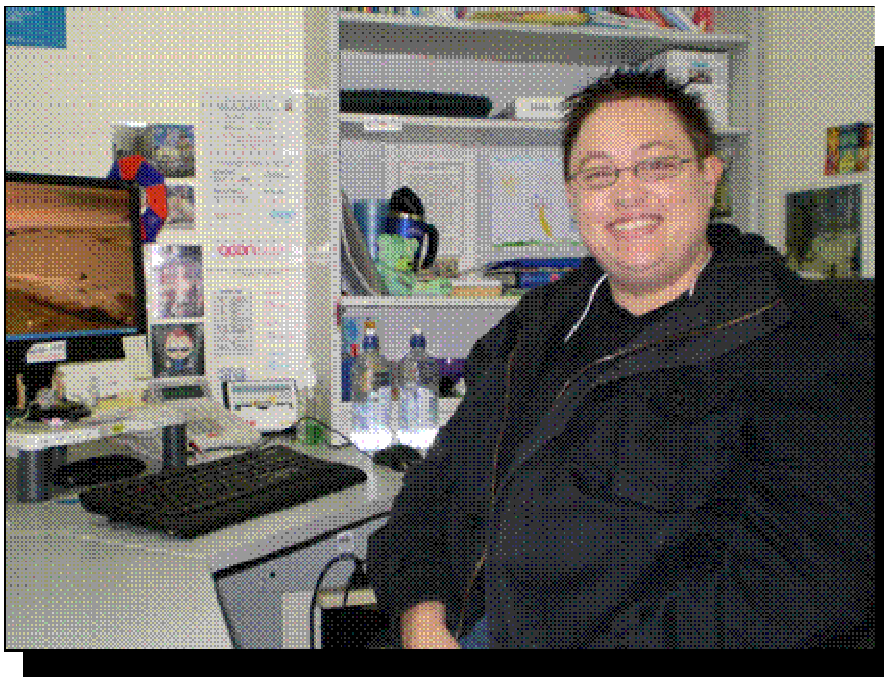


Out and About

WINTER 2011

New Client Services Officer



Hi, I'm Peita Johnson the newly appointed Client Services Officer for ACON Southern Region. I have only been here for a little while but everyone has been amazing. The staff here are really great to work with, and the people I have met so far have been v e r y

welcoming.

I have been very busy meeting people at different services. There is so much to learn and lucky there are wonderful people willing and able to share their knowledge. This is a great community and I hope to be able to contribute.

I am very excited to be

working for ACON. I have worked in a variety of areas including Drug and Alcohol and most recently Mental Health. I find I am enjoying the opportunity to expand my horizons. My approach is very much client focused so I would love to hear what services our community would like ACON to provide.

I know there are a number of people living in remote and rural areas which make it hard to drop in. I would love to hear from you, so contact me either by phone or email pjohnson@acon.org.au

I'd love to hear from you and support you as much as I can.

Cheers
Peita



**OUT AND ABOUT
Winter 2010**

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of ACON, its associates, or the Editor. Publication of contributions will be at the discretion of the Editor. Any articles containing racist, sexist, homophobic or defamatory remarks will not be published.

Contributions:

Original contributions and letters are welcomed and encouraged. It is preferred that articles are submitted by email to illaadmin@acon.org.au

**Deadline for the Spring edition
Sept/ Oct/ Nov is 1 August 2011**

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OUT AND ABOUT

is a quarterly publication of
ACON Illawarra Office

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Managers Report

Hello everyone. Winter is upon us already. So fast!! I'll take it as an excuse to snuggle in front of the fire with a hot toddy or two, a couple of cats (I am a lesbian after all) and my other half.

In my last column I mentioned that recruitment was underway to fill our client services position. By now you will have 'met' Peita. She brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the role and I know already she's a great asset to ACON and our communities. I would also like to say a big thank you to Súin for her great work in keeping client services operating while recruitment was underway.

I know you are all aware of ACON's web site, and many of you visit it regularly I'm sure. You may have noticed a few changes to the site,

and I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight southern region's home page and the additions and changes to it. Southern region/Illawarra has our own home page as well as Facebook page. We will regularly update events, happenings and campaigns on each of these as well as advertise your group's events. So please let us know of anything that's coming up for you. Give us a couple of weeks notice if possible so we can make sure it's uploaded to the web site and Facebook. You never know who'll be travelling to your area, and using ACON's web site for information is a great way for all of us to keep in touch www.acon.org.au

By now you will be aware that ACON Sydney office has moved. To find out more please go to the ACON website. It's a great location at 414

Elizabeth St Surry Hills and for those of us in regional and rural NSW so close to Central Station. This building will be host to a number of GLBT organisations so when you visit Sydney next please call in and say hello.

