

Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee

Communiqué

22 October 2019

Facilitating Primary Care in the Prevention, Treatment and Management of Blood-Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections