



Positive Women

# Positive News



## October 2011

# Women's Retreat



27~29 April  
2012  
Auckland

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# Editor's update

*Tena Koutou Katoa, Jambo, Hello, Talofa lava, Taloha ni, Halo olaketa, Bula vinaka, Kam na mai, La orana, Fakaalofa, lahi atu, Malo lelei, Nabat, Zdravo, Ciao, Shalom, Saludo, Bonjour, Aman, Servus, Konnichi wa, Buenos Dias, Nyob zoo, Torova, Namaste, Ci yi bak, Salaama, Murah*

**H**ello everyone from a city abuzz with flags and rugby fever. Even if you are not into rugby, it is hard not to be taken in by the enthusiasm and creativity of the fans. The highlights for me thus far has been the national anthems and the haka, especially the flash hakas taking place in various places around the country.

Now onto the newsletter. On page five you will notice a letter from our Board. The Board plays a major role in the running of Positive Women Inc., and, in this new regular feature, they will keep us informed on the work they do and the decisions they make.

Further on in the newsletter you can read about Jane's new appointment as one of the NGO delegates with the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board. Congratulations Jane on a well deserved appointment. We know you are going to do a fabulous job. This is followed by news about the work of the Positive Speakers Bureau on page ten.

We have received a number of queries about HIV and getting pregnant and have two articles focussing on the

topic on pages twelve and sixteen. On page fourteen you can read about the HIV treatment update that was held in Auckland recently followed by an article on the results of a research study that looked into the experiences of HIV positive African migrants in New Zealand.

We are in the process of developing a new look for our newsletter, which we hope to introduce with the next issue. Until then, enjoy the rugby and happy reading.

*Marietta*

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# Coordinator's update

**T**here has certainly been a party atmosphere in New Zealand over the past month with the Rugby World Cup—very exciting and now the clocks have turned forward we can also start to look forward to spring.

Since the last newsletter we have received another quarterly payment by the Ministry of Health of \$25,000. This amount contributes towards staff wages and other direct and indirect costs such as training and resources.

Positive Women Inc. also now has a direct contract with the Ministry of Health for the Positive Speakers Bureau. This is worth \$12,000 a year, although for this year we only received \$6000 for the last six months of this year. Previously this was subcontracted by Positive Women Inc. through the New Zealand AIDS Foundation.

Although Positive Women Inc. has the official contract, we are in fact only managing it on behalf of the National Collective of People living with HIV, which include Body Positive and INA.

In July we submitted our first accountability report to the Ministry of Health for funds received for the first six months of the year. We are happy to say we passed the reporting process and have been informed we are likely to receive another contract next year and the aim is for the contract to be a

multi-year rather than an annual one. This is fantastic news as this will be the first time ever that we can start to feel a little secure for a number of years knowing funds will be coming in every three months to cover wages and other important and relevant costs.

**Congratulations to us.** It's taken nearly twenty years but finally the work the organization does in supporting women and families in New Zealand living with HIV and the contribution we make to the National HIV response, has been recognised and acknowledged in a very significant way.

Marietta, Positive Women Inc's socialworker, has done another wonderful job in preparing the newsletter, along with all the other amazing work she has been doing. We have really been able to step up our ability to provide social and psychosocial support to our members. We are extremely lucky to have someone of Marietta's calibre working for Positive Women Inc.

Due to an increased workload for Marietta we are looking to restructure how the newsletter is produced and in future it will be more of a joint effort by all the staff here at the office and then compiled by Anna, our administrator. Anna has also become an invaluable attribute to Positive Women Inc. She manages the Positive Speakers Bureau

and has been very busy working on upgrading our internal database as well as setting up the Positive Speakers Bureau website and working on the upgrade of the Positive Women Inc. websites.