June 13-19 is Men's Health Week. We'll be urging men to talk about their health during that week and we encourage you to do the same. There are plenty of events happening across NSW for this week. If you and your community want to organise an event ACON will be happy to support you with condoms, information and publicity. Contact menshealthweek.org.au to find out about an event near you or to register your event.

Have a safe and warm winter.

Radda Jordan

The Drama Down Under



25 years into the HIV epidemic, reinforcing the rate and frequency of HIV testing has been a strong foundation and a vital aspect of ACON's work and that of the HIV sector in general.

This in part has fostered a high level of HIV testing among gay men in NSW. It is worth noting that these levels are significantly higher than other comparable international jurisdictions.

It is clear that gay men in NSW have embraced HIV testing as a necessary and very important part of their sexual health.

However, recent research* and data show that the group of 'untested men' (men who have never tested) might be larger than reported in previous years.

Research also shows that 'recent testing' rates (i.e. gay men who have tested in the past but not in the previous 12 months) have decreased, in particular amongst gay men who may be the most at risk of getting HIV (highly sexually active men living in Sydney).

Finally, NSW HIV notifications data 2009 indicate that the frequency of testing among newly diagnosed gay men is much lower than might have been anticipated given the strong historical association between gay men and HIV testing.

It is of vital importance in terms of health promotion, public health in general and HIV prevention in particular, that existing levels of testing are sustained for the majority of gay men and increased in subcultures where risk is greater such as with highly sexually active gay men and MSM.

It is imperative to ensure that regular HIV testing is back on gay men's radar as part of their sexual health to-do list.

As reported in the Pleasure and Sexual Health (PASH) survey, by far the most common reason given for why gay men had not been tested is that they feel themselves to be at low risk.

Other reported barriers are: Fear of doctors, medical procedures, needles and blood; fears associated with testing positive; bad previous testing experience; feeling ashamed to ask for too many tests in a short period of time; high level of stress generated by the waiting period between the test and the results and to some HIV is less of an issue now.

For more info go to:
www.thedramadownunder.info

Contact ACON for more info on
4226 1163.



**REGULAR
TESTING
FOR HIV
PUTS YOU
IN CONTROL!**

**KNOWING YOUR
STATUS AND
PLAYING SAFE
HELPS PROTECT
YOU AND
YOUR PARTNERS**

WWW.THEDRAMADOWNUNDER.INFO





Love, Safety and Respect

A new resource sheds light on often undiscussed issues in the GLBTIQ community. By Tobin Saunders

Healthy, happy relationships appear on the surface to be easily attainable and sustainable but the reality that some of us find ourselves in difficult situations is certainly cause for concern and action and GLBTIQ folk are not immune.

No relationship is perfect and they all need work, maintenance, healthy discussion and compromise and not just when things go awry.

The childhood stereotype from my far reaching memory is that of the bashed heterosexual woman with only an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) between herself and the dangers of a violent partner.

Now, with wider acceptance and recognition of GLBTIQ

relationships we are becoming more aware of negative dynamics in some relationships.

We all want respect and we don't want to live in fear, no matter how insignificant the issue may seem. There is support available to be able to talk about our relationships in safe and constructive environments. You are not alone.

Domestic Violence (DV) needn't be restricted to physical violence. In fact, much DV is insidious and often discretely controlling. Humiliation, social isolation, outburst of sudden anger, monitoring behaviour, financial control, emotional control and abuse, threats or coercive behaviour, stalking, all constitute forms of DV.

This violence can include monitoring, or making abusive comments on Facebook and other social networking sites, or via email and texting. You may find yourself editing what you say or feeling scared and anxious around your partner, if so you may be in a violent relationship.

Abuse and control in a relationship is domestic violence. DV also includes abuse within other types of relationships including; between relatives, housemates, a carer relationship - either paid or unpaid, or between an ex partner.

Domestic Violence is common but it is not ok. Domestic Violence is a criminal offence. There are many misconceptions and myths surrounding DV

and it's great to know that ACON, in conjunction with the NSW Same Sex GLBTIQ Domestic Violence Interagency and the Safe Relationships Project have produced a brilliantly informative booklet titled **Another Closet**.

