

Rainbow News

August/September/October 2008

“Would you wear it?” Campaign

In a community which regularly puts out the call for diversity and acceptance, it may come as a surprise to discover that racism is as evident in the GLBT community as it is in the general population.

“On the one hand, being a minority within a minority brings with it a much stronger sense of identity and belonging,” says ACON Aboriginal Project Team Leader Michelle Sparks. “But it also leaves the way open for a much stronger sense of exclusion and isolation as a result of the negative perceptions and attitudes of other people in our community.”

Michelle says research by ACON shows that GLBT people of Asian, Arabic and Aboriginal backgrounds experience a high level of racism from other members of the GLBT community.

“These groups have reported that social exclusion, offensive jokes, verbal abuse and an expectation to conform to stereotypes are the most common forms of racism,” she says. “In addition, there’s a widespread and unhelpful attitude that people who complain about racism or racist slurs are being oversensitive and shouldn’t take it too seriously.”



“Obviously, not everybody in the GLBT community is racist. But the sad and ugly reality is that some are and getting them to change their attitudes is not an easy process. There are, however many people who are not racist but who turn a blind eye and allow racist behaviours to go unchallenged. This is a much easier problem to target because basically all you’re doing is asking people to stand up for something they believe in.”

This is the principle behind One And Many, a new social awareness campaign that ACON has developed in close consultation with members of Sydney’s Asian, Arabic and Aboriginal communities. To be promoted through community media and at community events, the campaign is designed to encourage people to take a stand against racism.

ACON CEO Stevie Clayton says she hopes the campaign will help bring the GLBT community closer together. “What we’re trying to do, on a whole lot of different levels, is really get under people’s skin and help them realise that everyone is a unique and valuable member of our community.”

If you would like copies of any posters please contact Ian at ACON

acon
BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

USEFUL WEB PAGES

www.acon.org.au

Information about ACON and programs

www.positivelive.org.au

View Talkabout magazine online

www.treatmentupdate.info

Up to date information on HIV treatments and testing

www.afao.org.au

Information about AFAO, including *HIV Australia*

www.hepatitisc.org.au

Comprehensive information about Hepatitis C

www.napwa.org.au

National Association of People Living HIV/AIDS

www.ozegay.com

Local gay website with info and profiles

www.tropicalfruits.org.au

Local gay and lesbian social group

www.byrongay.com

Comprehensive local gay and lesbian website

byrongirls.com

North Coast lesbian website

www.ozfaeries.com

Australian Radical faeries - North Coast

www.hivandhepatitis.com

Info and articles on HIV, HCV and co-infection

www.napwa.org.au/node/685

TreatAware sponsored by NAPWA Australian treatments & clinical trials database

www.thebody.com/index.html

The Body - very useful & friendly US site

www.aidsmap.com

AIDSMap (UK) [(includes regular newsletter HATIP HIV & AIDS Treatment in Practice {mid-level info} and HIV Weekly (a more popular weekly newsletter)]

www.aidsmeds.com

AIDSmeds.com and Poz.com - useful US sites specifically for poz community

www.medscape.com/hiv

Medscape HIV/AIDS (free registration required: lots of current clinical information)

www.clinicaloptions.com/HIV.aspx

Clinical Care Options (includes regular email updates, esp. good for conference coverage & CME)

www.projectinform.org/

Project Inform

(includes regular e-newsletter PI Perspective)

www.i-base.info

HIV Treatment Bulletin [HIV treatment information for healthcare professionals and HIV-positive people, Monthly bulletin from HIV iBase UK charity]

When reading this page electronically you can link to the websites by holding down the Ctrl key and clicking your mouse once.

RAINBOW NEWS is now a quarterly publication of ACON, Northern Rivers Branch, 27 Uralba Street, Lismore PO Box 6063, South Lismore NSW 2480

Phone: (02) 6622 1555 **Fax:** (02) 6622 1520

Freecall: 1800 633 637

Email: northernrivers@acon.org.au

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of ACON Incorporated, 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 imacdonald@acon.org.au in word format.

Articles in Rainbow News cannot be reproduced without permission.

**Deadline for Nov/Dec/Jan issue is
Wed 8th Oct**

International Lesbian Day edition

Ian Macdonald	Content Editor
Sioux Harrison	Layout & Design
Stacy Hughes	Proof Reader

Martin, Maria, Elke & others Production

Contributors to this issue include: Amber McBride, Kelly Walsh, Sioux Harrison, Roy Starkey, Neil McKellar -Stewart ,Tania Lienert, Ian Macdonald and Kate.

PLEASE NOTE THAT RAINBOW NEWS WILL NOW BE PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

acon
BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

From the Manager's Desk

As I write I am just completing our reports to our funding body, the NSW Department of Health, and reflecting on the year that has been. I am so pleased and proud of all the Northern Rivers staff for their hard work and achievements. These include: supporting 93 clients living with or affected by HIV in more than 700 occasions of service; providing health information to 35 HIV positive people and service providers in more than 150 occasions of service; counselling 28 women in more than 150 occasions of service at our Lesbian Counselling Service, all paid for by fundraised money; distributing about 30 HIV and STI prevention and other GLBT health campaigns and thousands of resources; providing safe sex packs and displays to four Tropical Fruits and other regional GLBT parties; distributing almost 20,000 syringes in our Needle and Syringe Program; supporting 25 Lunch Club meetings run by local positive people from donated funds and their own contributions and labour; offering about 20 other varied forums, workshops, fun and fundraising events for the GLBT communities in our region, and being involved with a multiplicity of community activities and organisations all to help us better serve our communities.

We have also completed our 2008-2009 Business Plan. I'm excited to announce some of our upcoming activities: the continuation of a support program for people living long term with HIV; offering a Genesis workshop for people newly diagnosed with HIV or just starting to 'come out' as HIV positive; Phoenix workshops in partnership with BGF and SHAIDS for positive people wanting to explore new directions in life as a result of doing well on HIV treatments; "Opposites Attract" , a workshop for serodiscordant couples and a range of health education activities and forums for GLBT people.

If you'd like a look at the plan or want to get involved in our activities, drop into the Branch office and chat to one of our friendly team, or give me a call.

See you around,

Tania

ACON is a community based non government organisation promoting the health and wellbeing of a diverse gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, and a leading agency in HIV/AIDS policy development and program delivery. We provide HIV prevention, health promotion, advocacy and care and support services to members of our communities including indigenous people, injecting drug users, sex workers and all people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.