In this edition we start a new regular column from the Board of Positive Women Inc. The aim of the column is to keep everyone informed as to the activities of the Board and to highlight the work they do. While behind the scenes, their work is instrumental to

the effective and sustainable operations of the organisation. You can rest assured that Positive Women Inc. is in good hands and continues to go from strength to strength.

On a sad note to end, we send our condolences to ex-board member, Pauline, who lost her husband in September after a long struggle with cancer. Our thoughts are with her and her family at this difficult time.

Kia ora till next time, regards Jane B

## Letter from the Board

**K**ia ora koutou welcome to the first Board update. Just a quick recap, as the Board of Positive Women Inc., we are here to run the organization. The Board is normally made up of six members who have been voted on to the Board by you the members. We currently have five Board members who come from all over the country. In the last year we have lost two Board members. They have done a wonderful job in the time that they were on the board but for various reasons could not stay on until their term was completed. We thank them for their time and commitment.

The main role of the Board is to provide guidance and management through the development of policy, which is then used to guide the National Coordinator in the direction that Positive Women Inc. wants to

take. We currently meet five times a year in Auckland. As well as the regular meetings, we attend the yearly Annual General Meeting and the Women's Retreat. When and if possible, we will try to attend events where Positive Women Inc. plays an important role .

The Board is currently reviewing some of the policies that it has developed. This is an exciting opportunity to help provide direction for the organization. It is also great to be able to develop skills as a Board member and as a team member.

At the most recent meeting, we had the opportunity to have training to help us look at how we evaluate ourselves and the staff of Positive Women Inc. We found it really valuable and this should help us to manage and guide the organization better in future.

# UNAIDS position for Positive Women Inc.

**T**he UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board NGO Delegation has named Jane Bruning, National Coordinator for Positive Women Inc., as the new NGO delegate for Asia Pacific for the 2011-2012 term. The NGO delegation is part of the Programme Coordinating Board, which is the governing body of UNAIDS. The mission of the Programme Coordinating Board NGO Delegation is to ensure that the priorities and interests of HIV positive people and communities are considered in UNAIDS decisions and policies.

Positive Women Inc. is strongly involved in regional networks and is a member of the Asia Pacific Alliance (APA) and works collaboratively with the Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation (PIAF) and other Australian organizations. As New Zealand Alternate Delegate for the Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (APN+), Jane was nominated by the network to assume its seat on the Delegation for the 2011-2012 term.

The Board will be meeting in Geneva in December and the theme for this session of the Board is about HIV and

the law and will cover issues such as immigration laws, the decriminalisation of HIV as well as aspects of stigma and discrimination. Positive Women Inc. has contributed to this through working with the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective who ran a focus group in Wellington in September to discuss how laws with regards to HIV in New Zealand affect those living with HIV. Positive Women Inc. also did a video interview with one of our members about her experiences of being put through a public trial.

Similar events have been held by other representatives of the NGO delegation around the world and all this evidence will be collated in a report and will be presented at the Board meeting in Geneva in December. The report and some of the videos will also go on the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board NGO Delegation website for viewing ([www.unaidspcbngo.org](http://www.unaidspcbngo.org)).

It is an exciting and shifting time in the global context of HIV of which Positive Women Inc. is now a direct part of.



# Female condom campaign roll out

Over the past couple of months dozens of people in New Zealand have added their support to the international campaign by the Universal Access to Female Condoms (UAFC) to make female condoms more accessible and affordable to women worldwide. Together with YWCA, Positive Women Inc. held four events in Hamilton, Whangarei, Auckland and Wellington where people were able to write their messages of support on the paper dolls.