We have plenty of these in hard copy at our office and you can also access info from these and other materials from the resources section of the Another Closet website www.anothercloset.com.au

Another Closet has information, personal stories, quotes, strategies and support options for GLBTIQ people in abusive relationships in NSW.

Recently the Anti-Violence Project (AVP) launched a new DV workers toolkit. This follows from an executive summary and recommendations of a new research report; One Size Does Not Fit All.

Essentially it is an analysis of the gaps in NSW domestic violence support services in relation to GLBTIQ communities' needs.

You can download an electronic version of the toolkit through the ACON website at: www.acon.org.au/anti-violence/resources/GLBTIQDV-toolkit and simply type in - One Size Does Not Fit All - in the search window or you can contact the AVP for more details.

Coming up on 16 September 2011 is the 3rd Biennial (and first national) GLBTIQ Domestic Violence Conference to be held in Sydney.

This is a unique opportunity for workers, service providers, students and anyone with an interest in the area to participate in the first national conference on GLBTIQ domestic and

family violence in Australia.

The working party is currently calling for submissions for papers; more details are available on the ACON and Another Closet websites or by emailing Moo Baulch in the AVP mbaulch@acon.org.au

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger call the Police 000.

The police can provide you immediate protection day and night. Domestic Violence Liaison Officers (DVLOs) are trained in dealing with domestic violence in GLBT relationships.

GLLOs (Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers) are available in many areas of NSW – for more information about your nearest GLLO call the Police Switchboard on (02) 9281 0000

Domestic Violence Line is a 24/7 support for all people experiencing DV.

Ph: 1800 65 64 63

**ACON's Gay & Lesbian Anti-Violence Project
Ph: 9206 2116 (Reports)
Ph: 9206 2000 (enquiries)
Freecall: 1800 063 060
Hearing Impaired: 9283 2088
ssdvavp@acon.org.au**

**Another Closet
www.anothercloset.com.au**

**Safe Relationships Project
Ph: 1800 244 481 or 9332 1966
www.iclc.org.au/srp**



calendar

JUNE 2011

2 Nurses Clinic
10:30—1pm @ ACON
4226 1163

4 WAGS
7pm @ ACON
4226 1163

9 Q to Q
5pm @ ACON
4226 1163

9 Doctors Clinic
10:30—1pm @ ACON
4226 1163

18 WAGS
7pm @ ACON
4226 1163

18 Men's Health Week Event
Bunnings Warehouse -
Wollongong 10am -1pm

23 REAL
6pm @ ACON
0431 887 770

23 Q to Q
5pm @ ACON
4226 1163

23 Doctors Clinic
10:30—1pm @ ACON
4226 1163

JULY 2011

2 WAGS
7pm @ ACON
4226 1163

7 Nurses Clinic
10:30—1pm @ ACON
4226 1163

7 Q to Q
5pm @ ACON
4226 1163

14
28 Doctors Clinic
10:30—1pm @ ACON
4226 1163

16 WAGS
7pm @ ACON
4226 1163

19 The Sum of Us
8pm @ SEC
smgg.wall.fm

21 Q to Q
5pm @ ACON
4226 1163

28 REAL
6pm @ ACON
0431 887 770

Shoalhaven Men's Gay Group (SMGG) are organising a group to see 'The Sum of Us' at Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre (SEC) on **Tuesday 19th July at 8:00pm**. It stars Steve Bisley & Patrick Harvey. Tickets are \$38.50 or \$30 for groups of 10 or more.

AUGUST 2011

4	Q to Q 5pm @ ACON 4226 1163
4	Nurses Clinic 10:30—1pm @ ACON 4226 1163
6	WAGS 7pm @ ACON 4226 1163
11	Doctors Clinic 10:30—1pm @ ACON 4226 1163
18	Q to Q 5pm @ ACON 4226 1163
20	WAGS 7pm @ ACON 4226 1163
25	REAL 6pm @ ACON 0431 887 770
25	Doctors Clinic 10:30—1pm @ ACON 4226 1163

*For regular events and updates
check out ACON Illawarra's
new Facebook page.*

SWOP
SEX WORKERS OUTREACH PROJECT

Want to know the ins and outs
of your profession?

