

### Peer Education Program

This program provides support and advocacy for PLHIV at both an individual and group/workshop level. It also offers a range of social networking opportunities for PLHIV.

Clinical and support services also facilitate further activities, including social networking opportunities, treatment forums, HIV positive peer mentoring and training, and women-only dinners.

## Alcohol and Other Drugs

### Methamphetamine Peer Education Program (MPEP)

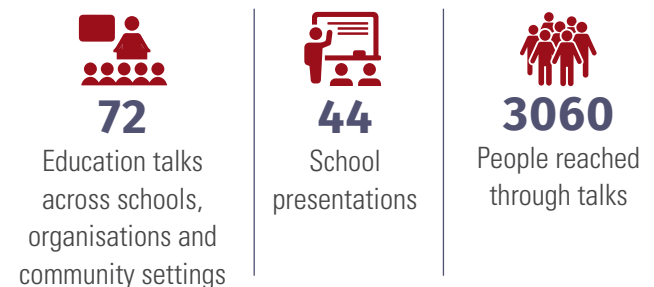
This program is a peer-based model which recruits Methamphetamine Peer Educators to disseminate harm reduction information and helpful strategies amongst a large cohort of people who are traditionally hard to reach. This project is funded by the Mental Health Commission.

## Health Promotion and Education

Participating in outreach activities, presentations, school talks, the promotion of HIV, STI and BBV prevention and testing and treatment, WAAC's outreach service is provided to priority populations and the wider general community. Staff provide relevant sexual health information, education, interactive activities, and safer sex equipment is also made available.

### Education Talks

Providing age appropriate presentations around safer sex and healthy relationships for teenagers and young adults through our HIV getting the Facts and Safe Sex no Regrets presentations.



# WAAC Services

## Outreach Activities

The distribution of safer sex hardware with relevant messaging and print resources such as Safer Sex, Consent, HIV facts, PrEP, relating to priority population occurs through these activities and interactions.



**15,432**

Number of people engaged through Outreach



**62**

Number of Outreach events



**236.5**

Total amount of hours for Outreach

## Training and Development

WAAC provides training and education to external stakeholders as part of our workforce development strategy. The training has been delivered predominantly face-to-face, however this year the development of online training modules has commenced and is now an additional method of making training more accessible, particularly for regional and remote target groups. Key training topics include education on transmission, testing, prevention, practicing safer sex, HIV and BBV's and the impact of stigma and discrimination.



**21**

Total workplace education sessions



**878**

Total attendees

**Training sessions on HIV, BBV's and STI education and awareness were delivered** across a range of services including the Justice Sector, Aged Care, Drug and Alcohol support services and a specific Women's service.

**Two Education sessions 'Birds and BBV's'** in collaboration with Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA) were delivered to Aboriginal Health workers = 22 attendees.

**Two PrEP Consumer Perspective sessions** in collaboration with ASHM delivered to GP's / medical workers – Attendees included 244 health care workers across Regional and Metro areas.

For the Justice Sector specifically there were **12 Workplace Education Sessions** delivered to a total of 358 attendees (excluding expos). This included a few new training opportunities with Acacia prison:

**Two new Education training session on Working with Diverse Sexuality and Gender Populations** at Acacia Prison = 73 attendees

**Two new Expos** – *Health Promotion Day, Drug and Alcohol Harm Reduction* expos at Acacia Prison = 160 young males / 1500 adult males attendees





## Freedom Centre

This year the Freedom Centre will be celebrating 25 years of service – a significant milestone in providing a safe social space for LGBTIQ+ young people. During the reporting year, the service provided 173 drop-in sessions with a total of 2620 visits from young people. Staff from the Freedom Centre also delivered 21 external training workshop sessions at 13 unique locations.



**209**

Number of new visitors



**1372**

Number of volunteer hours



**2782**

Total team hours

## Retreats

WAAC's retreats provide opportunities for LGBTIQ+ young people to spend a weekend in a safe social space, to get to know others with similar experiences to them and learn strategies for staying healthy and seeking help.

The positive outcomes for participants from these initiatives include decreased psychological distress, increased resilience, increased social and emotional support, increased social connectedness, and increased awareness of factors that hinder mental health and wellbeing, amongst many other beneficial factors.

Since July 2017, WAAC has held five retreats: two in Perth, one in Wokalup, one in Kalgoorlie and one in Albany.



**79**

Total number of retreat attendees



**78.5%**

Percentage of participants who were from rural, regional and remote (RRR) areas

## IEWA

Inclusive Education WA provides free specialised professional development, support, and resources to WA schools. It has a focus on building the knowledge, confidence and capacity of school staff to improve learning environments for LGBTIQ+ students.

It also supports schools to develop strategies to support LGBTIQ+ people and reinforce the message that they are an important and valued part of their school communities.

It is offered to all schools and school staff who want to ensure their learning environment is safe and inclusive of LGBTIQ+ or SSAIGD (Same Sex Attracted, Intersex and Gender Diverse) students, staff and families.

# Supporter/funder acknowledgments

**There are many groups, companies and individuals who have and continue to support the work of the WA AIDS Council. The support they provide is invaluable in assisting us meet the needs of our client base.**

We would particularly like to acknowledge:

## **Lotterywest**

The generosity of LotteryWest has enabled us to build our IT capability and capacity. The funding allowed for both improvements in hardware and software upgrades. One of the significant inclusions for software has been the development and implementation of an evaluation platform to help clearly demonstrate our impact on the WA community.

Alison Barclay from Collective Action has worked closely with us. With Alison's attention to detail, we have been able to demonstrate the theory of change across our range of programs through evaluation, and continue to demonstrate the great work that WAAC undertakes.

## **Government Departments**

Thank you to the Sexual Health Blood Borne Virus Program in the Department of Health, the Mental Health Commission and the Education Department for their on-going funding and the constructive working relationships they foster with WAAC.

## **K & L Gates**

For their generous pro-bono legal advice.

## **The following corporate organisations which have made a contribution:**

ViiV, Shell, Woodside, Beyond Bank, PWC, Clayton Utz, Modis, Accenture, HBF and ANZ.

## **Thank you to the following organisations for such positive and constructive cooperation:**

AFAO, SHQ, ACON, ACT AIDS Action Council, AHCWA MAC, Nyoongar Outreach, Fiona Stanley Hospital, Royal Perth Hospital, Telethon Kids, The Court, Waringarrie Aboriginal Corporation Kununurra, Ishar Multi Cultural Women's Health, ASHM, Magenta, CoPAHM WA representatives, SECCA, Kalbardi House, Volunteering WA Out in Perth, OKMG, Tonic Digital and PRIDE WA.

## **To the following universities with whom we partner in research:**

SiREN, Curtin, UWA, Murdoch and Centre for Social Research – UNSW and Kirby Institute.

## **To our many individual volunteers and donors – thank you!**







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664 Murray Street, West Perth, Western Australia 6005  
E: [waac@waaid.com](mailto:waac@waaid.com) | Ph: (08) 9482 0000

[waaid.com](http://waaid.com)

