

# International Student **HIV** Project

Raising awareness of contemporary HIV testing, treatment and prevention among overseas students in English language colleges in Sydney

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Diversity Programs and Strategies Hub  
Population Health | Sydney Local Health District

## Community



## Health Care Workers



## Media



# Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS)

The Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service works with culturally diverse communities and with health services in NSW to reduce the impacts of HIV and viral hepatitis.



HIV &  
Hepatitis

Information in  
more than 20  
languages



Client  
Support

Bilingual support  
for people living  
with HIV



Media

Ethnic media  
campaigns and  
resources



Workforce  
Development

Building skills  
among health  
and community  
workers



Health  
Promotion

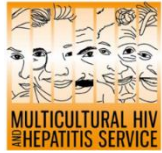
Initiatives and  
resources for  
priority  
communities



[www.mhahs.org.au](http://www.mhahs.org.au)



TheMHAHS



# HIV basics



- **HIV is a virus** ⇨ *Human Immunodeficiency Virus*
- **HIV causes AIDS** ⇨ *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*
- HIV is a chronic infection, asymptomatic for many years
  - HIV affects everyone
    - ⇨ *independent of age, sex, race, cultural background or religion*
    - ⇨ *specific modes of transmission*
  - People can have HIV and not know
  - The only way to know is by having a HIV test



- **Free HIV testing**

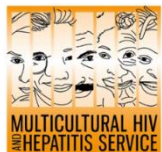
- Sexual Health Clinics
- Rapid testing [aTEST]
- DBS ('home' testing)

- **Prevention strategies**

- Safe sex (condoms)
- Medication
  - PrEP (PRE exposure prophylaxis)
  - PEP (POST exposure prophylaxis)

- **New HIV treatments**

- ⇒ One pill per day suppresses the virus: *Undetectable Viral Load*
  - HIV is manageable as a chronic condition
  - Prevents HIV transmission



# Why work with international students (IS)?

Increase in  
HIV notifications  
among XXX living  
in NSW

International students population increased by 50% in 2017 -2018

Low uptake of HIV testing and prevention options



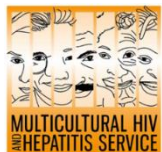
Students unaware of  
HIV prevalence in  
Australia



Students unaware of HIV  
testing, treatment and  
prevention options in NSW

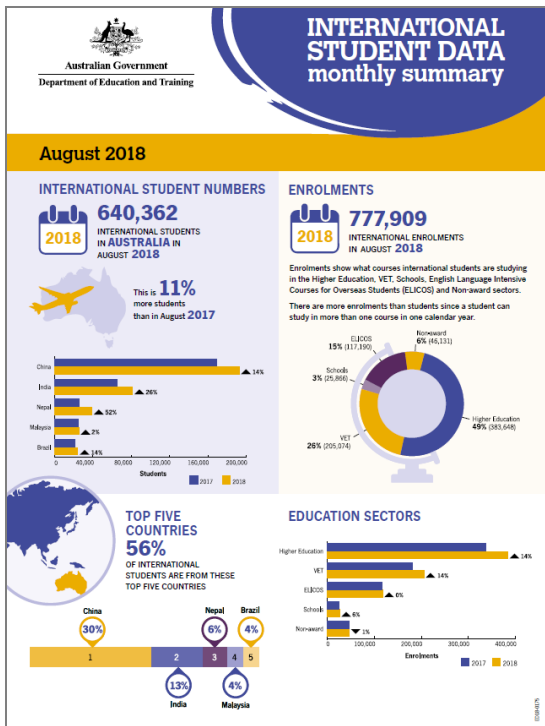


Students unaware of HIV  
health services and  
programs in NSW



# Why target English Language Colleges?

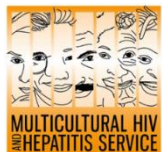
## Australia



## New South Wales

Sector	2015	2016	2017
Higher Education	92,035	105,504	124,844
VET	72,051	79,060	90,135
Schools	5,655	6,072	6,485
ELICOS	57,561	58,402	60,137
Non-award	13,948	17,546	21,624
Grand Total	241,250	266,584	303,225

- Highly mobile population
- Low English proficiency
- Support services ?



