

Communiqué

November 2022

Preamble

Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee

The Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee (Committee) was established to provide advice to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services (Minister), when requested by the Minister, on sexual and reproductive health-related matters in the context of the *Queensland Sexual Health Framework* (Framework) and associated action plans. The Committee provides advice based on current available evidence. To remain current with sector issues and emerging areas of potential advice, the Committee receive presentations and briefings on a range of matters. Core to their remit, the Committee is not a lobbyist body or an advocacy group. The Committee is scheduled to meet quarterly.

Sexual Health Research Fund and Research Sub-Committee

The Sexual Health Research Fund (SHRF) was established to provide seed funding for translational research activities to improve the delivery of sexual health services in Queensland and support implementation of the Framework. The Research Sub-Committee (RSC) is a subset of the Committee and was convened to set research priorities and assess and approve research applications.

This Communiqué provides an overview of major items discussed at this nineteenth Committee meeting held on 17 November 2022, and the Research Sub-Committee meetings held on 30 September and 5 December 2022.

Committee meeting overview

The Committee received briefings on current priorities and future directions around HIV, and infectious and congenital syphilis. The Framework's associated Action Plans for blood-borne viruses (BBVs) and sexually transmissible infections (STIs) conclude in their current iteration at the end of December 2022. New Queensland BBV and STI Action Plans will be developed, each in alignment with the corresponding [National BBV / STI Strategy](#), due for release in 2023.

The Committee received presentations on the intersections between Hepatitis C virus (HCV) and prisoner health and wellbeing, with correctional settings demonstrating significant HCV notification rates. The work of non-government organisations Kombi Clinic, Hepatitis Queensland and Queensland Injectors Health Network was highlighted in providing HCV testing, treatment and continuity-of-care support for people in correctional settings and/or on community orders. The Committee expressed support for a public health approach to harm minimisation in correctional settings.

The Committee were briefed on a [sexual health education toolkit](#) developed for alcohol and other drug workers. The toolkit, launched on 30 November 2022, is a collaboration between Insight (specialist providers of alcohol and other drug training and workforce development) and Queensland Health's Communicable Diseases Branch. The toolkit is free to access, with resources relevant for anyone

seeking to better understand sexual health and wellbeing concepts, and STI prevention, testing and treatment.

On World AIDS Day 2022 (1 December) Brisbane and Queensland became [Fast-Track Cities](#) as signatories to the *Paris Declaration 4.0*, committing to the virtual elimination of HIV by 2030. Committee members attended the launch event, hosted at Queensland's Parliament House, alongside representatives from state and local governments, and community peak bodies supporting people living with HIV.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for **9 March 2023**.

Research Sub-Committee Meeting Overview

SHRF Round Five

The RSC met on 30 September and 5 December 2022 to progress Round Five planning, considering strategies to encourage early career researchers and/or service provider-led project teams to apply in future SHRF rounds. The RSC are proposing Round 5 opens and closes in the second quarter of 2023 and will finalise research priorities in early 2023.

More information on the SHRF can be found at [Queensland Sexual Health Research Fund](#).

More information on the *Queensland Sexual Health Framework* and Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee can be found at [Queensland Sexual Health Framework](#), or contact us via email: SH_Framework@health.qld.gov.au.