

Tracking the Progress 2020:

National HIV Strategy



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The years for comparison are 2015 to 2019 unless otherwise specified.

Sources of data are provided in the data dashboard on the Kirby data site.

Acknowledgement is given to the many contributors helping report progress against the National HIV Strategy. The full list of contributors can be found on the Acknowledgement page of the Kirby data site.

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Tracking the Progress 2020: National HIV Strategy

The goals of the Eighth National HIV Strategy are to:

1. Virtually eliminate HIV transmission in Australia within the life of this Strategy
2. Sustain the virtual elimination of HIV transmission among people who inject drugs, among sex workers and from mother to child
3. Reduce mortality and morbidity related to HIV
4. Eliminate the negative impact of stigma, discrimination, and legal and human rights issues on people's health
5. Minimise the personal and social impact of HIV.

The National HIV Strategy has nine targets that provide specific focus for the efforts made towards achieving the goals of this Strategy. Each target has corresponding indicators that measure progress towards attaining the target. The full list of the targets and their indicators are listed in Appendix i.

Target 1

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Increase the proportion of people with HIV (in all priority populations) who are diagnosed to 95%

- Between 2015 and 2019, the estimated proportion of people who were living and diagnosed with HIV increased from 88% to 90%. Despite the increase, more work is required to meet the target of 95% of people living with HIV (PLHIV) are diagnosed.
- Between 2015 and 2019, the proportion of gay and bisexual participants in the Gay Community Periodic Survey (GCPS) who reported being tested for HIV at least once in the previous 12 months increased from 65.6% in 2015 to 74.3% in 2019. By comparison, the proportion of participants tested at least three times in the previous 12 months increased from 27.9% in 2015 to 50.9% in 2019.
- Among gay and bisexual men attending clinics participating in the ACCESS project, the proportion who had been tested for HIV in the previous 12 months remained stable between 2015 and 2019 and was 87.4% in 2019.
- Among female sex workers attending clinics participating in the ACCESS project, the proportion who had been tested for HIV in the previous 12 months increased steadily from 87.5% in 2015 to 91.5% in 2019.
- Among heterosexuals aged from 16 to 29 years attending clinics participating in the ACCESS project, the proportion who had been tested for HIV in the previous 12 months increased by 13% from 45.5% in 2015 to 58.3% in 2019.
- In the same period, among people who inject drugs attending clinics participating in the ACCESS project, the proportion who had been tested for HIV in the previous 12 months remained stable and was 74.3% in 2019.
- CD4+ T-cell count at HIV diagnosis can indicate how long a person has had HIV before being diagnosed. Late HIV diagnosis is defined as a CD4+ cell count of less than 350 cells/ μ L at diagnosis where there is no evidence of recent infection. Among HIV notifications attributed to male-to-male sex, the proportion diagnosed late increased by almost 10% from 22.7% in 2015 to 32.3% in 2019. Among HIV notifications attributed to heterosexual sex, the proportion diagnosed late increased by nearly 4% from 48.4% in 2015 and to 52.3% in 2019. For full data and breakdowns by all exposure classifications, please see the [Kirby Institute data site](#).
- Among participants of the GCPS, the self-reported HIV prevalence among gay and bisexual men remained stable between 2015 and 2019 and was 8.2% in 2019.
- Among participants in the Australian Needle Syringe Program Survey (ANSPS), between 2015 and 2019, the laboratory confirmed HIV prevalence remained stable and was 2.3% in 2019.
- *Data relating to **Indicator 1i: Prevalence of HIV among people in custodial settings** are in development and will be presented in future reporting.*

Target 2

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Increase the proportion of people diagnosed with HIV on treatment to 95%

- Between 2015 and 2019, the estimated proportion of people diagnosed with HIV who were receiving antiretroviral treatment (ART) increased steadily from 87% to 91%. Despite this encouraging trend, more work is required to meet the target of 95% of people diagnosed with HIV on treatment.
- Among participants in the GCPS, the proportion of HIV positive men who reported receiving ART increased from 86.5% in 2015 to 90.0% in 2019.