SWOP has a brand new website that features
information for sex workers, about:

- Sexual Health
- The Law
- Workplace Safety
- SWOP Services
- Downloadable Resources
- Regional and Rural Services
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)
- Links to other useful sites
- And much, much more!

www.swop.org.au

SWOP - Sex Workers Outreach Project
69 Abercrombie Street Chippendale NSW 2008
Phone: (02) 9319 4866
Free call: 1800 632 902
Email: info@swop@acon.org.au

acon
BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

Update on the Medicare Dental Scheme

The Government plans to cease operation of the Medicare Dental Scheme on 31 December 2011.

People entitled to the program are advised to have all necessary referrals, assessments, dental care, denture care, checks, cleans and other work attended to by this date.



At ACON Illawarra we understand distance can make it difficult to connect with lesbians and lesbian community groups across the Illawarra and southern region of NSW, not to mention groups connecting with each other.

Using the latest online platform and the World Wide Web can change all that. ACON Illawarra has introduced a lesbian health program called 'Byte by Byte'. This is a synchronous online program that enables lesbians and same sex attracted women, in groups or individually, to 'talk' to each other and participate in workshops across NSW all together and at the same time.

Hume Phoenix, a GLBT

community social and support group that have been operating for many years out of Albury NSW, hosted the first Byte by Byte session on 14 April called 'What is a Healthy Relationship?' Lesbians in groups and individually 'met' online to participate in this great workshop that explored many aspects of relationships including Same Sex Domestic Violence.

ACON Illawarra will host the next workshop called 'How Healthy is Your Vagina?' It'll be a fun way to discuss sexual health, pap smears, menopause and all things 'vagina'!

There'll be pictures and videos and plenty of time for 'group' discussion about your

own vagina and sexual health. Put it this way, it won't be a dry workshop!

To become part of this workshop all you have to do is contact the ACON Illawarra office illawarra@acon.org.au and give us your email address to register. It is a closed online discussion so don't worry if you think the whole WWW is watching, they aren't, it's just us. All you need is access to a computer and the internet.

This workshop will be held on a Thursday evening either late July or early August. Please watch for details on www.acon.org.au and follow the links to ACON Illawarra webpage or Facebook.

thisoz.

J.B. Ghuman Jr.
Writer & Director of *Spork*

Speak up for an
inclusive Australia.

www.thisisoz.com.au



SPREAD
LOVE
DON'T JUDGE
We're ALL Magik!!
xoxo



Wollongong Area Gays
www.wags.net.au

WAGS is a local Gay and Bisexual social, peer support
and networking group for men in the Illawarra
WAGS meets on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month
at the ACON community space
18 Ellen Street, Wollongong (the white building)
from 7 pm to 9 pm
For more information contact the ACON office on
4226 1163

**wagga
.pride**

Wagga Pride is a group of dedicated volunteers who hold an active interest in Gay & Lesbian affairs & lifestyle in the southern NSW city

of Wagga Wagga! Wagga Pride holds regular events in an effort to create an atmosphere where people can be themselves without fear of alienation, retribution or humiliation!" If you're in the Riverina area, you

will soon be able to tune into Free FM, a new radio station striving to give the regional GLBTIQ communities a creative yet supportive outlet to voice their opinions, concerns and beliefs without fear and discrimination.

Free FM will launch very shortly in Wagga Wagga and Albury areas. For the precise launch date contact Wagga Pride at contactus@everybodysfree.com.au

Hepatitis Awareness Week

25 - 31 July 2011

**Drop into the office during this week
to pick up an information pack.**

On **Thursday 28 July** we will have a doctor available from the Port Kembla Sexual Health Clinic to provide free and confidential hepatitis testing and treatment information.

