

# Interest in New Methods of PrEP Delivery Among Australian Women

## Authors:

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## Background:

The listing of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, and its subsequent uptake among gay and bisexual men (GBM), has provided the potential for the elimination of HIV transmission in Australia. The elimination of HIV transmission, however, will require a broader focus on ensuring PrEP is available for other populations, including both cis and trans women.

## Methods:

This paper draws on findings from a qualitative project, which sought to explore whether there is a role for PrEP among women in Australia. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted between mid-2023 and early-2024 with 15 PrEP-naïve and four PrEP-experienced women.

## Results:

Sixteen participants were cisgender and three were trans or gender diverse; seven were heterosexual, nine were bisexual or pansexual, two were lesbian, and one was queer; participants were aged between 18 and their late-50s.

Overall, participants were interested in the benefits PrEP might hold for them in a range of circumstances, including (but not limited to) entering into a serodifferent relationship; entering into a relationship with a man who has sex with other men; or travelling to countries with a higher HIV prevalence rate. A key theme was a strong/moderate interest in newer (and often under-researched) methods of PrEP delivery, such as long-acting injectable cabotegravir PrEP, the Dual Prevention Pill (DPP), and long-acting implantable PrEP. While on-demand PrEP is not recommended for cisgender women in Australia, it is a quite common desire to take PrEP on an on-demand or event-driven basis.

## Conclusion:

In-depth interviews with seronegative women living in Australia indicated that women are interested in PrEP. However, more clinical research is needed to prioritise the availability of new PrEP methods in Australia. Lessons from GBM have shown that increasing PrEP accessibility through offering a range of options will enable greater numbers of Australians to uptake PrEP and remain adherent.

## Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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