The first event took place at Wintec in

Hamilton on Monday the 8th of August. Over sixty young women attended lured by 'cocktales' and pizza. Sarah Davies and Rachael Bowley from YWCA, did a 'hand's on' demonstration on how to use the female condom with everyone in the audience being given a female condom to practice with. A member of Positive Women Inc. also spoke to raise awareness on HIV. The second event was held on the 23rd of

*Below: Jane Bruning, left, from Positive Women Inc. and Sarah Davies from YWCA Aotearoa at the recent workshop held in Whangarei. Photo supplied by Denise Piper/Whangarei Leader*

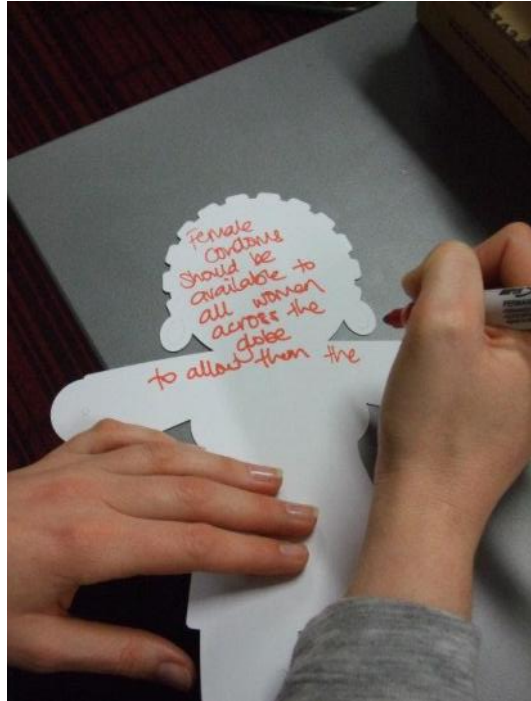


August in Whangarei and thirty health care workers attended this event. Sarah Davies of YWCA and Jane Bruning from Positive Women Inc. did the presentations at this event.

The third event was a presentation by Jane Bruning at the HIV update held on the 26th of August and the fourth event was held at Wellington at Victoria University. This was another 'cocktail' and pizza event.

There are other plans under way to do a presentation at Waikato University and this is currently being negotiated. The leaving party for the dolls

will take place on the 19th of October at the new MAC store at Britomart in Auckland from 6.30-8.30. Please come along if you can. Copies of all the dolls



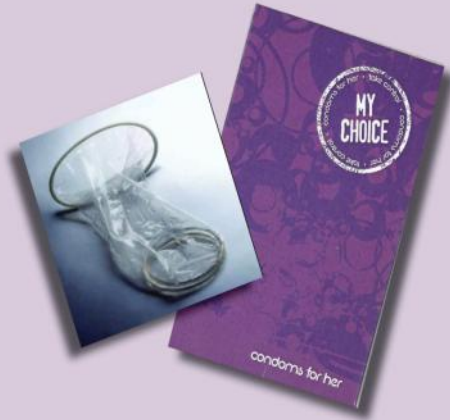
*Above: A supporter writing her message on one of the paper dolls*



signed in New Zealand will be on display for people to read. There will also be a female condom demonstration, while MAC makeup artists will do a Viva Glam theme day where they'll do makeup inspired by Viva Glam. We are currently also in negotiations to continue the campaign on a national level and to present paper dolls at Parliament buildings in Wellington on International Woman's Day in March 2012.

After the leaving party, the signed paper dolls are travelling to Amsterdam to be presented to the Dutch Parliament together with the thousands of other signed dolls from all over the world.

# *Ladies, take control!*



## ***Positive Women Inc. is now selling Female Condoms.***

The FC2 Female Condom is designed to be worn by women to help prevent HIV and AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancy.

***Purchase them for \$2 each.***

Order them by:

- Phone 309 1858 or 0800 POSITIV (769 848)
- Download a form from [www.positivewomen.co.nz](http://www.positivewomen.co.nz) and mail it in
- Come in to the Positive Women office

We accept credit cards, cash and EFT-POS.

# Positive speakers complete training

**F**ive more speakers have completed their training at a workshop held over the weekend of 29 July–1 August 2011. The workshop was organised by the New Zealand Positive Speakers Bureau, an initiative run by Positive Women Inc. in collaboration with members of the National Coalition of People living with HIV (NCPHIV).

