

NATIONAL PEER SUPPORT STANDARDS

Peer support standards for
children and adolescents



DISCLOSURES

Nothing to disclose



BACKGROUND

- Initiative of NAPWHA
 - Living Positive Victoria
 - Queensland Positive People
- Recognition of importance of peer work in HIV
- Guidance on minimum national standards for HIV peer support



NATIONAL PEER SUPPORT STANDARDS FOR HIV CARE IN AUSTRALIA

- Based on standards developed by Positively UK (in partnership with others)
- Adapted for Australian Context
- Informed by
 - CATIE: Practice Guidelines in Peer Health Navigation for People Living with HIV
 - International Association of Peer Supporters: National Practice Guidelines for Peer Supporters



DEFINITION OF PEER

“Peer support is a relationship in which people see each other as equal partners and where the focus is on mutual learning and growth.” (National Standards for Peer Support in HIV, Positively UK)

- Person with lived experience of HIV
- Not a therapeutic or clinical relationship
- Fosters the resilience and emotional wellbeing of PLHIV through shared lived experience
- Supports PLHIV to navigate clinical and other settings



PAID VERSUS VOLUNTEER PEERS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAID STAFF • Strong commitment to MIPA and GIPA • Recognition of professional skills of PLHIV • Supporting and advocating for paid peer staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VOLUNTEERS • Recognise the importance of volunteers • Capacity development for PLHIV • Resource constraints |
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STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

5 Standards

- Access to support
- People who provide support
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Child and youth centred peer support
- Cultural safety, diversity and inclusion*



STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

- Rationale
- Competencies and Skills
- Expected Outcomes
- Auditable Indicators



DIFFERENCE IN SETTINGS

Australia

- Approximately 100 children and adolescents living with perinatally acquired HIV
- Wide geographic distribution
- Few dedicated services

United Kingdom

- 1383 children and young people living with perinatally acquired HIV
- Centralisation
- Dedicated services for children and young people



SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS LIVING WITH HIV

- Sydney Children's Hospital has only dedicated HIV service in Australia
- Paediatric clinical services, often in Infectious Diseases departments, with nursing and social worker support
 - Camp Goodtime



SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS LIVING WITH HIV: VICTORIA

Living Positive Victoria

- Focus on support for parents, regardless of HIV status
- Camp Seaside
- Peer Navigator Program
- Christmas party and social events



KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN PEER SUPPORT FOR ADOLESCENTS

Safeguarding

- Critical importance
- No single national standard
- Adoption of Victorian *Child Safe Standards*
 - Most rigorous standard

Consent from parent or guardian



KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN PEER SUPPORT FOR ADOLESCENTS

- Cultural Safety for first nations adolescents
- Appropriate for culturally and linguistically diverse adolescents
- Appropriate of adolescents living with a disability



KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN PEER SUPPORT FOR ADOLESCENTS

- Stigma
 - Family relationships
 - Sexuality
 - Social skills
 - Access to services



KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN PEER SUPPORT FOR ADOLESCENTS

- Perinatally acquired or acquired later
- Requires different responses
- Recognition that the differing experiences based on length of time since diagnosis



KEY CONSIDERATIONS: PERINATAL OR LATER ACQUISITION OF HIV

- Adjustment to diagnosis
- Psycho-sexual adjustment
- Finding peers
- Family support
- Possible bereavement, parent or parents
- Adherence to ART



KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN PEER SUPPORT FOR ADOLESCENTS

Transition from paediatric to adult care

- Period of grief and loss
 - Camp Goodtime
- Adult care often not well placed to support youth



PEER SUPPORT STANDARDS: RATIONALE

- Adolescents have same rights to quality, appropriate healthcare as all Australians
- Adolescents report benefit from engagement with peers
- Australian examples: Camp Goodtime and Camp Seaside



PEER SUPPORT STANDARDS: KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- Ability to provide youth/child centred support
- Knowledge of how HIV affects family dynamics
- Ability to refer to appropriate youth services
- Good knowledge of safeguarding issues and legal requirements for vulnerable children and young people
- Knowledge of treatment issues for children and young people



PEER SUPPORT STANDARDS: OUTCOMES

- Knowledge and understanding of HIV treatments
- Adherence to medications
- Ability to manage their own health
- Ability to speak openly with healthcare professionals
- Building supportive and fulfilling relationships
- Ability to talk about HIV and other issues
- Confidence in their choices of sexual relationships
- Engagement with their community: school, faith, work
- Resilience
- Feeling optimistic about the future



PEER SUPPORT STANDARDS: AUDITABLE INDICATORS

- 90% of young people to be offered peer support when:
 - they are told that they have HIV.
 - they are newly diagnosed with HIV
 - facing a significant life event
 - making the transition from paediatric to adult care
- Policies in place for child safety and confidentiality
- Agreed pathway from clinic to peer support



CHALLENGES

Indicators are aspirational and face multiple challenges

- Stigma and discrimination
- Relatively low numbers
- Few dedicated services
- Resource constraints
- Wide geographic distribution



CONCLUSIONS

Adolescents have a right to peer support that is:

- Appropriate for their needs
 - Perinatally acquired
 - Recently acquired
- Complies with Child Safety Standards
- Honours their individual needs
- Respects their confidentiality
- Recognises and embraces their diversity: culture, sexuality, gender, and ability



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