Editorial

Just about every industry has its own unique set of acronyms. Having now been at ACON for just over 4 months I have had to come to terms with the lingua franca or ACON speak and learn as quickly as possible a whole as a set of ACONyms. I have come across AFAO, ARCSHS, NCHECR, NCHSR and NCHVR in my readings and in contact at training programmes and conferences. So a-fay-oh, arches, enchecker, enchaser and enchiever are all relevant to doing what I am striving to do.

What has this done? Well for a start it has opened my thinking to just how many people in so many different organisations are working on the complex needs of individuals and groups. These are people sharing a common focus in the presentation of new, important and interrelated information across wide and diverse groups working within this sector. And that's just for Australia. Throw in what's happening elsewhere, in countries with larger populations and whose social, political, cultural and economic situation can be so very different from ours. This is the stuff about which head spins are generated.

What has been useful amongst other things has been the access to the internet and the web. In using computers today we have at our finger tips a range of information that is just enormous and indeed an amount that is plainly mind boggling. For example I typed HIV AIDS into Google and in an instant received a response that 36,000, 000 articles were available on this topic. There were over 9,000 pages referencing just to NCHECR. Go on, Google it for yourselves and see what's happening in that area. Do you ever wonder what family members and friends deceased before 1990 would think of this whole new world of researching, accessing, downloading, sharing and disseminating information and communicating it to each other?

So if you have a computer and you want to while away a few hours to see some (not all) of the organisations that touch our lives and those organisations that we at ACON may meet in our day to day work, check out some of those mentioned above – Google is highly recommended.

If you don't have a computer and would like to find out more about the World Wide Web we'd be happy to see you at No 27 Uralba Street Lismore. We have a computer with internet connection set aside for you to use free of charge. This may throw a whole new spin on your life; but be warned a head spin is a distinct possibility.

Phone us on 6622 1555 to book the computer.

Your next ACON Northern Rivers publication will be out early October. We will feature International Lesbian Day as a special edition of Rainbow News. If you would like to make a contribution to this particular newsletter please contact Amber or Ian at ACON.

Ian Macdonald - Education and Community Development Officer: imacdonald@acon.org.au



STAND UP FOR YOUR LOVE RIGHTS

LOVE MAKES Family

National Day of Protest for Gay Rights & Acceptance
SATURDAY 9th AUGUST
11am ACE Building Magellan St Lismore
MC - Sarah Hort Info: Ben 0432957213 or ben8721@hotmail.com
Supporters: Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre, Centre for Peace and Social Justice SCU, ACON Northern Rivers.



A working bee will be held at Tropical Fruits on Saturday August 2nd from 12 noon until 3-00 pm to prepare banners, posters and strategies for the march.

Guest speaker on August 9th will be Lismore City Councillor Jenny Dowell

HAPPY Birthday Tropical Fruits!



ACON would like to congratulate Tropical Fruits on the occasion of its 20th birthday.

Tropical Fruits was established in 1988 as a self funded, independent and voluntary organisation. It is a not for profit, incorporated association that holds regular events for members of the local and wider GLBTI. Communities. It is well known locally and beyond for hosting the most fabulous parties. People come from far and wide to experience their well planned , well executed and absolutely fun-time parties. Today Tropical Fruits is the premier gay and lesbian social group of the Northern Rivers community.

In November 2004 Tropical Fruits opened The Fruit Bowl which is now the home of Tropical Fruits. It has rapidly become a hub of a wide range of activities servicing the needs of the communities



reached by Tropical Fruits activities. It provides a place to meet friends, get involved, get arty or drop by for a cuppa. The office is open Mondays and Tuesday and throughout the week there's always things happening. Check Rainbow News for details. Or contact Tropical Fruits to be placed on their mailing list to receive their newsletter 'Fruit Juice'. The club house is situated in South Lismore, please phone 6622 6440 for details.

ACON is pleased to work with Tropical Fruits by supplying safe sex packs for all parties. We also gratefully acknowledge financial and in-kind support, commitment and interest from Tropical Fruits for ACON and other GLBT community activities.

If you have received *Rainbow News* by post a copy of the membership form to join Tropical Fruits has been included in the envelope. Membership of Tropical Fruits can be applied for on this form or alternatively by visiting the Tropical Fruits website: www.tropicalfruits.org.au

What's new in Living Well with HIV?

Australian Government Medicare rebates for Dental Services are back!

Neil McKellar-Stewart



As many of you will know, in November 2007, the previous Federal Government implemented a Medicare rebate scheme for people living with chronic medical conditions (including HIV) who have complex health needs where their dental health impacts on their medical condition. The scheme required that people with HIV (and other eligible chronic conditions) have a Health Care Plan organised by their GP which included dental care arrangements with a dentist. A range of dental services would be eligible to receive a Medicare rebate over a two year period dating from the first registration with Medicare under the new scheme.

The new Federal Government, in late February, advised the Australian community that it was discontinuing the scheme in favour of direct funding of dental service to the State governments. The last day for rebatable service was 30th June, and no new participants in the scheme would be admitted after 30th March. Accordingly lots of people living with HIV were urged to register onto the scheme and have their rebatable dental services provided by their dentists by 30th June.

The Federal Government, in a raft of Bills sent to the Senate in June, sought to enact these changed arrangements, however, the Bill rescinding the scheme was not passed and the Government has had to re-instate the scheme.

Accordingly, the scheme is once again open for existing patients to continue their dental treatments and for new patients to enrol.

If you wish to have dental work done you must act quickly: the Medicare rebate scheme requires you to have a health care plan in place and for you to commence your dental treatments. We suggest that you do this as soon as possible as the Government will once again attempt to withdraw the scheme when the new Senate commences sittings at the end of August.

Inserted in this issue of *Rainbow News* is **A step-by-step guide to using the Medicare Chronic Disease Management Dental Program**. Please read it carefully and if you wish to have your dental care funded (in part at least) by Medicare ensure that you are registered with Medicare and commence your treatments as soon as possible. Please contact either Neil or Roy at ACON Northern Rivers for more information.

Your dental health is hugely important!

It might be asked: "Why is dental health so important for people living with HIV?"

It is well known now that HIV causes considerable and chronic inflammation right through the body. HIV infection itself is associated with increased levels of biochemical markers of inflammation and thrombosis (in particular two markers called interleukin-6 and d-dimer). Having gingivitis (which is a sign of poor dental health and a precursor to periodontitis), may increase the risk of coronary heart disease (CHD). The association between periodontitis and CHD was recently reported on AIDSmeds.com on the basis of research into the health over a 25 year period of over 1200 men in a large US study (see: http://www.aidsmeds.com/articles/hiv_aids_dental_1667_14375.shtml)

AIDSmeds.com reporters conclude:

"Given that inflammation has been linked to heart disease, and that periodontitis causes considerable and chronic inflammation, it may be wise for younger men with other risk factors for heart disease to be checked regularly by a dental professional, and this is equally true for men living with HIV."