# Aim & objectives

To increase **HIV health literacy** and promote access to HIV **testing, prevention** and **treatment** amongst international students attending English language colleges in NSW.



Increase access to traditional and new HIV tests, including DBS HIV testing



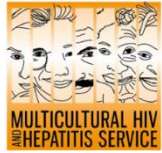
Increase uptake of HIV prevention strategies such as PrEP



Increase early HIV treatment uptake



Reduce HIV stigma



# Multi-strategic approach



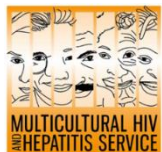
Interactive stalls  
at key student  
events



HIV prevention  
and testing  
workshops with  
students

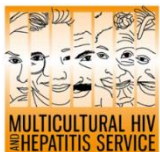


Develop English  
teaching module  
integrated with  
HIV curriculum



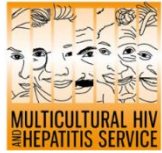
# Achievements to date





# Partnerships

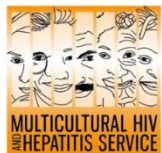




# Student engagement events



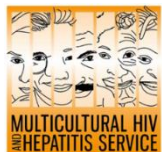
- > **Two thousand**
- Safe sex packs**
- HIV educational resources**
- Information in several languages**



# HIV education sessions

Delivered 41 workshops to **> 1070 students**

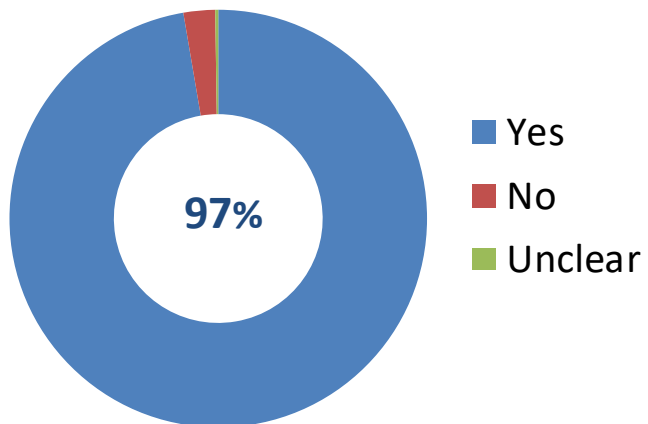




# Results & feedback

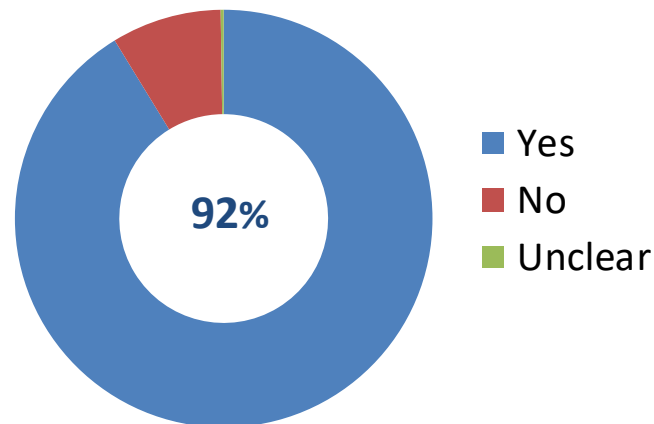
## COMPREHENSION METRICS

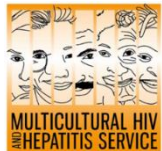
Was the information easy to understand?



