

20 YEARS SUPPORTING PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV DEMENTIA

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Background/Approach: Adahps was established in 1997 to meet the needs of the HIV positive individuals with cognitive impairment who required specialised care and intensive support. Adahps is a state wide service providing collaborative case management and neuropsychological assessment for people living with HIV related cognitive impairment, multiple comorbidities and complex psychosocial issues. In our 20th anniversary year we can report back to the community.

Analysis/ Argument: In order to meet the needs of clients presenting with complex issues, NSW Health set up a model of care that could provide intensive support. This model included co-case management as well as a hospital-based stabilisation unit and a 24-hour supported accommodation facility. Over time, as antiretroviral therapy changed HIV into a chronic, manageable condition, the hospital-based services were deemed to no longer be necessary, but instead people were supported to live in the community. This was achieved with funding for brokered care services.

Outcome/Results: Whilst some of our clients are living in 24 hour supported environments like Yaralla House or aged care facilities, the vast majority of people can be supported in the community. Adahps supports clients to move from such intensive supported accommodation into a less supported environment in the community. Medication adherence, retention in care and maintaining suitable accommodation are some of the challenges experienced by this client group who also have to live with multiple co-morbidities and complex psychosocial problems.

Conclusions/Applications: Although there have been considerable improvements in HIV Dementia, , less severe forms of cognitive impairment are more common, with the CHARTER study (2010) finding up to 45% meet the criteria for these milder forms of HIV-associated neurocognitive disorder. Therefore there continue to be 65-70 clients requiring Adahps support at any one time, with late presentations contributing to the concern of HIV dementia.