The workshop was facilitated by Jonathan Smith, the director of Eventimento, an event managing company, and our very own Jane Bruning. Both Jonathan and Jane have considerable experience in training and development. The workshop is for people in New Zealand living with HIV on how to tell their story and speak publically about their experiences on living with HIV.

During the weekend, participants were shown how to structure talks and how to tailor presentations for a broad range of audiences. This is the second training workshop Positive Women Inc. has coordinated, since being awarded the contract in 2010. The Positive Speakers Bureau now has twenty one speakers available to speak at public events. Speakers are flexible and can be matched to a variety of audiences, whether it be in the

corporate, healthcare, education, or hospitality setting.

To book one of the speakers to speak at your workplace or organisation or if you are interested in registering for the next Positive Speakers training workshop please contact Anna at [admin@positivewomen.co.nz](mailto:admin@positivewomen.co.nz) or call her on (09) 309 1858 or free phone outside of Auckland on 0800 (POZTIV) 769848.

## Jan Waddell speaks at medical seminar

**J**an Waddell, well-known member of Positive Women Inc. and speaker with the Positive Speakers Bureau, spoke at the Pre Analytical Services Seminar held in Hamilton for Phlebotomists and Specimen Reception staff from all over the country. The seminar was run through the New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Science. The presentations covered all aspects of phlebotomy, including a safety component. Jan's presentation was about her journey after contracting HIV from a needle stick injury, while performing a medical procedure. Jan's presentation was preceded by a

presentation by Marie Fullerton, who spoke about a survey she has done on needle stick injuries amongst health care profession in New Zealand

The survey identified the level of underreporting and the factors that influence needle stick reporting. The survey results showed that 9% of respondents had experienced at least one needle stick injury in the past year, and three practitioners had five or more injuries in the same period. The overall underreporting rate for needle stick injuries was 33%, which is consistent with internationally reported figures. More than one in six respondent doctors (17.8%) had sustained one or more needle stick injuries in the past year, compared with nurses (7.6%) or midwives (6.7%).

The survey has resulted in a series of recommendations to assist District Health Boards to formulate an appropriate strategy to manage the impact of needle stick incidences.

*Below: Jan Waddell speaking at Pre Analytical Services seminar in Hamilton*



## From our library



Our library is expanding. From time to time we acquire books we think our members will find useful and we have four more books to add to our growing selection. The latest books will be of interest to mothers with young babies. There are two books by Pinky McKay namely, *Sleeping like a baby* and *100 Ways to calm the crying*. *Sleeping like a baby* offers advice on helping babies to sleep better and *100 Ways to calm the crying* explores why babies cry, from normal developmental changes to more painful conditions such as colic and reflux.

Still on the topic of baby's sleep, or lack thereof, is *The no-cry sleep solution* by Elizabeth Pantley and *Night time Parenting* by William Sears, M. D., both excellent books offering parents the tools to get their baby and young children to sleep and stay asleep.

Contact any one of us at Positive Women Inc. if you're interested in any of these books and we will post it to you.

# Getting Pregnant and HIV

**F**or those living with HIV who are interested in having children, know that you are not alone. The majority of HIV+ women are of child-bearing age. Advances in HIV treatment have greatly lowered the chances of vertical transmission (that is, a mother passing HIV on to her baby). The chances of vertical transmission can be as low as 1 in 100 when certain steps are taken.

These same advances have made it much more possible for HIV+ people to live longer, healthier lives. They have also made it possible to reduce the chance of passing HIV to a partner when trying to have a child. As a result, it is no surprise that HIV+ women and men are interested in having children. A 2009 study showed that almost 70 percent of HIV+ women (ages 18 to 52) living in Toronto, Canada wanted to

give birth. The Women Living Positive Survey found that the same percentage of HIV+ women in the United States considered family planning an important part of their HIV care.