Target 3

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Increase the proportion of people on treatment with an undetectable viral load to 95%

- Between 2015 and 2019, the estimated proportion of PLHIV receiving treatment with a suppressed viral load (less than 200 copies of HIV per millilitre of blood) increased from 95% in 2015 to 97% in 2019. The 95% target was met in all years from 2015 to 2019.
- Among gay and bisexual men living with HIV and attending clinics participating in the ACCESS project, the proportion with a suppressed viral load increased from 92.7% in 2015 to 95.4% in 2019.
- Among people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds living with HIV (classified using country of birth) and attending clinics participating in the ACCESS project, the proportion with a suppressed viral load increased from 92.3% in 2015 to 94.6% in 2019.
- Among people who inject drugs living with HIV and attending clinics participating in the ACCESS project, the proportion with a suppressed viral load increased from 81.9% in 2015 to 87.5% in 2019.

Target 4

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Reduce the incidence of HIV transmissions in men who have sex with men and other priority populations

- Between 2015 and 2019 the HIV notification rate declined by 18% from 4.4 to 3.6 notifications per 100 000 population. Among males, the notification rate also declined by 18% in the same period from 7.9 to 6.5, and among females the notification rate remained stable and was 0.8 in 2019.
- The number of HIV notifications attributed to male-to-male sex declined from 702 notifications in 2015 to 533 notifications in 2019, a decline of 24%. A full breakdown of the number of notifications by exposure classifications can be found on the [Kirby Institute data site](#).
- Changes in the proportion of HIV notifications classified as newly acquired (clinical evidence of HIV acquisition within the previous 12 months) may be influenced by changes in HIV incidence but can also be influenced by changes in HIV testing patterns. Between 2015 and 2019, the proportion of notifications attributed to male-to-male sex and classified as newly acquired declined from 46.2% in 2015 to 36.2% in 2019. A full breakdown by exposure classification can be found on the [Kirby Institute data site](#).
- Among female sex workers attending clinics participating in the ACCESS project, HIV incidence remained low and was 0.05 per 100 person-years in 2018.
- *Data relating to **Indicator 5a: Incidence of HIV among people who inject drugs** were not available at the time of reporting. Future reporting will include data relating to this indicator.*

Target 5

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Sustain the virtual elimination of HIV among sex workers, among people who inject drugs and HIV transmission from mother to child through the maintenance of effective prevention programs

- Between 2015 and 2019 the number of infants who acquire HIV through perinatal transmission reported to the Australian Paediatric Surveillance Unit remained low. In 2015, 2018 and 2019, there were three, two and one cases of perinatal HIV transmission, respectively. The proportion of perinatally exposed infants diagnosed with HIV was 6.5% in 2015, 4.7% in 2018, 2.8% in 2019 and 0% for 2016 and 2017. It should be noted that the number of perinatal HIV exposures reported to the APSU may be under reported and caution should be applied in the interpretation of these figures.

Target 6

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Increase the proportion of eligible people who are on PrEP, in combination with STI prevention and testing, to 75%

- Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) is the use of antiretroviral treatment by HIV-negative people to reduce their risk of acquiring HIV. PrEP became available to eligible individuals through the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) on 1 April 2018. Between the start of Quarter 1, 2018 and the end of Quarter 4, 2019, the cumulative number of people with one or more PBS-subsidised PrEP prescriptions increased from 6503 to 32 869.
- Among non-HIV-positive participants of the GCPS:
 - the proportion were reported being aware, eligible and who reported using PrEP in the previous 6 months increased from 0.6% in 2015 to 21.0% in 2019. This proportion does not include those who were ineligible for PrEP through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.
 - among the men who reported using PrEP, the proportion who also received an STI test in the previous 12 months remained close to 100% for all years, 2015 to 2019.
 - of the men who reported engaging in condomless anal intercourse with casual male partners in the previous six months, the proportion who reported using PrEP increased from 1.2% in 2015 to 31.1% in 2019.
- Between 2016 and 2019, among gay and bisexual men who have received PrEP and attended clinics participating in the ACCESS project, the proportion who had at least one STI test in the previous 12 months remained stable and was 96.3% in 2019. By comparison, the proportion who had at least three STI tests in the same period also remained stable and was 58.3% in 2019.
- Among participants of the ANSPS, between 2016 and 2019 the proportion of people who inject drugs that reported re-using another person's used needle and syringe in the previous month remained stable and was 16.2% in 2019.
- *Data relating to **Indicator 6b: Proportion of the eligible population receiving PBS-subsidised PrEP in the previous 12 months** was not available at the time of reporting. Future reporting will include data relating to this indicator*

Target 7

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75% of people with HIV
report good quality of life

- Among participants of the HIV Futures study, using a four-point scale, the proportion of PLHIV reporting their general health status and general well-being to be excellent or good was 51% in 2019, down from 60% in 2016. More work is required to reach the target of 75% of PLHIV reporting good quality of life.

Target 8

access full
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Reduce by 75% the reported experience of
stigma among people with HIV, and expression
of stigma, in relation to HIV status

- As reported in the **Annual Report of Trends in Behaviour 2019 HIV and STIs in Australia**:
 - Among PLHIV surveyed in 2018, 56% reported experiencing any stigma in the last 12 months compared with 74% in 2016.
 - Among gay and bisexual men surveyed in 2018, 83% reported any stigma in relation to their sexual orientation in the last 12 months.
 - Among health care workers surveyed in 2018, 44% reported witnessing any stigma towards PLHIV in the last 12 months. Further, 23% of health care workers reported expressing any stigma towards PLHIV because of their HIV status in the last 12 months.
 - Among members of the public surveyed in 2017, 52% reported that they would express stigma or discrimination towards PLHIV.

Appendix i

National HIV Strategy

Indicator	Data source
Target 1 Increase the proportion of people with HIV (in all priority populations) who are diagnosed to 95%.	
1a Proportion of people living with HIV who are diagnosed.	Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney
1b Proportion of gay and bisexual men who have been tested for HIV 1 time or more in the previous 12 months.	Gay Community Periodic Surveys
1c Proportion of gay and bisexual men who have been tested for HIV 3 times or more in the previous 12 months.	Gay Community Periodic Surveys
1d Proportion of people who inject drugs who have been tested for HIV in the previous 12 months.	Australian Needle Syringe Program Survey
1e Proportion of gbsm who have been tested for HIV in the previous 12 months attending a health service participating in the ACCESS network	ACCESS (Australian Collaboration for Coordinated Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance)
1f Proportion of fsw who have been tested for HIV in the previous 12 months attending a health service participating in the ACCESS network	ACCESS (Australian Collaboration for Coordinated Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance)
1g Proportion of pwid who have been tested for HIV in the previous 12 months attending a health service participating in the ACCESS network	ACCESS (Australian Collaboration for Coordinated Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance)
1h Proportion of heterosexuals aged 16-29 who have been tested for HIV in the previous 12 months attending a health service participating in the ACCESS network	ACCESS (Australian Collaboration for Coordinated Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance)
1i Proportion of new HIV diagnoses determined to be late (CD4 count<350 cell/ μ L) by exposure category.	State and territory health authorities
1j Self-reported HIV prevalence among gay and bisexual men.	Gay Community Periodic Surveys
1k Prevalence of HIV among people who inject drugs.	Australian Needle Syringe Program Survey
1i Prevalence of HIV among people in custodial settings.	National Prison Entrants' Blood Borne Virus Survey (NPEBBVS)
Target 2 Increase the proportion of people diagnosed with HIV on treatment to 95%.	
2a Proportion of people living with diagnosed HIV who are receiving ART.	Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney
2b Proportion of HIV positive gay and bisexual men receiving ART.	Gay Community Periodic Surveys

