

Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee

Communiqué

February 2019

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* and associated action plans. 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 *Queensland Sexual Healthy Strategy 2016–2021*. The Research Sub-Committee (a subset of the Committee) was convened to set research priorities and assess and approve research applications.

This communiqué provides an overview of major items discussed at the seventh Committee meeting held on 14 February 2019, and the Research Sub-Committee meeting held on 8 February 2019.

Committee Meeting Overview

The Committee noted the sixteen research proposals received in round one of the SHRF, which was open for submissions from 7 December 2018 to 14 January 2019. The Committee endorsed the research proposals recommended by the Research Sub-Committee for round one funding, and approved the fund administrator's progression of the proposals. The research priorities identified for the first round will also be included in second round funding, with expanded detail provided to assist applicants to shape their proposals.

A presentation on The Queensland BBV and STI Research Strategy for 2018 to 2021 (Research Strategy) was provided to the Committee by the Queensland Professorial Chair of HIV and STIs, a position jointly funded by Queensland Health and The University of Queensland. Key elements of the Research Strategy were noted by the Committee, including its status as an advisory document published by The University of Queensland, the rationale underpinning the Research Strategy, and its five strategic objectives.

Updates on implementation of the North Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexually Transmissible Infections Action Plan 2016–2021, and progress regarding the management of new cases of HIV in far North Queensland, were received by the Committee. This included an overview of recent promotion and prevention, and monitoring and evaluation activities. Progress by the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service in developing a North Queensland HIV Action Plan was also noted.

A presentation on stigma and discrimination for people living with, or at risk of exposure to, HIV was provided by Mr Phil Carswell OAM, followed by discussion on the more recent U=U (Undetectable equals Untransmissible) campaign which has been internationally endorsed.

The Committee discussed the finalisation of the Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Forum report and the potential for increased involvement of young people in the work of the Committee. The report remains on schedule to be provided to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services in early 2019.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for 16 May 2019.

Research Sub-Committee Meeting Overview

The Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee, Research Sub-Committee met on 8 February 2019 to assess the research proposals received in round one of funding. It is anticipated that the SHRF administrator will announce the successful proposals in the coming weeks.

The Research Sub-Committee agreed that the Research Priorities listed for 2018–19 would continue as priorities in the second round of funding, with more detail provided to guide applicants. The call for round two research proposals is anticipated to occur in April 2019.

More information and application details for the Sexual Health Research Fund can be found at www.ashm.org.au/programs/qld or via email to SHRF@ashm.org.au.

Contact us: SexualHealthStrategy@health.qld.gov.au