There are several different options for reducing the chances of HIV

transmission while trying to get pregnant. Each option has risks and benefits which you need to discuss with your health care provider. The options fall under one of two categories: serodiscordant partners or seroconcordant partners.

**Serodiscordant (HIV+/HIV-negative) partners**

Serodiscordant refers to couples in which one person is HIV+ and the other is not. Sometimes, serodiscordant partners are referred to as “magnetic couples” or “mixed status couples.” You can lower the risk of HIV transmission to the child or uninfected partner by reducing your viral load (or your partner’s) before



trying to become pregnant. Having an undetectable viral load lowers transmission risk, but does not get rid of the risk altogether. Treating any sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) before trying to get pregnant will also lower your chances of passing HIV between partners. If you are an HIV+ person in a same-sex relationship, some of the information about alternative insemination techniques may be helpful to you as well.

### **Seroconcordant (HIV+/HIV+) partners**

Seroconcordant means that both partners are HIV+. You will still want to lower the risk of passing HIV to your partner, as there is the possibility of passing a different strain of HIV (one that may be stronger or more drug-resistant) to your partner. This is referred to as “superinfection.” As with serodiscordant partners, you can reduce the risk of HIV transmission to the child or partner by reducing your viral load before trying to become pregnant. Having an undetectable viral load lowers transmission risk, but does not get rid of it. Treating any sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) before trying to get pregnant will also lower your chances of passing HIV between partners.

It is important to note the risk of a baby having HIV is only present if the mother has HIV or AIDS.

### **Finding a provider and building a support network**

Regardless of whether you have HIV or not, choosing to have a child can be a very difficult and very exciting decision. While having a supportive relationship with a knowledgeable health care provider is a good idea for any potential parent, for people living with HIV it is even more important. A friendly health care provider can talk with you about many issues around pregnancy and having children: which option is right for you, appropriate HIV treatments for you and/or your partner, whether to disclose that you have HIV to others (including other providers, your child’s paediatrician, additional friends and family), and how to handle the stigma and fear around being HIV+ and pregnant.

Given the existing stigma against people living with HIV having children, you may encounter judgemental responses from others. Therefore, it is important that you build a strong support network of loving family, friends, and providers.

Ultimately, you get to choose when and whether to have children. You deserve to be treated with respect and given access to the information necessary to make an informed decision and plan for your future.

*Source (article shortened):  
[http://www.thewellproject.org/en\\_US/Womens\\_Center/getting\\_Pregnant\\_and\\_HIV\\_.jsp](http://www.thewellproject.org/en_US/Womens_Center/getting_Pregnant_and_HIV_.jsp)*

# HIV treatment update

*This is an excerpt, republished with permission, from an article by John Windle in the September 2011 issue of Positively Positive.*

Each year Body Positive hosts a one day seminar updating the community on advances and progress on HIV medicine, treatments and issues surrounding living with HIV. On 26th August the latest event took place at the Pullman Hotel in Auckland. Speakers came from a wide range of fields including medical and legal. Attending were academics, police, support workers and health professionals as well as people living with HIV.

Professor Simon Mallal is the Executive Director of the *Western Australian Centre for Clinical Immunology and Biomedical Statistics*. He is an HIV physician, clinical immunologist based at the *Royal Perth Hospital*. His team in partnership with *Murdoch University* has been credited with several key advances in HIV medicine.

The focus of his presentation was when is the best time to start treatment based on CD4 counts. In New Zealand at present treatment is not usually offered to those with a CD4 count above 350 per ml of blood. Overseas especially in the United States, there is a shift towards commencing treatment when a patient's CD4 levels drop to 500. However, the long term benefit of

such an approach is not yet clear.

A case is made that those starting treatments earlier have their viral loads reduced to an undetectable level and are therefore, far less likely to pass on HIV to new partners. This has become known as Treatment as Prevention. However, there is a question over the long term effects of the toxicity of the treatments versus the continual low grade inflammation of the immune system as it continually fights HIV if that patient was not on treatments, i.e. those whose immune systems are continually working overtime. In essence the current generation are guinea pigs for future generations.

