



Positive Women

Positive News



August 2011

Women's Retreat



diary date

27~29 April
2012
Auckland

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Editor's update

Tena Koutou Katoa, Jambo, Hello, Talofa lava, Taloha ní, Halo olaketa, Bula vínaka, Kam na maí, La orana, Fakaalofa, Lahí atu, Malo lelei, Nabat, Zdravo, Cíao, Sha-lom, Saludo, Bonjour, Aman, Servus, Konnichi wa, Buenos Días, Nyjob zoo, Torova, Namaste, Cí yi bak, Salaama, Muraho

Warm greetings from all of us at Positive Women Inc. and welcome to another edition of our newsletter.

I have just returned from our first camp for young people in New Zealand living with HIV and what an amazing weekend it was. You can read more about this exciting weekend on page 6. Still on the topic of children and young people, on page 7 is an article on a book on HIV that explains HIV to children and teenagers.

August is a busy month for the campaign promoting the female condom in New Zealand. See page 5 about all the events planned by PWI and YWCA in a number of cities.

Positive Speakers continue to appear in the mainstream media. On page 5 is an item on a recent radio interview with three of our members.

On page 10 we announce a milk formula scheme for new mothers with HIV.

It has been 30 years since the world first became aware of HIV and AIDS and on page 12 and 13 Beri Hull, a global HIV advocate for women issues,

takes a look at how things have changed globally since the early days of HIV. An article on page 8 and 9 discusses the recent results from research projects on pre-exposure prophylaxis that created a stir at the IAS 2011 conference in Rome.

From all of us at Positive Women Inc., happy reading and keep warm until next time.

Marietta

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If you have any inquiries about the above please call 09 309 1858 or 0800 769848 from outside Auckland or send an email to support@positivewomen.co.nz

Coordinator's update

Hello everyone and welcome to another issue of Positive News. A huge thank you to Marietta who has once again put together a great selection of news and information to keep everyone up to date with what is happening at Positive Women Inc. and in the world of HIV.

As always it has been an action packed couple of months at Positive Women Inc. The most exciting, from my perspective, has been the New Zealand Youth Camp which took place over the weekend of 21-24th of July. I would like to express extreme gratitude and congratulations to Rosemine, the student placement social worker who has been working with Positive Women Inc. for the last three months. The camp was a project Rosemine took full ownership of during her time with us and she did a fantastic job. Rosemine has now finished her time with us and we are going to miss her immensely as she quickly became part of the family. Thank you Rosemine. We wish her all the very best with her studies and know that she will make an excellent contribution to the community when she graduates. She has done so already.

Secondly, and again, another huge thank you to Marietta who supported and mentored Rosemine over the past three months as well as doing all her own work. Also for giving up her weekend to go on the Youth Camp to support the young people over the weekend.

The past few months have been very exciting at the office now that we have such a strong and dynamic team. Anna is settling in well and has made a significant difference working on the

upgrade of the database, keeping the PWI Facebook updated, and being the best second right-hand a manager could ask for.

The hunt for new premises continues. It's been difficult work as we want a place that is going to meet our needs perfectly as well as fit into a budget we can sustainably afford. The latter being the main challenge. Premises we have looked at so far will set us back around \$40,000 a year. A scary prospect but we will not be defeated. The perfect place at the right price is out there and we will find it.

Funding and contracts

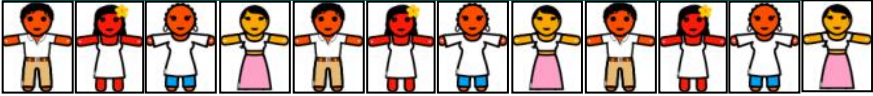
During June and July we received our quarterly payment of our MOH contract money. It is such a comfort to know these funds will arrive every three months. Our contract finishes in December but having just completed the first 6-monthly report to the Ministry we are hoping the work that we have done during 2011 will prove that we are deserving of another contract next year.

On the topic of contracts, Positive Women Inc. now has a direct contract with the MOH for the administration, on behalf of the National Collective of People Living with HIV, for the Positive Speakers Bureau.

I hope you are all keeping warm and well and please call the office if there is anything we can help you with or call just for a chat.

Warm regards
Jane Bruning
National Coordinator

Female condom road show



The New Zealand leg of the female condom Paper Doll campaign is officially being launched in August. As reported in our last newsletter, the campaign is part of the international Paper Dolls Campaign to raise awareness of the female condom.

Positive Women Inc. together with YWCA, have organised four events during August with the first one being held at Wintec in the Waikato on the 8th of August. This lunch time 'Cocktails' event will include a talk presented by Sara Davies of YWCA which will include a practical demonstration on how to fit the female condom using a vaginal model. A member from Positive Women Inc. will present a personal story so as to help humanise HIV. This will be followed by a question and answer session. People will then be given the chance to write their messages on the paper dolls while they are eating pizza and drinking (non-alcoholic) cocktails.