Another good reason to check out your dental health.

ACON website *Living with HIV* web pages have been expanded and updated : Check it out!

In addition to the information about the Chronic Disease Management Medicare rebate scheme for dental treatments, the ACON website has expanded its contents. There are new sections in the Living with HIV pages www.acon.org.au/living_with_hiv/ which include new information about the following key topics:

- Employment rights for people with HIV,
- Managing money & debt,
- Early access to superannuation, and
- Disability support pension (DSP)

Check these out: there's lots of useful information.

These accompany the Dental care section, which was launched in April, and together form the start of a diverse collection of information and referral content for people with HIV, which will cover practical and social aspects of living with HIV, as well as clinical/medical issues.

Each new section will be available as a Briefing, which repeats the web content in a paper-based format.

ACON's *HIV+ Services and Health Promotion Unit* of which Neil McKellar-Stewart is a member will continue to develop more helpful content for the ACON website: future web sections and briefings will include:

- International travel for people with HIV
- Hepatitis co-infection
- Smoking cessation
- Mental wellness
- Ageing with HIV
- Regional life with HIV
- Facial fillers,
- Insurance issues
- Alcohol & other drug interactions
- Safer-sex issues for people with HIV.

plus other print resources and web functions. Keep

Cont. Neil McKellar-Stewart

an eye open for these on the website. We'll let you know when new content appears.

What's new in HIV Treatments?

Each year there are a number of major international conferences in which new advances in HIV treatments are reported to the international HIV care community. As you read this, the *XVII International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2008)*, will be gearing up to be held in Mexico City, from 3-8 August 2008. It will attract over 20,000 people from around the world and will present lots of new information about the HIV pandemic. We will be reporting on news from this important conference in future issues.

In February the *15th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI)* was held in Boston. There was new information about the basic science of HIV, HIV prevention, complications of HIV disease and treatments, and advances in antiretroviral drug therapy. Read all about it at the following websites:

The Body:

www.thebody.com/content/confs/retro2008/art44980.html

AIDSMeds.com:

www.aidsmeds.com/archive/2008_Jan_2151.shtml

(check out the interviews with Experts present at the Conference, requires broadband connection)

HIV and Hepatitis.com:

www.hivandhepatitis.com/2008icr/croi/main.html

AIDSMap.com:

www.aidsmap.com/cms1174967.aspx

In the past year in Australia there have been three new drugs released on compassionate access schemes: the new integrase inhibitor *Raltegravir*, the new entry (CCR5) inhibitor *Maraviroc* and the new non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor *Etravirine*

How are the newer drugs performing?

Earlier this year *Rainbow News* reported on some of the clinical trials of these new drugs. At *CROI* in

Boston the results of clinical trials out to 48 weeks of treatment were presented. All three drugs demonstrate that they continue to be effective in reducing HIV viral load in blood plasma.

Data from the BENCHMRK-1 trials (including sites in Australia) show that after 48 weeks of treatment with Raltegravir nearly two out of three people who have developed resistance to drugs from all three current drug classes had their viral load reduced to undetectable levels (VL <50 copies/mL). These are people who had an average of around 160 CD4+ cells/ μ L and VL around 40,000 copies/mL and were failing their existing drug regimes. Their CD4+ increased by an average of 120 cells/ μ L. If Raltegravir was combined with drugs in the optimized background therapy (OBT) to which the patient had no previous drug resistance, 89% of patients achieved undetectable VL. Similar results were reported from BENCHMRK-2 trials.

Combined results from the MOTIVATE trials of Maraviroc at 48 weeks of treatment were presented. The participants in this trial had; experience with all 3 classes of HIV antiretrovirals, an average of 190 CD4+ cells/ μ L and a VL around 40,000 copies/mL. Of these 46% achieved an undetectable VL by 48 weeks.

In the DUET trials of Etravirine the participants had documented resistance to the other non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase drugs and also 3 or more resistance mutations to the protease inhibitors (PIs). They had a median CD4+ count of 105 cells/ μ L and VL around 65,000 copies/mL. At 48 weeks around 60% of participants had achieved undetectable VLs. Etravirine was generally well tolerated with about one in five people having a rash which generally lasted around two weeks and which subsided within six weeks of commencement of treatment, and which lead to less than 2% of participants discontinuing treatment.

Cont. Neil McKellar-Stewart

Results for the new investigational entry (CCR5) antagonist *Vicrivoc* from the VICTOR-E1 trials were reported. Participants in this trial had median CD4+ counts of 202 cells/ μ L and VL around 42,000 copies/mL. They had experience with three or more drug classes. At 48 weeks they had median increase of around CD4+ 120 cells/ μ L and 56% of them had achieved undetectable VL. *Vicrivoc* was generally well tolerated with only one in five participants experiencing adverse events.

These results indicate that the newer drugs becoming available are as effective as those in use currently and provide an alternative for those failing their regimes.

Switching from enfuvirtide (Fuzeon) to raltegravir (Isentress)

One paper examined a group of patients who were experiencing treatment-limiting, injection-site reactions to an enfuvirtide (Fuzeon)-containing regimen. All participants were offered to switch from enfuvirtide to raltegravir. Subjects were highly treatment-experienced. Thirty-six subjects made the switch and were observed with routine virologic monitoring for a median of 7 months. The plasma HIV RNA levels of 34 of 35 subjects were still below 50 copies/mL at their most recent assessment. The remaining subject had a level of 60 copies/mL. No subjects discontinued raltegravir treatment. The authors concluded that this drug substitution was safe and effective in subjects receiving Fuzeon.

Comparison of once-daily atazanavir/ritonavir with lopinavir/ritonavir

Results were also presented for the CASTLE study which compared open-label, once-daily atazanavir/ritonavir to lopinavir/ritonavir (Kaletra) soft-gel capsules, each given with fixed-dose Truvada (tenofovir/emtricitabine) to 883 antiretroviral therapy-naïve subjects with a plasma HIV RNA

The median CD4+ counts in the atazanavir/ritonavir and lopinavir/ritonavir groups were 205 cells/ μ L and 204 cells/ μ L, respectively, and the mean plasma HIV RNA levels were around 100,000 copies/mL and 4.96 log₁₀ copies/mL, respectively. At 48 weeks results were similar: 78% of participants receiving atazanavir/ritonavir and 76% receiving Kaletra, achieved undetectable VL. There were more discontinuations with those participants who had lower VL and who received Kaletra because of more side effects from Kaletra. There were slightly more favourable lipid profiles for participants receiving atazanavir/ritonavir in contrast to Kaletra (based on fewer participants initiating lipid-lowering therapy and with slightly better cholesterol ratios).