Simon gave a good account of the evolution of HIV treatment in Australia, New Zealand and overseas. His evening presentation was designed for other medics and described a clear preference for individualised treatment, an earlier start to medicines in order to reduce the chance of the newly diagnosed patient passing HIV on to their partners. He challenged the international recommended guidelines. He did however, reiterate that in his opinion, Australia and New Zealand have performed well in comparison to other countries in handling the HIV/AIDS issue since 1980 due to their political bipartisan approach, a politically active patient group and broad community support for the measures to be taken.

# Research on African migrant experiences

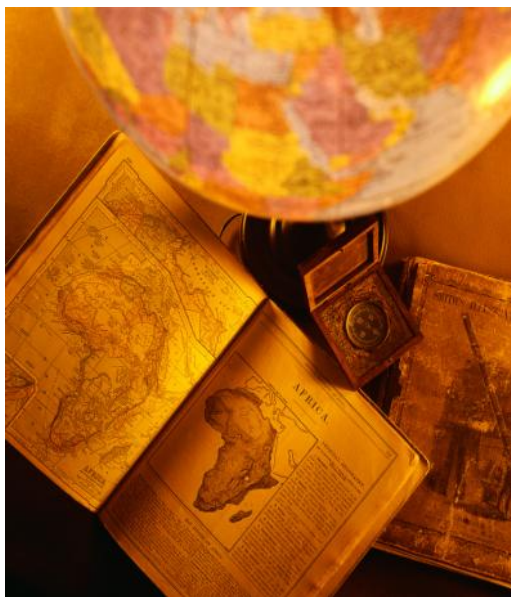
A recently completed research project explored the experiences and social services needs in New Zealand of African migrants, refugees and their family members who are affected by HIV. In-depth interviews were conducted between July and August 2010 with thirteen Black African people living with or affected by HIV. The research was conducted by Christa Fouché, Mark Henrickson, Cynthia Cannon Poindexter, Kay Scott, Derek Brian Brown and Christina Horsford.

One of the main themes that emerged from the data is HIV-related stigma and the profound ways it affects participants' lives—including the ways they access care for HIV. Another major theme relates to participants' courage, integrity and their challenge of stigma.

While the participants were positive about the support they received in New Zealand and expressed appreciation for being valued as people when receiving care and support, it is clear from the experiences related by them that education of health care educators,

human resource managers and nurse managers is urgently required in order to protect their legal and human rights. Participants reported breaches of their privacy and confidentiality on their jobs that had nothing to do with their ability to perform their jobs. Although the sample did not reflect experiences nationally, the report highlights that specialist knowledge about HIV and access to services in rural areas are a concern—not only for this population, but for all people infected with HIV.

Participants reported peer support and social contact with other people living with HIV as valuable.



# Getting pregnant naturally

by *Lorraine Ferrier*

**S**haron and I met Jane Bruning at a recent New Zealand Lactation Consultants Association (NZLCA)

Conference and learnt a lot more about the important work done by Positive Women Inc. Jane suggested we share with you what we do to help take the stress out of trying to conceive, by enabling you to pinpoint when you are most fertile, so that you maximise your chances of getting pregnant naturally - no drugs, no strange devices!

We are all different and Natural

Working alongside an educator you get one-on-one direction and support specific to you and your needs. An educator is typically with you for three appointments, taking a detailed health history, giving preconception care along with free on-going email and phone support until you are comfortable with charting, so there is always expertise at your fingertips. We also offer a distance learning service for those who cannot reach a clinic.