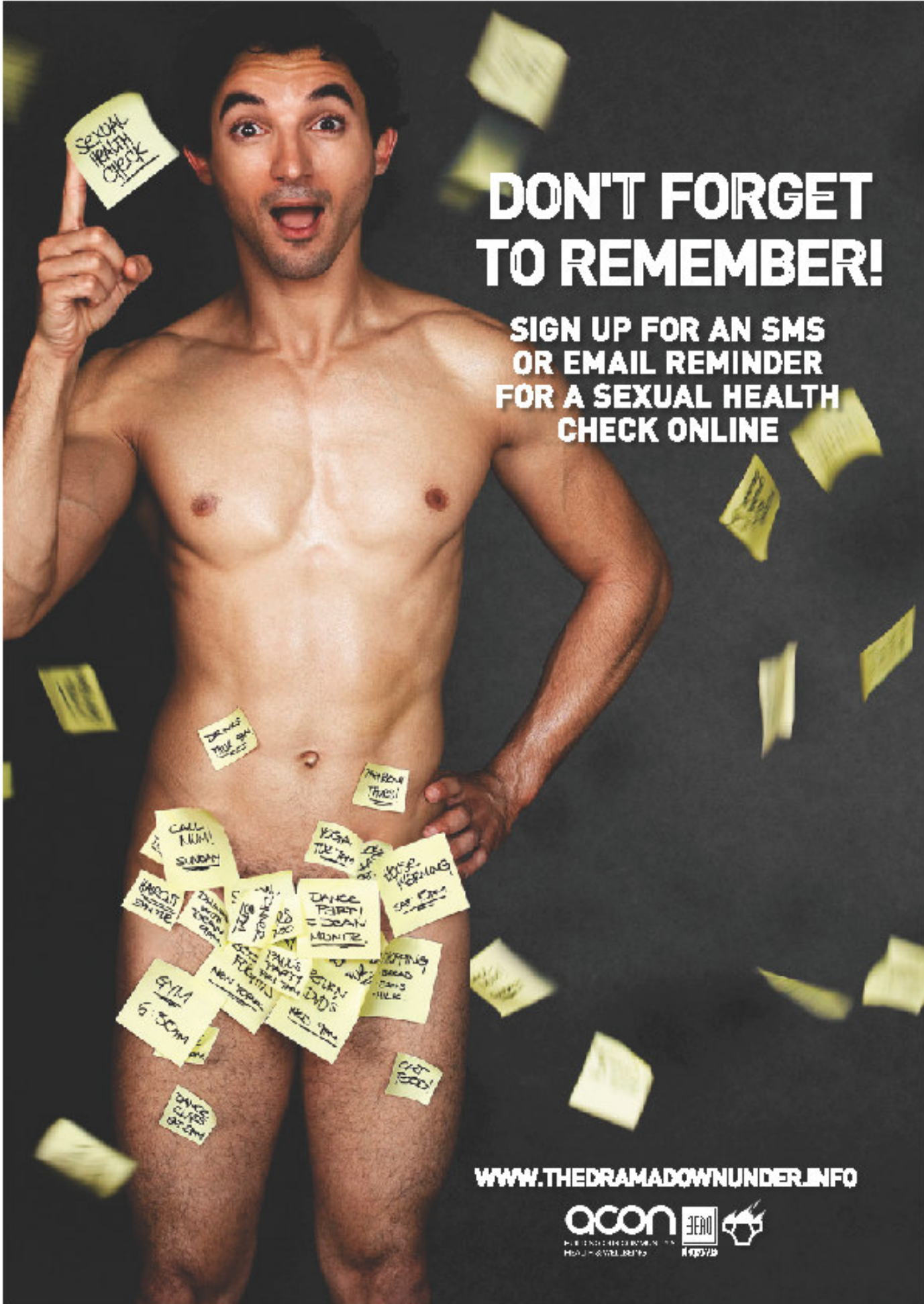
The clinic will be available between 10:30 am and 1pm. Phone us for an appointment on 4226 1163.

The **Hepatitis Helpline** is a NSW state-wide telephone information and support service for people affected by Hepatitis C.

It's a free, confidential and non-judgmental service.

Phone **1800 803 990**
or visit
www.hep.org.au





DON'T FORGET TO REMEMBER!

SIGN UP FOR AN SMS OR EMAIL REMINDER FOR A SEXUAL HEALTH CHECK ONLINE

WWW.THEDRAMADOWNUNDER.INFO



During National Youth Week 2011, celebrated the first week of April, ACON with the support of Wollongong Youth Services and Wollongong City Council developed and launched a new campaign around sexuality, gender and homophobia.

The 2 posters for the campaign 'Start the Conversation' aim to remove the stigma and raise awareness around the issues of stereotypes and social exclusion as a result of homophobia.

This resource adds to the many resources and projects we offer to young people in the southern region of NSW in challenging homophobia and removing its stigma.

For more information on the campaign or any other youth projects in the southern region please do not hesitate to contact: the ACON Community Health Promotion Officer, Chadwick on 4226 1163 or email cspinazza@acon.org.au

Starting the Conversation

**"WORDS DON'T
HURT ME...
...HOW YOU USE
THEM DOES."**



**START THE CONVERSATION.
"THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK."**

Everyone has the right to feel safe and accepted, let's start the conversation around sexuality, gender and homophobia. To learn more or get support visit the ACON Southern Regional Office at 47 Kenny St, Wollongong, call (02) 4226 1163, email llawarra@acon.org.au or head online to www.acon.org.au

ACON would like to thank Wollongong Youth Services and Wollongong City Council for their support.