The second event will follow a similar format in Whangarei on the 23rd of August at the YWCA event centre. Alcoholic cocktails will be served at this event as it is in the evening.

The third event will be a presentation at the HIV Update in Auckland to be held on the 26th of August.

The final event is still being worked on but we are hoping it will be at the new MAC store opening in August at Britomart in Auckland.

Together with thousands of signed paper dolls from all over the world, the signed paper dolls from New Zealand will be sent to the Netherlands at the end of October and will be carried into the Dutch Parliament in November.

We have tried to organise events in Wellington and Christchurch but so far have been unsuccessful. We have until the end of October and will continue to seek opportunities in these and other regions to promote the campaign.

Positive speakers on radio



Three women, who have been through the Positive Speakers Bureau training programme,

were interviewed on Radio NZ on the 20th of July about living with HIV and about speaking publicly about living with HIV.

An audio of the interview can be heard on the Radio New Zealand website at

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/aucklandstories>.

A great interview, well done girls!

NZ Youth Camp

A group of New Zealand young people living with HIV recently went on a youth camp where they were challenged by various activities that involved dizzying heights, narrow spaces and creative thinking. This is the first time that a camp for positive young people has been held in New Zealand.

The young people spent their time between daily support groups and outdoor adventure activities. The support groups were run by Angela Miller, a social worker from the Paediatric HIV Service at Sydney's Children's Hospital. We modeled our camp on the camps Angela organizes for positive young people in Australia. Angela was assisted in the support groups by Lyndon Moore and Kate Armstrong, counselors from the Burnett Centre in Auckland.

Over the weekend we were challenged by our instructor, Shanon, to push ourselves and overcome our fears on various adventure-based activities that included a flying fox, caving, rock climbing wall, snow tubing and other challenges that involved thinking strategically.

We want to say thank you to Angela, Kate, Lyndon, Shanon, Rosemine and Elizabeth our nurse, without whom this camp would not have been possible. Thanks also to the sponsors of the camp: Merck Sharp & Dhome, Gilead, and Abbott Virology.

Most of all we want to say thank you to the fantastic group of young people for their enthusiasm, great personalities, their incredible sense of humor and for giving it a go even when a challenge was tough. You are awesome!



Medikidz explains HIV

Medikidz is a series of comic books for children and young people on various paediatric conditions, including HIV. Medikidz was founded by two paediatricians, Dr Kim Chilman-Blair and Dr Kate Hersov, after working in paediatrics and identifying a gap in available material for young people on medical conditions. The comic books are both entertaining and educational and are written by professional medical writers and doctors.

In the book, *What's up with Matt?*, Medikidz explains HIV. The Medikidz – Skinderella, Axon, Chi, Pump and Gastro – are a group of super heroes. They each specialise in a different part of the body and teach children about the battle inside the human body as the immune system fights the HIV virus.

In *What's up with Matt?*, the Medikidz take Matt, a boy with HIV, on a tour of Mediland where he learns from the super heroes what is happening inside his body.

What's up with Matt as well as two other books about children and HIV are available on loan from Positive Women Inc.

The two other books available for loan



are *Bye-bye Secrets*, a book about children living with HIV and Aids in their family and *How do I tell my kids?*, a disclosure booklet about HIV and Aids in the family. These two books are published by the Teresa group, a Canadian organisation supporting children and families living with HIV.

In *Bye-Bye secrets* five girls between the ages of 8 and 12 write about their experiences living with HIV in their families. *How do I tell my kids?* is a booklet for adults who want to tell their children that a family member has HIV.

PrEP study results talking point at Rome conference

The results of studies on pre-exposure prophylaxis treatment (otherwise known as PrEP) as an HIV prevention strategy in serodiscordant couples, attracted a lot of attention at the 6th International Aids Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2011), which was held in July in Rome, Italy.

In the following article by Myles Helfand, the editorial director of the TheBodyPRO.com, Helfand comments on the studies and the debates it is sparking in the scientific community and in the media as well as the practical and ethical challenges translating the results into practice.

HIV treatment: it goes both ways

The biggest story at IAS 2011 – at least, the story that grabbed the most headlines in the mainstream media – was the hubbub over pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP. PrEP is a potential HIV prevention strategy in which an HIV-negative person takes HIV medications (usually once-daily Truvada [tenofovir/FTC] or Viread [Tenofovir]) every day in hopes it will reduce the risk of getting HIV from an infected partner.

