

Show your support and walk

TOWNSVILLE residents are encouraged to take a stand against AIDS next month.

Queensland Association for Healthy Communities staff will be leading a World AIDS Day walk along The Strand on December 1 and are calling on the public to show their support as well as remember those who have died as a consequence of the illness.

Townsville Sexual Health Services nurse unit manager, Rose Gordon, said Queensland had reported a worrying increase in people affected by HIV over the past 10 years.

"Because of the confidential nature of our service, Townsville specific figures cannot be provided," she said.

"However, in Queensland, the rate of HIV diagnosis has increased from 2.8 in 2001 to 5.4 per 100,000 population in 2010.

"We have had 206 Queenslanders diagnosed with HIV last year, compared to 182 in 2009."

On a somewhat positive note, numbers of new HIV diagnoses over the past five years across Australia has remained stable at around 1000 per year.

Rates, however, differ throughout the states ranging from 2.5 to 5.4 per 100,000 population.

Ms Gordon said raising awareness of this potentially deadly disease had never been more important.

"December 1 is World AIDS Day, a day to remember all those we have lost to AIDS," she said.

"In Australia we are quite fortunate due to the availability of effective medication – because of this very few people progress from HIV to AIDS.

As part of World AIDS Day, the Queensland Association for Healthy Communities has organised a walk along The Strand with staff from Townsville Sexual Health also walking to show their support.

The walk will commence at 6pm from The Rockpool and concludes at the Gregory Street amphitheatre.

For more information on the walk contact the Queensland Association for Healthy Communities on 3017 1777.

Anyone who has concerns about HIV should contact Townsville Sexual Health, a free and confidential service, on 4778 9600. Other support services for people in Townsville with HIV include Positive Directions, Queensland Positive People and Queensland Association for Healthy Communities.



PEOPLE around the globe will mark World AIDS Day with a variety of events, here in Townsville a march along The Strand is planned on December 1

FACTS & FIGURES

- HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. This is the virus known to cause AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). If someone is HIV-positive, it means they have been infected with the virus.
- HIV is transmitted through body fluids in particular blood, semen, vaginal secretions and breast milk. The most common route of transmission in Australia is unprotected sexual intercourse.
- In 2010, 206 Queenslanders were diagnosed with HIV infection. This is the highest number of HIV notifications reported since 1984.
- Consistent with previous years, males continued to comprise the majority (174 or 84 per cent) of new HIV notifications in Queensland in 2010. The average age of males notified with HIV in 2010 was 37 years.
- The majority of males newly notified with HIV in 2010 were men who have sex with men (75 per cent).
- In 2010, there were 32 new HIV notifications in females in Queensland. There were 20 notifications in females in 2009. Almost 60 per cent of females diagnosed in 2010 reported origin from a high prevalence country, the highest annual number reported for this exposure on record. An additional 28 per cent of females had a heterosexual risk exposure.
- There were seven new HIV notifications in 2010 in indigenous people in Queensland. The HIV notification rate in indigenous people in Queensland is generally similar to the rate in non-indigenous people.
- Since 2005 in Queensland there has been an increasing trend in HIV notifications in people from a high prevalence country. In 2005 there were seven notifications, rising to 30 notifications in 2010. The list of countries with high prevalence of HIV can be found on the UNAIDS website at: www.unaids.org.
- Survival rates in Australia for those notified with HIV since the mid 1990s are better than those notified prior to the mid 1990s. This is predominantly due to advances in treatment.
- In 2010, there were 22 notifications of new AIDS diagnoses in Queensland.

World AIDS Day
1 December

2 SPIRITS
 Promoting Healthy Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Gay Men & Sistersgirls

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RIP & ROLL

SUPPORTING WORLD AIDS DAY

1800-884-401 tsv@qahc.org.au

A SAFE SEX MESSAGE FROM HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
 1800 155 141 | qahc.org.au

Spiritus
Positive Directions
 For people living with HIV

Level 3/155 Denham Street,
 TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810

Townsville:
 (07) 4721 1384 & (07) 4722 0400
 Outside Brisbane metropolitan:
 1800 422 313

Proudly Supports Townsville
 WORLD AIDS DAY
 December 1st

www.qpp.net.au | www.worldaidsday.org.au
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