

# Positive Life NSW's In-Clinic Peer Navigation Program in Greater Western Sydney

## Authors:

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## Background/Purpose:

Building on decades of foundational partnerships that have evolved innovative models of care for people living with HIV (PLHIV) in NSW, Positive Life NSW's (PLNSW) In-clinic Peer Navigation Program (PNP) is a partnership with Local Health Districts (LHDs) in Greater Western Sydney (GWS). PLNSW's PNP highlights the transformative nature of peer support for highly marginalised, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), and under-served communities of PLHIV in GWS.

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## Approach:

Peer Navigators (PNs) delivering PLNSW's PNP are professional, skilled workers operating in a clinical environment; trained to deliver peer support for PLHIV with a specific focus on improving health and wellbeing, quality of life and working aspirationally with PLHIV health consumers attending sexual health and immunology clinics in GWS. Sensitivity is placed on ensuring that PNs represent and provide support for culturally diverse communities, with culturally safe approaches to addressing HIV fear and stigma in ethnically diverse communities.

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## Outcomes/Impact:

Since the programs inception and rollout in 2024, 83 unique consumers have attended the PNP in three GWS locations, resulting in 275 occasions of service (OOS). PNs communicate treatment and health advice and provide referrals to other support services that are offered in the GWS area. PLHIV health consumers are invited to PLNSW social inclusion events that aim to mitigate social marginalisation and assist with community development in GWS. PNs also deliver prevention advice and information to clinic attendees who are not PLHIV, reducing fear of HIV acquisition and alleviating the effects of HIV stigma in the broader community.

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## Innovation and Significance:

PNs have been collectively invited to participate in clinical service delivery in GWS which has led to the ongoing development of the PNP program. Providing PN support in-clinic has extended the reach of peer-based support for PLNSW, enhanced health care delivery and in turn, helped to raise the quality of life of PLHIV in GWS.

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## Disclosure of Interest Statement:

Positive Life NSW recognises with gratitude the effort and passion of the community of people living with HIV in NSW.

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Andrew Heslop is Senior Health Promotion and Peer Navigation Manager at Positive Life NSW, responsible for the development of peer support and navigation programs. He champions compassionate, strengths-based, person-centred practice, social justice, inclusivity and the continuous improvement in quality of life for all people living with HIV in NSW.