Appendix i

National HIV Strategy		
	Indicator	Data source
Target 3	Increase the proportion of those on treatment with an undetectable viral load to 95%.	
	3a Proportion of people receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV infection whose viral load is less than 200 copies/mL.	Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney
	3b Proportion of gay and bisexual men receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV infection whose viral load is less than 200 copies/mL.	ACCESS (Australian Collaboration for Coordinated Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance)
	3c Proportion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV infection whose viral load is less than 200 copies/mL.	ACCESS (Australian Collaboration for Coordinated Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance)
	3d Proportion of people who inject drugs receiving antiretroviral treatment for HIV infection whose viral load is less than 200 copies/mL.	ACCESS (Australian Collaboration for Coordinated Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance)
Target 4	Reduce the incidence of HIV transmissions in men who have sex with men.	
	4a Annual notification rate of new HIV diagnoses.	State and territory health authorities
	4b Number of HIV notifications by exposure category.	State and territory health authorities
	4c Incidence of recent HIV infection among HIV diagnoses by exposure category.	State and territory health authorities
	4d Incidence of HIV among people who inject drugs.	Not yet reported
	4e Incidence of HIV among female sex workers.	ACCESS (Australian Collaboration for Coordinated Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance)
Target 5	Sustain the virtual elimination of HIV among sex workers, among people who inject drugs and from mother to child through the maintenance of effective prevention programs.	
	5a Incidence of HIV among people who inject drugs.	Not yet reported
	5b Incidence of HIV among female sex workers.	ACCESS (Australian Collaboration for Coordinated Enhanced Sentinel Surveillance)
	5c HIV transmission to newborns perinatally exposed to HIV.	Australian Paediatric Surveillance Unit

Appendix i

National HIV Strategy		
Indicator		Data source
Target 6	Increase the proportion of eligible people who are on PrEP, in combination with STI prevention and testing to 75%.	
6a	Number of people with one or more PBS-subsidised PrEP prescriptions in the previous 12 months.	Monitoring HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis in Australia
6b	Proportion of the eligible population receiving PBS-subsidised PrEP in the previous 12 months.	Not yet reported
6c	Proportion of non-HIV-positive gay men who have received PrEP in the previous 12 months.	Gay Community Periodic Surveys
6d	Proportion of gay and bisexual men who have received PrEP and had at least 1 STI tests.	Gay Community Periodic Surveys
6e	Proportion of gay and bisexual men who have received PrEP and had 3 or more STI tests	Gay Community Periodic Surveys
6f	Proportion of gay and bisexual men who have received PrEP and have had an STI test	Gay Community Periodic Surveys
6g	Proportion of gay men who have engaged in condomless anal intercourse with casual male partners in the previous six months who have received PrEP	Gay Community Periodic Surveys
6h	Proportion of people who inject drugs who report re-use of someone else's needle and syringe in the previous month	Australian Needle Syringe Program Survey
Target 7	75% of people with HIV report good quality of life.	
7a	Proportion of people with HIV who report their general health status and their general well-being to be excellent or good.	HIV Futures
Target 8	Reduce by 75% the reported experience of stigma among people with HIV, and expression of stigma, in relation to HIV status.	
8a	Proportion of surveyed people living with HIV who report experiencing any stigma or discrimination in relation to their HIV status in the last 12 months.	Annual Report of Trends in Behaviour
8b	Proportion of surveyed men who have sex with men who report experiencing any stigma or discrimination in relation to their sexual orientation in the last 12 months.	Annual Report of Trends in Behaviour
8c	Proportion of health care workers expressing stigma or discrimination towards clients living with HIV.	Annual Report of Trends in Behaviour
8d	Proportion of the Australian public who report they would express stigma or discrimination towards people living with HIV.	Annual Report of Trends in Behaviour