Comparison of twice-daily Kivexa with Truvada

Only limited data directly compare the 2 once-daily fixed-dose nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor combinations of abacavir/lamivudine (Kivexa) and tenofovir/emtricitabine (Truvada). At CROI data was presented which compared

fixed-dose combinations of these NRTIs, each given with once-daily lopinavir/ritonavir soft-gel capsules (Kaletra). The abacavir sensitivity test was not offered. The trial enrolled 688 participants with a median baseline of around CD4+ count of 200 cells/ μ L and median plasma HIV RNA level of around 80,000 copies/mL. At week 48, slightly over 2/3 of participants had undetectable VL. Both regimes performed well with no inferiority of Kivexa to Truvada. However subsequent analysis of those participants with baseline VL > 100,000 copies/mL showed that there was a slightly higher virological failure amongst those receiving abacavir/lamivudine (Kivexa).

Comparison of twice-daily and once-daily Kaletra

Data was presented from an open-label, randomized controlled trial of once-daily versus twice-daily dosing of lopinavir/ritonavir (Kaletra) given with fixed-dose tenofovir/emtricitabine (Truvada). The 664 participants had a mean

plasma HIV RNA level of 100,000 copies/mL and CD4+ count of 216 cells/ μ L in the two arms. Viral load became undetectable for about three in four participants in both once-daily and twice daily dosing regimes. Once-daily dosing was shown to be noninferior to twice-daily dosing. The adverse event rate and discontinuations because of adverse events were similar between groups. Among participants with virologic failure, no PI resistance-associated mutations were found.

For more information about your treatments and whether you maybe eligible for the new drugs on compassionate access schemes, please talk to your S100 prescriber.



Futures 6 Survey

The Living with HIV program at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS), La Trobe University will be conducting the HIV Futures Survey again this year. As with previous rounds of the survey, the success of this project depends in large part on the willingness of agencies such as ACON to ensure that surveys reach as many potential participants as possible and that research findings reach those who can use them.

It is hoped that the survey will be available in the field and on-line in August this year. As for the Futures 5 survey, Futures 6 will be able to be completed on-line by going to www.hivfutures.org.au.

If you would like to participate in this survey you can make application through the website address (above) or alternatively you can contact Neil at ACON on 6622 1555

For information about the HIV Futures 5 survey and reports, including the recently published HIV Futures NZ 2 report, you can obtain these from the website:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/hiv-futures/>

Roy's Backchat

By Roy Starkey

The end of the financial year means planning for the coming period as well as winding up our financial affairs for the previous year. I was recently contacted by a person who had received a notice of penalty from the Australian Taxation Office. This caused some angst for the person concerned, so I take this opportunity to remind you that you need to complete a taxation return! Even those of you who are on Centrelink benefits may need to complete a return depending on your circumstances. Check with Centrelink and the Australian Tax Office with regard to your particular circumstances.

During June ACON Northern Rivers delivered training to care workers at St. Carthages Community Care Service. The training was an update on HIV information, professional boundaries and confidentiality matters; 30 workers attended the session. This is the second time that updates have been held for this organisation. I feel confident that if any of the client group requires services from this organisation they will be treated with dignity and respect. We have also recently delivered information sessions to education students from Southern Cross University and TAFE Community Welfare students.

The new Living Long Term with HIV Support Group had its first meeting in June. The Group will allow people to meet in a relaxed atmosphere with a focus on living longer term with HIV and what that means as our population of clients enter older age.

Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF) Sydney met with ACON, SHAIDS and facilitators from TAFE to map out the Phoenix Workshops for this region. The workshops will be residential and will offer participants pathways into looking at returning to work, further training/education, and other options to engage with life in the region. The workshops will be held in September with a variety of facilitators to deliver the program. Neil McKellar-Stewart also attended this meeting and we will keep you informed about Phoenix Workshops as more information comes to hand.

Earlier this month I attended the Lismore Chamber of Commerce, Business After Hours meeting and following a brief presentation to that group I have been requested to speak with two job service providers about how they can assist our client base in return to work, if that is what some of the client group require. ACON will undertake to educate all service providers about HIV issues. This should assist clients to be accepted and receive equal service provision.

I will not be in the office due to leave and work arrangements from 28th July until August 25th 2008. If you need urgent assistance during this time please contact ACON Manager Tania Lienert in the first instance on 6622 1555.

Positively Women

by Kate

If you're like me there's a whole life to manage apart from HIV. We are so lucky in this country that we can be HIV positive and still so very well too.

We poz women are few and far between up here in this region of NSW. Actually, I get to meet only a few of you and then stay in contact; however, for all the connections with women I have made in the Northern Rivers I am truly gladdened. In watching myself, what other positive friends say and go through, and having watched my partner who died years ago, I know there are odd times in life where support is needed; sometimes suddenly needed. This is support which, is of course welcomed too - support of which I am so grateful in my times of need.

Peer support which is available to us all can be either through meeting people face to face or, these days, electronically. Initially I would invite you to contact me (through Neil at ACON) for a chat. Also, I can bring any concerns that we as women have to the PLWHA Consultative Committee when we meet. In fact there's always a space to meet us all before each meeting – even just to say “hi”. I am hoping for a retreat for women in the future. Advancing this will require your initial interest before the planning can begin in earnest. Does a weekend away somewhere at a lovely venue where we can share and learn together and be waited on with yummy food and receive relaxing massages sound like a great idea to you?

Our fortnightly luncheon at Brunswick Heads is a place where everybody is so accepting and it's a place where we can all meet, join in, talk, and eat together and have a really nice time! Another group that is meeting monthly for the next four months is called Getting On With It (see the notice of this on page 12 of this edition).

Other options available are through email and online forums. NORCOWAM is open to all poz folks. Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF) has an on-line forum for NSW poz people and women@ozpoz, auspiced by NAPWA, is a national forum for women to share. Also in Sydney are the following groups:

- The Women and Family Project, which is a social and support group – 9699 8756
- PozHets, which is a group for HIV Positive Heterosexual people offering support, education, social outings, workshops and sharing with the negative partners if positive people – 1800 812 404

Please check out all the other general support services listed in this issue of *Rainbow News* through ACON and SHAIDS clinic. Remember that these people are here for us so let's make good use of the services they offer.



☆☆ Getting On with It ☆☆

A Social/Discussion Group for people living longer-term with HIV

Next meeting: Saturday 23rd August 5:00 - 8:00 pm

In a safe and convenient location in the Northern Rivers area

Living with HIV in a regional setting is full of challenges: especially if you've been poz for some time!

Getting to meet, share experiences and socialize with other poz people can be a real challenge!