So far, those hopes are coming true. Last week, news broke about two studies that showed PrEP could reduce HIV risk by half or more in HIV-negative, heterosexual men and women who had sex with HIV-positive partners. More detailed findings from

those studies were presented at IAS 2011. They follow similar findings released last year on PrEP use among men who have sex with men – and they seem to counter a study earlier this year that suggested PrEP did not work for heterosexual women.

The new study results have sparked an explosion of questions about PrEP, namely over whether (and how) taking HIV medications should become a recommended part of an HIV-negative person's daily diet. But as several HIV/AIDS activists have pointed out, there's another big question to ask here: Instead of worrying about how to give HIV medications to HIV negative people, why aren't we trying harder to ensure that people who already have HIV receive the medications they need?

Just a couple of months ago, we saw results from a landmark study known as HPTN 052. The study found that HIV-positive people who were on effective HIV treatment reduced their risk of passing HIV to partners by at least 96 percent, and maybe more. Further results from the same study, newly presented at IAS 2011, add more good news: If people with HIV start treatment with a relatively high CD4 count – over 550 – their odds of developing a serious illness appear to drop by 40 percent.

Most of the people who volunteered for HPTN 052 live in Africa and Asia, so those of us who live in wealthier nations need to be cautious about

drawing too many direct conclusions. (The main "serious illness" reported in the study was tuberculosis, which is not a major concern in most Western countries. In addition, while rates of serious illness dropped among those starting treatment early, rates of death did not, although people in the study were only followed for an average of less than two years.) But it is only the latest of an increasingly long string of studies that suggest starting HIV treatment – and starting it pretty quickly – is much better for everyone involved than not starting treatment.

And yet, five years after the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended routine HIV testing for all in the hopes it would increase the number of people who learn their status and get treatment, HIV testing is anything but routine in much of the U.S. Meanwhile, virtually every week for the past year, we've had to pencil a new number in the record books for Longest-Ever Waiting

List for U.S. AIDS Drug Assistance Programs. (Right now, more than 8,600 people with HIV in the U.S. are standing by to receive medications through the programs, even though it may be their only way to get access to treatment they otherwise can't afford. An unknown number of additional people have been dropped from the programs entirely due to changes that some states have made in eligibility rules.)

The evidence increasingly shows that the best way to make people with HIV healthier, while simultaneously ensuring that HIV doesn't pass from one person to another, is to help as many people with HIV as possible get on effective HIV treatment.

Source: <http://www.thebodypro.com/content/63072/hiv-aids-treatment-research-update-july-20-2011.html>



New formula milk scheme

Positive Women Inc. has come to a preliminary agreement with an Australian supplier of infant formula to provide free infant formula for babies born to mothers living with HIV. The scheme is intended for mothers on a low income and who are seriously struggling to afford infant formula and is not automatically available to all mothers with HIV.

Positive Women Inc. is not able to make the request on behalf of a woman. The request must be done by either the woman's GP, midwife or HIV specialist.

The request must be printed on the letterhead of the GP, midwife or HIV specialist and sent directly to the

Australian company.

If approved, the formula supplies will be delivered by the company directly to the GP, midwife or HIV specialist who made the request from where the mother can collect it.

We have put together a template letter, which covers all the details required for the request to the Australian company that we can send to the GP, midwife or HIV specialist..

Please contact Positive Women Inc. if you want more information about the scheme.



No regrets

*From visualisation time
at the Women's Retreat*

Do I live in a room with no regrets?
What if any regrets do I hang onto?

Is the room of regrets really swept clean?
to expose a beautiful old fashioned wooden table
varnished over the years showing
its grains like experience lines on my face

Is the room of my regrets full of rubbish?
or has it got glimpses of light?
or are there any clean furnishings?
or is it a jumbled mess of stuff?
with a child like path wandering through it

Can I really sweep away the pain, loss and sadness
maybe under the carpet or really away
with the help of my supportive friends
so I can live with no regrets!

What would it be like to live a life of no regrets?
in a clean, warm, comfortable room,
full of light and a room to be fully furnished
fully me, even to celebrate

How can I have such a room?
Maybe by dealing with the past regrets,
maybe by living in the present
or maybe give myself permission to grieve
and then really live!

*by
Amanda*

HIV advocate recognized as Champion of Change

Beri Hull has been honored by the White House as a Champion of Change. Beri is the Global Advocacy Officer for the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW Global). She was diagnosed with HIV in 1993. Below is a shortened version of her blog written on the White House website on her perspective as we mark thirty years of a world living with HIV.

In the 30 years since the world first became aware of AIDS a lot has changed. As the communities most affected became less privileged, poorer, more feminine, people living with HIV were increasingly dealing with additional layers of stigma. As the response to AIDS became less inclusive

of the people most affected, the people most affected had less capacity to participate or advocate and many were faced with higher priorities as they struggled to support themselves, their families, and to understand what their diagnosis would come to mean for them and for their communities.