## CONTENT QUALITY METRICS

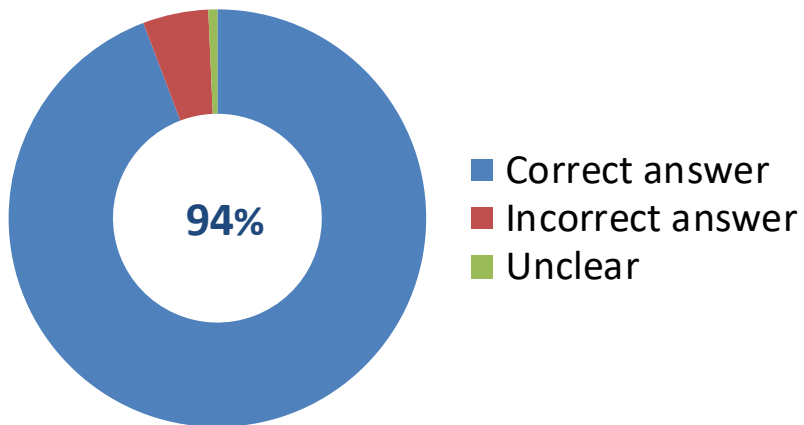
Did you learn something new?



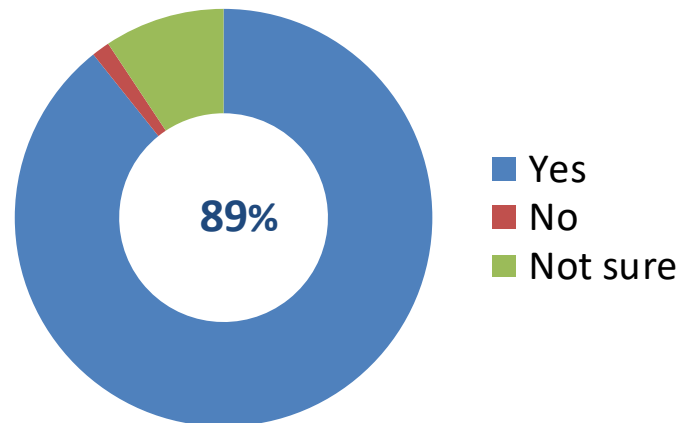


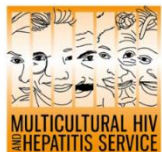
# Results & feedback

## Knowledge acquisition assessment



## Likelihood to share HIV information





# Results & feedback

**Thank you! It is the first time I listen to a talk in English and I can understand everything!**

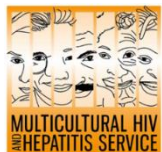
**So important to have this kind of information. Very easy to understand and util\* (useful).**

**It was really good to know the information also there is a health check hospital for free.**

**Good and friendly presentation! Thanks for sharing your knowledge with us.**

**That was the best presentation I've had about HIV. Congratulations.**



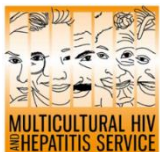


Is good to make people aware about HIV. We don't think about it too much, but talking about it is the perfect way to help people.

Very useful, interesting especially for international students. It is very important to educate the teachers of international students.

I really appreciate this talk because there is still people out there that are unconscious of what risks they have...  
My advise for everyone would be that you can just trust on yourself and if you are going to have unprotected sex, you must be the one that is taking PrEP....





# Capacity building initiative



## English integrated-skills lesson



Health & Wellbeing Unit  
**Talking about HIV**

### Key features:

- Ready to use handouts
- No HIV knowledge required
  - Key information incorporated
  - Teachers guide & answer key
- Follows TESOL recommendations
- Versatile
  - Lower-intermediate to advance levels
  - Flexible lesson planning and delivering



## Health & Wellbeing Unit | Talking about HIV

Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS) | NSW Health



This integrated skills lesson plan features HIV as the subject matter. Students can develop subskills while completing the interactive exercises outlined.

The lesson plan promotes current information and aims to increase HIV awareness among international students encouraging HIV prevention, testing and treatment. Information, including links to health and social services throughout NSW, are also provided. This ready-to-use handout encloses the following aims:

### Activity 1 | Leading activity - Speaking task

To set general context by discussing previous knowledge and experiences.

### Activity 2 | Vocabulary building task

To unlock essential vocabulary through a matching task.

### Activity 3 | Reading task

To read for specific information.

