

Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee

Communiqué – February 2020

Preamble

Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee

The Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee (Committee) was established to provide advice to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services on sexual and reproductive health-related matters in the context of the *Queensland Sexual Health Strategy 2016–2021* (Strategy) and associated action plans. The Committee is scheduled to meet quarterly.

Committee meeting overview

The Committee received a number of presentations on sexual health in Queensland. Committee member Dr Stephen Stathis, Children's Health Queensland, presented on the Queensland Children's Gender Service. This included an overview of the service, application of clinical policy and guidelines, forward challenges and highlighted issues with consistently misleading media coverage.

Committee member Ms Barbara Shaw, Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women, presented on *Prevent. Support. Believe. Queensland's Framework to address Sexual Violence* (Framework). Ms Shaw highlighted the priority areas and objectives of the Framework, its alignment to other national and Queensland strategies and policies, and the role of the Sexual Violence Prevention Roundtable. The Committee expressed interest in establishing linkages with the Sexual Violence Prevention Roundtable group to consider areas of common interest.

The Committee received a presentation from Ms Melissa Warner, Queensland Positive People (QPP) about its draft *Sexual conduct involving HIV and the criminal law in Queensland, Issues and options paper*. This emphasised contemporary issues faced by people living with HIV, scientific and medical advancements in HIV treatment, and application of current legislation, with proposed policy solutions outlined. A roundtable discussion on the topic to be convened by QPP later in 2020 was noted and the Committee supported member participation.

An update was received on the implementation progress of the *North Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexually Transmissible Infections Action Plan 2016–2021*. A significant increase in notifications of infectious syphilis in pregnant women in the last Quarter of 2019, in Queensland's north-west was noted. The rise was largely attributed to an increase in screening and testing. However, the Committee agreed this highlighted the need for further attention on the screening, testing and management of syphilis in north Queensland, and supported advancing this matter.

The Committee noted feedback from the Youth Advisory Group about barriers to accessing sexual health services experienced by young people was considered and agreement was made to progress this further. The progress of Sexual Health Research Fund research projects from Rounds 1 and 2 was also noted.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for 14 May 2020.

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