ACON Northern Rivers is facilitating a new SOCIAL/DISCUSSION GROUP FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV

This peer-support group will operate with the following parameters:

- Open to all people living with HIV
- Offering themed discussions & presentations lead by experienced facilitator/s on themes relevant to people with HIV
- Providing healthy food (BBQ & salads) and non-alcoholic refreshments
- Supported by and communicating via the existing *NORCOWAM PLWHA* web discussion group

Interested? Want to contribute? Have lots of ideas/experiences to share? Have some feedback?

*** TO ATTEND YOU MUST RSVP—please contact us to let us know you're coming! ***

T: (02) 6622 1555 OR 1800 633 637 (freecall) OR E: nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au

Assistance to travel to this event may be available for ACON clients. Please contact ACON for details.

☆☆ HAPPINESS ☆☆

A Peer-Workshop exploring how we can fully live with HIV

Sunday 3rd August 10:00am - 4:00pm

At a safe and comfortable venue at a beach central to the region!

A free event for all people with HIV in the Northern Rivers!

Jann Porter from Lifeline Lismore who has lots of experience in facilitating fun and stimulating groups will present for us.

- ☆ What is happiness anyhow?
- ☆ Reflect on what contributes to happiness
- ☆ Setting Life goals ... Personal quests ... Dreams ... Wonder
- ☆ Learn new ways to increase contentment and happiness
- ☆ Explore how living with a chronic medical condition can impact on our happiness
- ☆ What gets in the way: The blues ... the black dog days ... How to manage them

BOOKINGS are essential!

To book and for further information, including program, location transport and everything else you need to know please contact:

Neil McKellar-Stewart, HIV Health Maintenance Officer

T: (02) 6622 1555 OR 1800 633 637 (freecall) E: nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au

LESBIAN HEALTH PROJECT

by Amber McBride

ACON's Lesbian Health Strategy

I remember reading an article in the 2003 Special Lesbian Edition of *Rainbow News* titled '*Why do we need a Lesbian Health Strategy?*' written by the then Lesbian Health Project worker, Jill Barwick. The article went on to describe what's so special about being a dyke. From a health perspective it drew on the then recently released 'Health and Sexual Diversity' (by the Victorian Ministerial Advisory Committee on Gay and Lesbian Health - July 2003) which found that the negative impacts to lesbian health, in particular, included discrimination, gender inequality, lesbophobia and heterosexism leading to violence, isolation and social invisibility that particularly affected mental health. This can be exacerbated by ignorance and prejudice by some health care providers which may result in reduced access to and quality health care, delayed attendance and reduced screening and reproductive services. Patterns of ill-health and drug and alcohol use were linked to cultural practices and increasing risky behaviours (party, party, party). For lesbians particularly, issues linked to smoking and obesity fall into this area. Difficulties with relationships (particularly in rural areas) due to ostracism or the fear of it, can occur with partners, friends, parents, family and community and religious groups. This leads to feelings of inadequacy, guilt and depression.

All of these factors are compounded by location in a rural or regional area with poorer health outcomes due to fewer services, increased homophobia and reduced social networks.

This strategy is a first and it has been written with both regional and rural perspectives in mind. The key action areas of ACON's Lesbian Health Strategy are Sexual Health, Alcohol, Tobacco and other drugs, Mental Health and Well Being, Violence, Cancer, Ageing, Relationships, Parenting and Fertility and Youth.

For more information about how our Branch office in Lismore plans to work within this strategy contact us at 27 Uralba St Lismore or phone 6622 1555. The draft ACON Lesbian Health Strategy is available at our Lismore branch office or online at www.acon.org.au

ACON's Lesbian Health Services

We will continue our one day a week counselling program offered in partnership with the Lismore and District Women's Health Centre; we are piloting a regional statewide telephone component of this service.

In recognition of their services I wish to thank the women recently signed up to assist with the many volunteer tasks aimed to keep same sex attracted women in the Northern Rivers informed, connected and resourced. Please contact the co-ordinator of our Volunteer Program, Sioux Harrison, if you would like to join the dynamic and passionate team of behind the scenes Lesbian Health Project "vollies"! Volunteers to work on International Lesbian Day events are also welcome.

Lesbians and Ageing

ACON's Draft Lesbian Health Strategy reports that currently there are estimated to be over 35,000 people in NSW past the age of 55 who identify as gay or lesbian. Many myths and negative stereotypes exist concerning aged lesbians and same sex attracted women. Together, older lesbian and same sex attracted women suffer from a triple stigma in society – gender, age and sexuality. The image of the older lesbians as depressed, isolated, desperate and sexless is prevalent. This image, however, does not hold up empirically.

There is little research about older lesbians and same sex attracted women, and few programs are provided to meet their specific needs. In Lismore earlier this year the Northern Rivers Lesbian Health Project put on "Ask a Lesbian to Lunch" which took a closer look at lesbian health and ageing. It was very well attended by some of the most gorgeous women from the Northern Rivers! Fun, fabulous and over fifty these grey haired sistas of all shapes and sizes, these independent dynamic and intelligent women who are able to celebrate life, love and laughter met together to share many common experiences.

I would like to encourage older lesbians who would like to plan future activities and events to network together and contact me for support and events promotion.

Yamba Queer Grrls
Presents

Comedy Cabaret By The Sea

Venue: Yamba Surf Club at Main Beach Yamba
Date: Saturday, August 2nd 2008
Time: 6:30pm till late

Performances by local North Coast Dykes:

Fabulous line-up of stand-up comedians

Titillating

Best DJ's

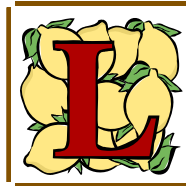
Fun surprises throughout the night

Admission \$20/\$18 concession
includes finger foods & glass of Sangria!
Delicious supper n sweets plus drinks
available at reasonable cost

For enquiries, accommodation & transport options:
email yambaqueergrrls@hotmail.com or phone 04100 31015

Event supported by ACON Northern Rivers,
Tropical Fruits, Trouble in Paradise & Coastal Lynx

**POSTPONED TILL FURTHER
NOTICE**



Lemon Sundaes Picnics

Women of diverse sexualities, lesbian mothers, their children and our supporters welcome!

Come and be part of a supportive social network
in a comfortable and casual environment.

This is a great opportunity for future mums to meet
with other women who are at some stage of the journey.

THIRD SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH

BYO picnic/BBQ

FOR DIRECTIONS, MORE INFO AND TO RSVP

Chris or Kate: 6624 6446

Gina: 6685 1990

WOMEN'S SOFTBALL TEAM

New Players Welcome for the 2008-09 Season



WHO ARE THE BLUES SISTERS?