### Activity 4 | Text comprehension skills

To activate content and infer meaning through a 'true or false' task.

### Activity 5 | Conversation skills

To develop oral fluency through role play.

### Activity 6 | Reading task

To read for specific information and infer meaning (logical reading).

### Activity 7 | Listening task

To listen for specific information.

### Activity 8 | Listening task

To listen for general understanding and infer meaning: answer open-ended questions.

### Activity 9 | Review

To develop oral fluency and review key messages learnt.



## ANSWERS KEY | Talking about HIV

### Activity 1 | Page 1

Open-ended questions: no correct or incorrect answers provided. Encourage students to share their own experiences. Ensure students' views and opinions are valued, facilitating a respectful discussion. Note examples of good language usage or errors (vocab, grammar or pronunciation). Provide feedback.

### Activity 2 | Page 1

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. VIRUS: A very small organism that causes infection. | 6. NEEDLE & SYRINGE: Plastic tube with a sharp steel end [...] |
| 2. DISEASE: Illness, sickness, feeling unwell.         | 7. SYMPTOMS: An indication of being sick (e.g. fever, pain).   |
| 3. IMMUNE SYSTEM: The body's natural defence system.   | 8. BLOOD TEST: Checking a blood sample [...]                   |
| 4. TRANSMIT: To 'pass on' a virus, to give it to [...] | 9. RISK: Chance of injury or danger.                           |
| 5. CONDOM: Barrier used during sex to stop HIV [...]   | 10. STERILE: Free of virus, bacteria, etc.                     |

### Activities 3-4 | Page 2

- |          |          |          |         |          |
|----------|----------|----------|---------|----------|
| 1. TRUE  | 2. FALSE | 3. FALSE | 4. TRUE | 5. FALSE |
| 6. FALSE | 7. FALSE | 8. FALSE | 9. TRUE | 10. TRUE |

### Activity 5 | Page 3

Run the conversation task. Set a clear time frame. Check that everyone is on task and monitor progress. Note examples of good language usage or errors (vocab, grammar or pronunciation). Provide feedback.

### Activity 6 | Page 4

#### 1. What is safe sex?

Safe sex is using a condom (and a water-based lubricant) when you have sex.

#### 2. Do condoms protect you from HIV and other sexually transmissible infections (STIs)?

Yes. Condoms are the best way of protecting yourself from HIV and most sexually transmissible infections (STIs).

#### 3. What is the difference between PrEP and PEP?

Both are medications to prevent HIV. The difference is PrEP is taken before a risk exposure (to prevent any possible HIV transmission);

PEP is taken after the risk exposure (to reduce the chance of infection within 72hrs. after being exposed).

#### 4. What happens when an HIV positive person is on HIV medication?

When an HIV positive person is on HIV medication, the level of HIV in the person's blood (viral load) goes down to 'undetectable' levels and they cannot transmit HIV to others.

### Activity 7 | Page 5

- |               |           |              |             |              |                |
|---------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. Diagnosed  | 2. Virus  | 3. Treatment | 4. Health   | 5. Diagnosis | 6. Test        |
| 7. Contracted | 8. Stigma | 9. Chronic   | 10. At risk | 11. Ongoing  | 12. Medication |

### Activity 8 | Page 6

#### 1. Is it important to have an HIV test? Why?

Yes. All people may be at risk of contracting HIV. The only way to know is by having an HIV test.

The earlier people know the better. People can receive treatment from the very beginning and have better health.

#### 2. Can HIV be treated now? If yes, how?

Yes. HIV can be treated now as a chronic illness, like diabetes or heart disease.

#### 3. Is it important to start treatment early? Why?

Yes. Because doctors know that by starting medication earlier people have a better health in the long term.

In addition, treatment reduces the possibility of the HIV virus to be transmitted to other people (onwards transmission).

### Activity 9 | Page 6

#### 1. Is HIV present in Australia?

Yes. HIV is present in Australia and can affect anyone.

#### 2. Is there a cure for HIV?

No. There is no cure for HIV. In Australia, there are now very effective treatments that help people who are living with HIV to live a healthy life.