Some couples do have difficulties conceiving. In fact, one in five couples in New Zealand have trouble

## One in five couples in New Zealand have trouble conceiving

Fertility NZ Educators recognise this. By working with an accredited Natural Fertility NZ Educator you can take control of your fertility naturally. We teach you the scientifically proven Sympto-Thermal Method of charting (observing cervical mucus, sensation and temperature) to empower you to recognise your own unique signs of fertility. All accredited educators undergo extensive initial and on-going training and clinical supervision to maintain high professional standards.

conceiving and you may need to be referred to other medical professionals for further investigation. Should this be necessary, the charts you have kept will provide a useful and accurate record of your menstrual cycle.

Using fertility awareness for conception allows you to be in control of your reproductive health and this knowledge can then be used for contraception as well as when experiencing menopause - therefore at all stages of your reproductive life.

## Natural fertility educators contacts

For an informal chat on how Natural Fertility can help you please contact: Lorraine Ferrier at Ayusoma on 09 817 7662 or 028 8500 7662 or

[lorrainef@naturalfertility.co.nz](mailto:lorrainef@naturalfertility.co.nz).

Lorraine is currently completing the supervised practice part of her training and plans to be accredited within the next month. You can also contact Sharon White, Accredited Fertility Educator, at Fertility Concepts on 022 102 6770 or

[sharonw@naturalfertility.co.nz](mailto:sharonw@naturalfertility.co.nz).

Sharon and Lorraine are two Auckland based educators, and, in addition to

Natural Fertility education, they also focus on nutrition, lifestyle and herbal support for fertility where required.

For more information please take a look at the informative Natural Fertility New Zealand Website [www.naturalfertility.co.nz](http://www.naturalfertility.co.nz) detailing the full range of services and research on fertility.

There are more than sixteen clinics throughout New Zealand. Please visit the website to contact an educator in your region. You can also join Natural Fertility New Zealand on Facebook.

*Below: Natural fertility educators Lorraine Ferrier, left, and Sharon White, right.*



## Life Insurance for PLHIV

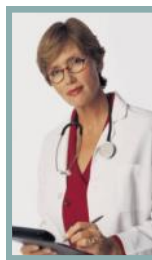
If you thought you couldn't get life insurance because you have HIV....think again.

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](mailto:support@positivewomen.co.nz).

## HIV friendly Dr's & Dentists

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



## Positive Women Inc. complaint process

If you have any concerns about the services, governance, staff or any other issues related to Positive Women Inc., please let us know. We have a safe and confidential process as follows:

- write or email the National Coordinator about your complaint. The National Coordinator will address your complaint and inform you of the outcome. The National Coordinator will also inform the Board of your complaint through the monthly National Coordinator's report. The email for the National Coordinator is [coordinator@positivewomen.co.nz](mailto:coordinator@positivewomen.co.nz).
- if the National Coordinator is not able to resolve your complaint or you are not happy with the resolution, the complaint will be forwarded to the Board to resolve.
- if you don't feel comfortable directing your complaint to the National Coordinator, you can forward your complaint directly to Board by mail or by email at [boardpw@gmail.com](mailto:boardpw@gmail.com). The Chairperson will respond to your complaint.

To ensure transparency, we ask that you please provide your name.

Please note that all correspondence relating to Positive Women Inc. on an organisational level is shared between the National Coordinator and the Board of Positive Women Inc. and we will resolve your complaint in a timely manner.

# Diary dates

**Paper Doll leaving party  
MAC store, Britomart  
Auckland**

**19 October 2011, 6:30pm—8:30pm**

**Straight Arrows Lunch  
29 October 2011**

**World AIDS Day Collection  
25 November 2011**

**Women's Retreat  
27– 29 April 2012**

**Family Hui 2012  
2-4 November 2012**

## **Contact**

**Positive Women Inc.**

1/3 Poynton Terrace, Newton, Auckland 1010

Email: [support@positivewomen.co.nz](mailto:support@positivewomen.co.nz) . Web: [www.positivewomen.org.nz](http://www.positivewomen.org.nz)

Phone: (09) 309 1858,

Free phone: 0800 769 848

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*supported by ASB*