We are a team of women from the local region who identify as lesbian-bi-queer and queer-friendly. We are diverse in our ages, abilities and fitness. We come together to play softball in a spirit of fun and community.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF PLAYERS?

Two hours training every Wednesday afternoon from 5pm in Lismore

One 1½-hour game every Saturday afternoon in Lismore

Softball association registration \$120

Uniform costs \$10 subs / \$30 waged

All games will be played at Albert Park in Keen Street, Lismore.

OFF-FIELD SUPPORT ALSO WELCOME

Enthusiastic community members can also help out with scoring, fundraising, sponsorship (in cash or in kind) or other official duties.

FIRST TRAINING FOR THE SEASON

Saturday 2 August, 2:00 pm at Trinity Fields, Brewster Street (opposite Lismore Palms Caravan Park)

For further information, please call Coach Sheila on 6624 6734.

Volunteer matters

By one of our volunteers

**Interested in
volunteering at ACON
Northern Rivers?
Many roles available!
Ring Sioux 6622 1555.**



My name is Kelly Walsh and I am the Front of House volunteer at ACON on a Monday. I am studying Stage 1 of Certificate IV in Community Services at Lismore TAFE and aim to develop skills required to work in the community services industry by volunteering.

Apart from helping out around the office, I have been undergoing training in ACON's Needle Syringe Program (NSP) so I can work with clients of the secondary outlet here in the office. The program has included modules on harm minimisation, the effects of drugs, treatment options and peer education. I have been on an excursion to the NSP Primary Outlet (HITS) which is located in Laurel Avenue - behind the Lismore Base Hospital. This has meant that through my association with ACON I have been offered further educational opportunities with agencies such as HITS. My next step is to work in partnership with other agencies by visiting Riverlands to learn more about local treatment options.

On May 15th, as part of the ACON volunteer program I assisted Sioux in helping run the stall at the Community Volunteer Expo at Lismore City Hall. I met volunteers from a range of local services and helped attract several new ones to ACON. This provided both ACON and me with a fantastic networking opportunity. In November I will be completing ACON Rover training.

ACON Rovers attend dance parties and events such as the Tropical Fruits New Years Eve party. ACON Rovers are members of the GLBT community and their friends who volunteer to provide health promotion services at major GLBT events.

All of the opportunities above are available to any community member who is interested in volunteering at ACON. It's a fantastic way to develop your skills, broaden your outlook and meet some great people. Any one interested in helping out should speak to ACON's volunteer co-ordinator Sioux Harrison, about completing the volunteer training.

Please say hello if you are visiting the ACON office - I look forward to meeting and working with you.

Have Your Say



You can have input into ACON's activities and programs a number of ways. Once a year, in March, we hold our annual Branch Planning Day where stakeholders can attend and give feedback about our activities and suggest new ones according to ACON's strategic priorities and local needs. A suggestion box is located in the foyer of the Branch Office at 27 Uralba St, Lismore, where you can make suggestions or voice compliments or concerns. You can leave your contact details and you will receive a reply, and anonymous suggestions will be answered here in Rainbow News.

Alternatively, if you have any questions or concerns about any aspects of service delivery from the Branch, or would just like to introduce yourself, please do not hesitate to contact Branch Manager Tania Lienert on 6622 1555 Monday to Friday.

Make an appointment to see Tania or email her at tlienert@acon.org.au.

Transport assistance or information?

Want to access a health service?

Want to access a GLBT community event?

Transport an issue?

ACON Northern Rivers may be able to assist you.



If you are attending a health/community service or community event and are having transport issues ring us and have a chat.

If you meet a set of simple criteria we may be able to assist.

Contact ACON Northern Rivers Branch on (02) 6622 1555 for an application form.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer community driver for GLBT community members contact Sioux @ ACON Northern Rivers.

- **This initiative is made available as a result of a grant from the Ministry of Transport.**



INTRA, the Buttery based Drug and Alcohol outreach program, is pleased to inform you of an upcoming seminar called "Coming Off Methadone".

This one day workshop is designed for people considering the options of coming off opioid replacement therapies and for those interested in supporting this process.

This education and support day will be held on Thursday 7th August from 9am to 4.30 pm at the Lismore City Hall.

The purpose of this seminar is to offer interested people information they can use to better determine what they may need to do prior to withdrawal, in order to give themselves the best possible chance of success. In other words, this workshop aims to assist the person considering withdrawal to recognise how and when they may be ready.

The contributions of a broad variety of attendees will enrich the program through enhancing the diversity of perspectives and content presented. We have invited local health care providers to speak on a range of topics including pharmacological support for withdrawal and self support through natural medicine. Importantly, guest speakers who have successfully withdrawn and continue to maintain abstinence from opioids will provide insight and support for those considering embarking on a similar path. We intend to make this both an informative and supportive seminar.

Mandy Nolan will be adding her trade mark humour as MC and fresh, healthy food will be provided

Contact Fiona Owens on (02) 6687 2835

NORCOWAM PLWHA

NORCOWAM means **No Ordinary Rural Community of Women And Men**. It is an on line group/forum open to all HIV Positive people living in the Northern Rivers area of NSW (we have members down as far as Kempsey, Coffs Harbour and from Tamworth), also for Poz people in South East Queensland and it is supported by ACON and Positive Life NSW Inc. We hope to provide a space for chatting, online connection, information, education, support from peers, and a general what's on! Also note our hosting site gives us our own private chat room for real time interactivity with other members that cannot be viewed by external parties.

Please note that we are open to all poz people regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

To join up with us send an email: Nick Roy minyon@bordnet.com.au

OR

Neil McKellar-Stewart at ACON

nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au

As this is a private closed community, we will ask you a few questions to verify your status prior to joining you up to maintain the integrity of this community.



**The People Living With
HIV/AIDS Consultative Committee**

The People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) Consultative Committee is a joint project of ACON and the North Coast Area Health Service.

It meets four times a year across the Northern Rivers region.

Local HIV+ people are welcome to raise issues with the committee anytime that will help improve our services.

**Our next meeting is in the Grafton area on Monday 18 August 2008
then at Lismore Monday 17 November 2008**

Join us for morning tea - call Neil for details of venue & time

For more information please call Committee members:

Nick Roy, Martin, Peter Gordon (Yamba) or Kath via

ACON's HIV Health Maintenance Officer - Neil McKellar-Stewart 6622 1555 or 1800 633 637

INTO THE REALM OF ART

Armistead's Gallery is hosting an exhibition by five of Lismore's emerging artists, Betty Wotherspoon, Denise Hirshausen, Betty Kirkland, Gloria Hardwick and Patsy Walsh.

