

‘Even Me?’: Reframing HIV prevention for WA’s diverse communities

Authors:

KARINA REEVES¹, MARCUS SHAW¹

¹WAAC, Perth, Australia

Background/Purpose:

Recent data from the Department of Health WA show HIV notifications increased from 68 in 2023 to 77 in 2024. Between January and June 2024, 28 new diagnoses were reported, with the majority involving individuals born in South-East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. People from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds are a priority group under both the *Western Australian Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Strategy 2024–2030* and the *Ninth National HIV Strategy 2024–2030*.

Approach:

The ‘Even Me?’ campaign was co-designed with CaLD community members and stakeholders in the CaLD health sector. This three-year, multi-phase initiative raises awareness of HIV prevention, with focus on PrEP and routine HIV testing. Community consultations revealed widespread gaps in knowledge about HIV risk, prevention, and treatment, particularly among migrants from Asia, Africa, and South America, consistent with contemporary evidence. The community reference group informed key campaign elements, including video settings, dialogue, and imagery. The campaign utilises inclusive and positive framing, and social connection.

Outcomes/Impact:

A suite of campaign videos and imagery has been developed, to be launched May - June 2025. Pre-launch activities include community engagement, education sessions, and radio and print advertising. Articles for the health workforce will be published in medical journals. Early evaluation indicates community acceptability and cultural relevance.

Innovation and Significance:

As HIV demographics shift to include more heterosexual individuals and those from CaLD backgrounds, prevention strategies must evolve accordingly. The changing nature of HIV transmission highlights the importance of inclusive, adaptive approaches that address the specific needs of emerging at-risk groups. This campaign represents an essential step in empowering CaLD communities with the knowledge and tools to prevent HIV. A second phase will be developed in 2026.

Disclosure of Interest Statement

WAAC is funded the WA, Department of Health. No grants were received in the development of this project.