We have been through difficult times where we saw ideology and moralizing punditry prioritized above the science of prevention and treatment even while we knew that people were needlessly becoming affected. We have seen a global effort to provide HIV treatment access, around the world, begin to diminish in the context of a great recession.



At the same time, we finally have evidence of what many of us intuitively believed all along: access to treatment prevents HIV transmission. We see light at the end of the tunnel.

As a woman living with HIV and a global advocate, who is both a US citizen and a member of an amazing international network of HIV positive women (ICW), I see a global culture beyond the US that offers many valuable lessons. For example, the proportion of those living with HIV who are women has steadily grown since the beginning of the epidemic. In 1985, women accounted for 8% of new HIV diagnoses while in 2009, women accounted for 25% of those newly diagnosed. Women of color have been particularly affected and are significantly more likely to be diagnosed with HIV than their white counterparts.

As we continue to see women's HIV risk rise within the US, it is important to be able to look outside our borders to understand how globally, women continue to make up the majority of those living with and at risk of HIV. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, home to the majority of people living with HIV, women compose 60% of the total. When we look around the world, we are able to clearly see that gender inequality, human rights violations, and violence against women are all contributors to women's risk for HIV and have enormous impacts on quality of life for women living with HIV. These priorities are important for addressing the concerns for women in every region of the world, including our own.

There is now evidence that HIV treatment diminishes infectiousness and has a public health benefit

towards reducing HIV transmission. In addition to saving the lives of millions of people living with HIV, we have a unique opportunity to forever change the trajectory of this disease. We know that concern for survival and well-being by those most affected are powerful influences on the policy and programs that impact on the lives of men and women living with HIV. Now, we as a community want an investment in our own powerful motivation to end new transmissions and to achieve universal access to treatment, care, and support.

As the affected communities and people in need of health care we must work together. We have infrastructures and networks that can engage as a powerful collective for which we need linkage, support and inclusion at all levels. Nothing for us without us!

Source: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2011/06/10/30-year-anniversary-aids-pandemic-what-has-changed-what-needs-change>

New date for 2011 Queen of the Whole Universe

The 2011 Queen of the Whole Universe has been postponed until 2012. The event which was to take place in October, will now take place on Saturday the 21st of July 2012 at the ASB Theatre, Aotea Centre, Auckland. The event has been postponed, because of the many rugby world cup events taking place in October. Since its inception in 2004, Positive Women Inc. have received \$15 000 from the event, which we have used for our Family Hui.

Therapeutic Massage

Mary Ann, a qualified massage therapist is offering members a special price of \$30 for an hour session at the Positive Women Inc. office in Auckland. She also offers Crystal Healing and Reiki. Contact Positive Women Inc. to make a booking or you can contact Mary Ann at 021 215 6800.

Life Insurance for PLHIV

If you thought you couldn't get life insurance because of your HIV status....think again.

Positive Women Inc. is working with Your Life Insurance who is able to work with a client's individual needs. Life insurance for people living with HIV is now a possibility.

For more information contact Marietta at Positive Women Inc. at support@positivewomen.co.nz.



Travel Insurance

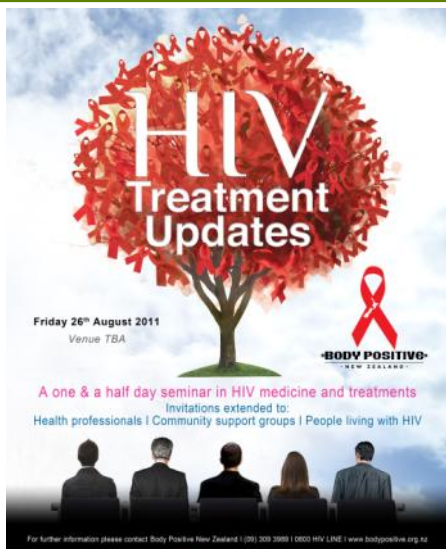
Positive Women Inc. is able to help you get travel insurance at a very competitive price with no questions asked as to your HIV status. This can all be done by email or phone. Call us

HIV friendly Dr's & Dentists

Need to find a new doctor (GP) or dentist and are anxious about disclosing your HIV status? Give us a call and Positive Women Inc. will do the initial (anonymous) investigation for you.



Diary Dates



The annual HIV treatment update organised by Body Positive is taking place on Friday the 26th of August 2011 at the Pullman Hotel in Auckland. The update is an opportunity for members to hear from medical and research professionals about the latest developments around HIV in New Zealand and how it impacts on the positive community.

Scholarships to attend the event may be available for members living outside Auckland. Contact Positive Women Inc. if you are interested.



Women's Retreat 27- 29 April 2012

Family Hui 2012 2-4 November 2012

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