These women have been collectively working on building their skills in oil painting over the past two years.

Rhonda from Armistead's Galley said, "This has been a real journey of discovery for these women and I've watched them develop their style over several years and I can say that the works they are beginning to produce is quite strong, with fantastic elements of design, composition and excellent use of colour and texture". The works are diverse in colour and style and the exhibition promises works that have a strong appeal, from rugged Australian landscapes and portraiture to some quite contemporary large paintings.

This is the first exhibition for all of these artists and they would like to extend an invitation to all to come along to 43b Wyrallah Rd, Lismore.



This image from Gloria Hardwick



Want to be the first to know?

Hot Topics is a great way to receive all the latest news and information on the topics that interest you. Sex, drugs, health, events and more.

Simply email us and indicate on which Hot Topics you would like to receive information.

All names and email addresses are strictly confidential and ACON will not disclose any details to any other party.

Emails will never exceed more than one per week and each email includes instructions on how to unsubscribe.

To subscribe

Send an email to hot-topics@acon.org.au stating which of the following Hot Topics you would like information on (please indicate as many as you like): Gay men's health (including HIV/AIDS and other STIs), HIV Positive Health, alcohol and other drugs, violence and safety, lesbian health and other women's issues, upcoming events (workshops, forums, fundraisers etc) and participation in focus testing, campaigns and research

Some emails may include sexually explicit language or images, reference to illicit drugs and GLBT community content.

All emails will come from the email address hot-topics@acon.org.au. Please add this address to your 'allowed senders' list so that it can pass through any anti-spam software you may have.



If you would like copies of posters, keyrings, coasters or other campaign materials, contact Ian at ACON.



PHOENIX WEEKEND

BGF will be presenting our first Phoenix Weekend in the Northern Rivers area at Lake Ainsworth from Friday 12-Sunday 14 September.

The Phoenix Weekend is based on our successful Phoenix Workshops, which are designed to help people living with HIV feel more optimistic about the future, build confidence and initiate positive changes. These capacity-building workshops provide relevant information about:

- Returning to work and/or study
- Learning new skills
- Finding alternatives to paid work
- Initiating some other "life change"

Our inaugural Phoenix Weekend will incorporate similar information, as well as offering advice on stress management, goal-setting, disclosure and undertaking TAFE courses.

For more information, please contact James Fraser or Kim Donohue on 1800 651 011 or james.fraser@bgf.org.au or kim.donohue@bgf.org.au.

BGF OUTREACH VISITS

Bobby Goldsmith Foundation caseworkers are visiting Tweed Heads and Brunswick Heads from Wednesday 10 – Friday 12 September.

Appointments can be made to discuss any of the following issues:

- assistance with utilities and telephone costs
- support with HIV medications and medical costs
- contributions to vitamins and alternative therapy costs
- interest-free loans for household items
- support to clients who undertake study or contemplate a return to work
- advocacy for troublesome debts
- other BGF services

New and existing clients are welcome. To arrange an appointment, please contact BGF directly on 1800 651 011 or speak with your local service provider.

ARE YOU A BGF CLIENT?

Did you know that you can fax your utility accounts **toll-free** directly if you have access to a fax?

Fax No 1800 651 012

If you do not have access to a fax, you can post your account to ACON for faxing. Accounts will be returned to you by post.

Remember, you can always call into the office and fax accounts. If you have any queries please contact ACON Northern Rivers on 6622 1555

or 1800 633 637
www.bgf.org.au

BGF visiting our area:
Tweed Byron **Sept 10-12**
Lismore **Nov 19-21**
Ring BGF to make an appointment
1800 651 011

Bobby Goldsmith Foundation
P.O. Box 97, Darlinghurst NSW
1300

T: 1800 651 011

F: 1800 651 012

E: bgf@bgf.org.au

W: www.bgf.org.au

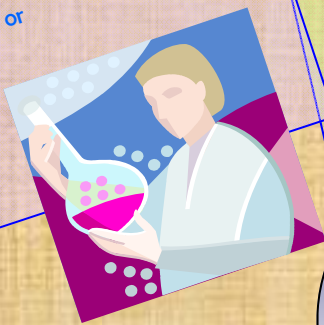


HIV HEALTH MAINTENANCE OFFICER PROGRAM

ACON HIV Health Maintenance Officer Neil McKellar - Stewart is available for one on one HIV Health and treatments information.

Contact Neil on 6622 1555
1800 633 637 or

nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au



The Sex Workers Outreach Project

For information and support around working in the sex industry

Condoms & lube at cost price

The Professional and Ugly Mugs also available



SECONDARY NEEDLE & SYRINGE PROGRAM

Clean 1 ml syringes & Sharps Bin
Referral & Information Service

For more information call

1800 633 637

Provided as part of ACON's commitment to HIV prevention



ACON VITAMIN SERVICE

Vitamin and nutritional supplement service. ACON offers, at **REDUCED RETAIL PRICES**, a range of quality vitamins and nutritional supplements to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Check out our "Monthly Specials"

For further information call ACON on:

6622 1555 or 1800 633 637

Don't have access to a Computer or the Internet?

ACON Northern Rivers has a public access computer available for community members use, soon to be upgraded to broadband. This service will be available at ACON during office hours from Monday to Friday, but must be pre booked.

Free usage. 5c for b/w printing. 10c colour.
GLBT library and lounge also available.
Drop in for a cuppa!



Lesbian Health Services

Lesbian health information and referrals are available at the ACON Northern Rivers

ACON has recently launched a number of lesbian specific resources which are available in the office.

Our office also stocks the latest copies of Lesbians on the Loose, Cherie and the gay and lesbian newspapers.

One on one information, support, and referrals for PLWHA clients.

Roy Starkey our Client Services Officer is available Monday to Friday,

from 10am to 4pm to discuss any issues. Feel free to drop by for a cuppa, chat, find out the latest community info, or just to pick up the papers.



Lesbian Counselling

In partnership with ACON Lesbian Counselling is available Mondays @ Lismore and District Women's Health Centre
25 Uralba St Lismore
6621 9800.

ACON OUTREACH VISITS

ACON Northern Rivers Client Service Officer Roy Starkey provides regular outreach visits to Grafton, Coff; Harbour and Tweed.

**Grafton
Clinic 229
(02)6640 2229**

1st Monday of month

**September 1st
October 13th**

**Coff; Harbour
Sexual Health
Coff; Harbour Health Campus
(02) 6656 7865**

Last Friday of month

**August 29th
September 26th
October 31st**

**Tweed Heads
Clinic 145
(07) 5506 6850**

3rd Tuesday of month

**September 16th
October 21st**

**Contact Roy Starkey 6622 1555/1800 633 637 to make an appointment
N.B: Roy Starkey is on leave July 28th to August 25th.**

If you think you've just been at risk...