#### 3. What is the best way of keeping you safe from HIV and other sexually transmissible infections (STIs)?

Practising safe sex (condoms) is the best way of protecting yourself from HIV and most STIs.

#### 4. What is the only way to find out if you have HIV?

The only way to find out if you have HIV is by having an HIV test.

#### 5. Where can you have an HIV test?

You can have an HIV test by asking your doctor (GP), visiting a Sexual Health Clinic, getting a rapid test at a *TEST* and Point of Care sites, or ordering it online at the DBS website. Use the provided websites & QR codes to find more information and book a test.

# Talking about HIV

| Quick teachers guide  
| Answer key

## Health &amp; Wellbeing Unit | Talking about HIV



## ACTIVITY 1 | SPEAKING











Work in groups. Discuss these questions.

- What is HIV?
- What do you know about HIV?
- How do people talk about HIV in your country?

## ACTIVITY 2 | VOCABULARY

Match each word in the first column with its correct definition from the second column.

Can you explain the new vocabulary in your own words?

1. Virus	<input type="checkbox"/>	 The body's natural defence system.
2. Disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	 To 'pass on' a virus, to give it to somebody else.
3. Immune System	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Illness, sickness, feeling unwell.
4. Transmit	<input type="checkbox"/>	 A very small organism that causes infection.
5. Condom	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Chance of injury or danger.
6. Needle & syringe	<input type="checkbox"/>	 An indication of being sick (e.g. fever, pain).
7. Symptoms	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Plastic tube with a sharp steel end, used for injecting medications or taking blood.
8. Blood test	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Free of virus, bacteria, etc.
9. Risk	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Checking a blood sample to know if there is an infection, such as HIV.
10. Sterile	<input type="checkbox"/>	 Barrier used during sex to stop HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).



## ACTIVITY 3 | READING

Dr Natalie Alba shares with us more information about HIV.

Scan the text boxes below and circle the words listed in Activity 2.

Did you know that HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus?

HIV is a virus.

Viruses are very tiny organisms that can enter the body and cause disease.

HIV attacks the immune system, which the body's natural defence. The immune system protects against viruses, bacteria and other germs that make people sick. If a person's immune system is badly hurt by HIV, they will develop AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). This means they are likely to get infections and illnesses that their body would normally fight off.

When HIV infects the blood, the person then becomes 'HIV positive'.

But, how can you get HIV? HIV can be transmitted through:

- Unsafe sex (sex without a condom)
- Sharing needles & syringes, and other equipment used when injecting drugs
- Unsterile body piercing or tattooing
- A mother to her child during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding
- Blood transfusion in some countries. In Australia, blood transfusions are safe

HIV affects everyone regardless of age, gender, race, cultural background or religion.

You can't tell 'just by looking' if someone has HIV. Most people who have the virus look healthy and have no symptoms for many years. In fact, many people who have HIV don't know it themselves.

*The only way to know is by having an HIV blood test!*

How to stay safe from HIV?

*It is important to know that there is no vaccine or cure for HIV. Don't put yourself at risk!*

Using condoms during sex, not sharing needles & syringes, and having sterile piercing and tattooing are the most effective ways to protect yourself from HIV. In Australia, there are now very effective treatments that help people who are living with HIV to live a healthy life.

## ACTIVITY 4 | TRUE OR FALSE?

Read the above text boxes again and circle the correct option.

According to Dr Alba, HIV can be transmitted by...

