

# RETENTION IN CARE IS AIDED BY CASE MANAGERS ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV AND COMPLEX HEALTH NEEDS

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## Background:

Income, education, employment, housing and support are all social determinants of health (SDH). When some or all of the SDH are absent it can have a profound impact on people living with HIV (PLHIV), affecting commencement of antiretroviral therapy, treatment adherence, retention in care and community engagement.

The study objectives were to discuss the role of community based, intensive, multidisciplinary and collaborative case management for PLHIV with complex needs. To report on the psychosocial, economic and medical complexities for many PLHIV and challenges faced by the front line clinicians when working with this population. To report on the individually focused health interventions and outcomes of PLHIV with complex health needs

## Methods:

Seven case studies were collected in 2017 from three NSW Health Sydney HIV community teams that work with PLHIV and complex medical and psychosocial issues. The case study methodology was chosen to capture the complexity of their needs and care required. A standard reporting proforma was used, results were quantitatively and descriptively graphed.

## Results:

All participants had between one and six comorbidities: depression, anxiety, drug and alcohol issues, intellectual disability, schizophrenia and HIV associated neurocognitive disorder. Prevalent themes included unstable housing, inadequate incomes and difficulty engaging in care due to belief systems and chaotic levels of function. Case managers collaborated with between seven and 12 HIV specific and generalist services, providing over 140 occasions of service in a twelve month period. All participants experienced an improvement in medication adherence, illustrated by increased CD4 and undetectable viral loads. Retention in care, housing and income status were also improved.

## Conclusion:

The results of the case series demonstrates an improvement in cART adherence, engagement in care, improved housing and income status. Suggesting intensive support from these highly skilled specialist clinicians is instrumental in facilitating improved healthcare and quality of life outcomes.