PEP

is a treatment that might stop you getting HIV.

ACT NOW!

**CALL THE PEP 24 HOUR HOTLINE
1800 737 669
1800 PEP NOW**

Sausage Meats
The Smokers of the Month

SMS ☐ 0413 918 288
For Backyard of the Month

Backyard BBQ
From the Smokers of the Month

BENT EVENTS www.bentevents.com.au

acon
BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

Northern Rivers Events and Activities Aug/Sept/Oct 2008

AUG	TIME	WHAT	CONTACT
2nd	12-3	Rally working bee	Tropical Fruits
2nd	2pm	Blues Sister try outs	6624 6734
3rd	10 - 4pm	Happiness Workshop	via Neil ACON
7th	9 – 4.30pm	Coming off Methadone	INTRA
1/15/29	12 - 3pm	Luncheon Club	via Neil ACON
8th	12pm	Bent Events BBQ	SMS to 0413 918 288
9th	11am	Day of Action Rally	0432 957 213
18th	10am	PLWHA Committee	via Neil ACON
23rd	5-8pm	Getting on With It	via Neil ACON
29th	10 - 5pm	Coffs Outreach	via Roy ACON

SEPT

10-12th	11am	BGF Outreach Tweed /Byron	1800 651 011
12 –14th	Weekend	Phoenix Workshop	BGF - 1800 651 011
12/26th	12 - 3pm	Luncheon Club	Brunswick

OCT

4th	5-8pm	Getting on With It	via Neil ACON
4th	Evening	Dance Party	Tropical Fruits
8th	All day	International Lesbian Day	via Amber ACON
8th	5pm	RAINBOW NEWS DEADLINE	via Ian ACON
10/24	12 - 3pm	Luncheon Club	via Neil ACON

UPCOMING DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

CONTACT

NOV

1st	5-8pm	Getting on With It	via Neil ACON
7/21st	12 - 3pm	Luncheon Club	via Neil ACON
17th	10am	PLWHA Committee	via Neil ACON
19-21st	1am	BGF Outreach Lismore	1800 651 011
22nd	10 - 4pm	ACON Rovers Training	via Ian ACON

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

ACON, Northern Rivers

Tania Lienert - Manager - tlienert@acon.org.au
Amber McBride, Lesbian Health Project Worker - amcbride@acon.org.au
Ian Macdonald, Education & Community Development Officer
imacdonald@acon.org.au
Neil McKellar-Stewart, HIV Health Maintenance Officer
nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au
Roy Starkey, Client Services Officer - rstarkey@acon.org.au
Sioux Harrison, Admin/Volunteer Officer - sioux@acon.org.au
Robyn Leitch, Admin Officer - rleitch@acon.org.au

Legal

HALC - HIV/AIDS Legal Centre NSW
Free legal advice - 1800 063 060 / 9206 2000

Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre - 6621 1000
Free legal advice, information & referral. Women's Outreach Court Support & Legal Education.

JP - Judith Anne Haggard - JP # 000760. Telephone 6687 6536

NSW Police Gay & Lesbian Officers

Byron Bay - Sgt. Murray Powell - 6685 9499
Lismore/Ballina - Sgt. Jody Hamilton - 6623 1599
Casino - 6662 0099
Tweed Heads Snr Constable Kellie Quinn 07 55 360999

Support

SHAIDS - Sexual Health & AIDS Service - 6620 2980
NRAHS Liver Clinic - for HepC clients 02 6620 7539
Australian Bisexual Network (Northern NSW & Country Queensland)
1800 653 223 / ausbinet@optusnet.com.au
Transgender Support Group - Jackie - ph/fax 07 5538 8922
GAMMA (Gay and Married Men's Association) - 1800 804617
Tweed Shire Women's Services - PO Box 407, Murwillumbah 2484
COAL (Coalition of Activist Lesbians): Lavender: 0448 251 348

Freecall Numbers

ACON Sydney - 1800 063 060
ACON Treatments Officer - 1800 816 518
24-hour Treatment Support - 1800 454 510
AIDS Hotline - 1800 451 600
BGF - 1800 651 011 / Fax 1800 651 012
Domestic Violence Crisis Line NSW - 1800 656 463
Hep C Info & Support - 1800 803 990
PLWHA (NSW) - 1800 245 677
Lifeline - 24 hour counselling - 13 11 14

Services

Gay Dads NSW Dominic 0400 296 253 / nsw@gaydadsaustralia.com
Mensline - Ph 6622 6116 / www.menandfamily.org.au

Gay & Lesbian Counselling Services
1800 184 527 (5.30-10.30pm, 7 days)
02 8594 9596 (5.30-10.30pm, 7 days)
GayLine (Brisbane) - 1800 249 377

PFLAG Northern Rivers - Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
Phone Robin & Richard 6687 4726 (h) / 6620 6112 (w)
PO Box 227, Lismore NSW 2480

Lismore & District Women's Health Service including ACON's Lesbian counselling Service
25 Uralba Street - 6621 9800

Women's Health Matters
Menopause, Osteoporosis & Incontinence
Phone 6620 2999

Sexual Health Clinics
Clinic 145, Tweed Heads - 07 5506 6850
Grafton - Phone 6640 2229
Lismore, Byron & Ballina - 6620 2980

Dental (People living with HIV/AIDS)
North Coast Area Health Service - 6620 2617

Public Dental Health:
Call for locations of other public dental clinics or to make appointments for the Lismore area - 1300 651 625

Social

Sista-Link (Tweed Region Lesbian Network)
Host regular women's coffee group at Murwillumbah - 6672 2868
Tweed Ph 0439 744 322
sista_link@hotmail.com

Feathers Women's Social Club
Monthly Dances for Women
07 5535 2821 or 07 5559 5877
3rd Saturday @ Nerang RSL, 69 Nerang Street, Nerang

BLSG (Ballina Lesbian Social Group)
email blsg2005@hotmail.com or contact Helen 0407 226 967

Tropical Fruits
Social & support for gays, lesbians and friends - ph/fax 6622 6440

Radical Faeries
130 acre land sanctuary, north of Nimbin
Come and visit, gatherings, rituals, communal workdays.
Call us first 6689 7070.
Email ozfaeries@yahoo.com / Website www.ozfaeries.com

Women's Network Dinners - Lyn - 0420 373 173 last Friday of the month in February, May, August and November

Blues Sisters Softball Team - lesbian-bi-queer and queer-friendly.
Contact Sheila 6624 6734.

Lemon Sundaes Lesbian Parenting Group 6624 6446 or 6685 1990