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Unsafe sex (sex without a condom)                                    | TRUE or FALSE |
| 2. Kissing, hugging or crying   | TRUE or FALSE |
| 3. Coughing or sneezing   | TRUE or FALSE |
| 4. Unsterile body piercing or tattooing                                 | TRUE or FALSE |
| 5. Sharing a bed with someone who has HIV                               | TRUE or FALSE |
| 6. Eating food with someone who has HIV                                 | TRUE or FALSE |
| 7. Sharing a toilet or a shower with someone who has HIV                | TRUE or FALSE |
| 8. A bite from an insect (e.g. mosquito)                                | TRUE or FALSE |
| 9. Sharing needles and other equipment used when injecting drugs        | TRUE or FALSE |
| 10. A mother to her child during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding | TRUE or FALSE |

## Talking about HIV

## HANDOUT 1

| Leading activity

| Vocabulary building

| Reading task

⊙ Health information

| Text comprehension

## INFORMATION SHEET | HIV testing

## How can you find out if you have HIV?

Many people do not experience any signs or symptoms:  
the only way to know is to have an HIV test!

## HIV TESTING IS FREE, EASY, FAST AND CONFIDENTIAL

1. Having a test is simple
2. The results are kept private
3. It is illegal for any healthcare professionals to share your private information without your permission.

There are different types of HIV tests available in NSW:



## Traditional HIV test

- Also called 'antibody test'.
- It is done by taking blood.
- Is not always included in a routine blood test.
- The results are usually available in a week.

Talk to your Doctor (GP)



## Rapid HIV test

- A rapid HIV test involves collecting a small drop of blood, usually from your finger.
- A result is usually available within 30 minutes.
- You can get a free rapid test at a [TEST] and Point of Care sites.
- Book an appointment online.



[www.endinghiv.org.au](http://www.endinghiv.org.au)



## DBS HIV test

- DBS is a free test that you can do at home, ordering it online.
- You need to collect a few drops of blood from your finger and let it dry on a test card.
- Send the card back via post to the laboratory.
- The result will be back in a week.



[www.hivtest.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hivtest.health.nsw.gov.au)



HIV testing is available for free at SEXUAL HEALTH CLINICS

To find a sexual health clinic near you call the  
Sexual Health Infolink (SHIL)

- You do not need to give your name or have a Medicare card.



## ACTIVITY 5 | CONVERSATION

Work in pairs. Practice your conversation skills with this role play.

- Student 1 calls the Sexual Health Infolink, to ask about HIV testing.
- Student 2 is a nurse, who will answer the questions using the above information.

First introduce yourself. Ask at least three questions per round. Then swap roles.

Ask your partner these questions:

- Can you tell me where I can have an HIV test?  
 What do you mean by "rapid test"?  
 Can I do a test at home?

Write three more questions to ask:



## ACTIVITY 6 | READING

Work in pairs. Read the brochure below and answer the questions.

This is Daniel. He just had his first HIV test. He was very nervous about it! Luckily the HIV test came back negative, meaning he does not have HIV. Now he wants to know more about how to stay safe. The doctor gave him a brochure with more information.

1. What is safe sex?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do condoms protect you from HIV and other sexually transmissible infections (STIs)?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the difference between PrEP and PEP?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What happens when an HIV positive person is on HIV medication?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## HOW TO PREVENT HIV

## [1] Safe sex

- Use a condom and a water-based lubricant every time you have sex.
- It is the easiest, cheapest and most effective way of protecting yourself.
- This also protects you from most sexually transmissible infections (STIs).
- You can get free condoms at some sexual health clinics.



## [2] PrEP

- PrEP stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis.  
PRE exposure = BEFORE HIV risk
- It is a way of protecting yourself from HIV by taking medication (1 pill) once daily.
- You have to take PrEP every day for 7 days if you are a man who has sex with men or for 20 days if you are a woman, before being protected from HIV.
- PrEP is recommended only for people who are at high risk of HIV.
- PrEP does not prevent other STIs.

## [3] PEP

- PEP is Post Exposure Prophylaxis.  
POST exposure = AFTER HIV risk
- If you think you have been at risk of HIV, you can take medication that may stop you getting HIV.
- For PEP to work you have to take it as soon as possible, no later than 3 days (72 hours) after being at risk.
- You will need to continue taking the medication for 4 weeks for it to work.
- Talk to your doctor or call 1800 737 699.

## [4] TasP

- TasP stands for Treatment as Prevention
- When an HIV positive person is on HIV medication, the level of HIV in the person's blood (viral load) goes down to 'undetectable' levels.
- This means that even though the person is HIV positive and is not cured, the virus is at such a low level they cannot pass on HIV to others.