**"SO, YOU'RE
ASSUMING I'M...
...MAYBE I'M
NOT."**



**START THE CONVERSATION.
"CHALLENGE YOUR PERCEPTION."**

Everyone has the right to feel safe and accepted, let's start the conversation around sexuality, gender and homophobia. To learn more or get support visit the ACON Southern Regional Office at 47 Kenny St, Wollongong, call (02) 4226 1163, email llawarra@acon.org.au or head online to www.acon.org.au

ACON would like to thank Wollongong Youth Services and Wollongong City Council for their support.



Mens Health Week

Men's Health Week is a strong reminder to men that their health is important. Major health risks, such as type 2 diabetes, bowel cancer, skin cancer and even prostate cancer, can be reduced through simple lifestyle changes and a yearly visit to the GP. It is often the simplest alterations to day to day life that can make the difference to a man's health risks. On the website below you will find a lot of useful health information as well as some fantastic services providing help and information for men.

<http://www.whatsyourscore.com.au/>

Free Community Event

Where: Bunning's Warehouse, Wollongong

When: Saturday 18 June

Time: 10am – 1pm

Have a fun day and learn about your health at the same time.

All men and their families are welcome

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Contact Zaga on 4221 6700



@ ACON Community Space

18 Ellen St, Wollongong
Tea, Coffee & Cake

4th Thursday of each month from 6pm - 8pm

P: 0431 887 770 for additional information

W: <http://realillawarra.blogspot.com/>

E: real.illawarra@gmail.com

Respecting Equality Amongst Lesbians

Contacts

ACON Illawarra

47 Kenny St, Wollongong
Ph: (02) 4226 1163
Email: illawarra@acon.org.au

SUPPORT

ACON Counselling at Illawarra

- 4226 1163
For all GLBT and PWH community members

ACON (Sydney)

- 1800 063 060 (freecall)

ACON Treatments Information

- 1800 816 518

ACON 24 hour Treatment Support

- 1800 454 510

Gender Centre

Transgender Support and Social network
based in Sydney.

- 9569 2366 www.gendercentre.org.au

Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers Wollongong

- 4226 7899

Dapto - 4262 9499

Warilla - 4295 9499

Illawarra Women's Health Centre

- 4255 6800
info@womenshealthcentre.com.au

Multicultural HIV/AIDS Service

- 9515 3098

Nowra Women's Health Centre

- 4421 0703
Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm

Positive Life NSW - 1800 245 677 (freecall)

www.positivelife.org.au to view 'talkabout'
magazine online.

Positive Heterosexuals (POZHET)

- 1800 812 404
For Men and Women who are HIV positive.

Sex Industry Outreach Worker (SWOP)

- 4226 1163 (office) or 0417 694 149
(mobile)

Wollongong Women's Resource Centre

- 4228 1499

MEDICAL

Sexual Health Clinics Illawarra & Shoalhaven Wollongong

- 4226 1189

Nowra - 4423 9353

Port Kembla - 4223 8457

Free Dental Care through SESIAHS
(Anyone with a Pension or Health Card)
- 1300 369 651

Clinic 35

Wodonga - (02) 6022 8888

DRUG AND ALCOHOL

Watershed Detox & Rehab Services

- 4272 3000 (24 Hours)

First Step Program at Port Kembla Hospital

- 4275 1529 / 0411 408 726

LEGAL

Illawarra Legal Centre - 4276 1939

Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre

- 4422 9529 / 1800 229 529

HALC HIV/AIDS Legal Centre

- 1800 063 060 (freecall) www.halc.org.au

SOCIAL

Pink Nation - Illawarra Gay and Lesbian weekly
radio program presenting queer
information, news, entertainment.
Mondays 5pm - 6 pm, 2VOX, 106.9FM

Respecting Equality Amongst Lesbians (REAL) social & support group for lesbians

Contact Fay or Janine 0431 887 770 or
real.illawarra@gmail.com
<http://realillawarra.blogspot.com/>

Q to Q – group for same-sex attracted and gen-
der diverse school aged young people or those
questioning their sexuality or gender
Contact Chadwick at ACON: 4226 1163
Illawarra@acon.org.au

Wollongong Area Gays (WAGS) - Social and
support group for gay & bi-sexual men contact
ACON: 4226 1163
www.wags.net.au

Unity Wollongong - Dinner and
dance group. Contact 0403 899 015