## Talking about HIV

## HANDOUT 2

| Reading task

| Referral information

| Conversation skills

| Inferring skills

## STORY | Living a positive life

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVuoFdN-jPc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVuoFdN-jPc)

Watch Abby Landy story. She speaks about the experience she went through when she discovered she was HIV positive. In the video, Dr Catriona Ooi explains about the importance of testing for HIV and starting treatment. Do you know anybody who is living with HIV?



## ACTIVITY 7 | LISTENING #1

Watch the video for the first time. Fill each blank with the correct word.

HEALTH TEST	CHRONIC ONGOING	MEDICATION VIRUS	DIAGNOSIS CONTRACTED	STIGMA AT RISK	TREATMENT DIAGNOSED
-------------	-----------------	------------------	----------------------	----------------	---------------------



[A] My name is Abby Landy. I am 27 years old. I work full time as a legal assistant and I'm also studying law at the moment. I do a lot of exercise: I like going to the gym, going to the beach... that sort of thing.

So when I was first <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ I sort of didn't know what it meant and thought, you know, that was going to be a complete game-changer. But I was diagnosed really early, just shortly after contracting the <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

So I have had great <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ from the very beginning, which means my <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ has been really well managed and my life looks exactly the same as it did, you know, prior to that <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.



[B] I just had a gut feeling that something wasn't right and after a couple of more trips to the doctor, I just said: "Look, I want you to <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ me for HIV".

And their response was: "You know Abby, you're a young heterosexual female living in Australia; the chances of you having <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ HIV are so slim". I'd never considered that that was a potential outcome. I didn't know about HIV.

I knew nothing, you know, 20-something educated person and I knew nothing about HIV and so I sort of identified that as the problem.



[C] There needs to be a lot more education about HIV and the fact that it is not a death sentence. There's a lot of <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ and discrimination surrounding the infection still, and really the infection doesn't discriminate; people do it. It can be treated now and as a <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ illness, like diabetes for example or heart disease.



[D] People need to realize they are <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ of contracting HIV. You know, I wasn't considered at risk and here I am.



[E] The earlier you are diagnosed, the better. It is for your own health, because it means that you can have <sup>11</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ monitoring, you can get engaged in medical care and you can start <sup>12</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

## ACTIVITY 8 | LISTENING #2

Watch the video again. Answer the questions below.

1. Is it important to have an HIV test? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Can HIV be treated now? If yes, how?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Is it important to start treatment early? Why?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ACTIVITY 9 | REVIEW

Work in pairs. Check your knowledge. Can you remember the answers to these questions?

1. Is HIV present in Australia?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Is there a cure for HIV?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the best way of keeping you safe from HIV and other STIs?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the only way to find out if you have HIV?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Where can you have an HIV test?  
\_\_\_\_\_



To find HIV information in your language visit the  
Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHHS)



[www.mhhs.org.au](http://www.mhhs.org.au)

[@TheMHHS](https://www.facebook.com/TheMHHS)

## Talking about HIV

## HANDOUT 3

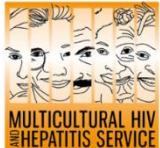
| Video: lived experience

| Listening for detail

| Inferring skills

🎧 Review key messages

| Oral fluency



# Where to now...?

⇒ Sign up for the **'Talking about HIV'** pilot implementation





# Acknowledgements

## MHAHS IS Project team

Wa'el Sabri, Galuh Sapthari, Ally Kerr, and Belinda Marchesiello.

## Health organisations

Positive Life NSW

CSRH UNSW

Advisory Group (HARP units, Pozhet, ACON)

## Students representatives

City of Sydney International Students Leadership and Ambassador (ISLA) program.

## ELICOS

- Scots English College
- SELC English Language Centre
- SELC Career College
- Lonsdale Institute
- ELS Universal English College
- Embassy English College
- Taylors College
- Greenwich College
- IGLU Student Accommodation



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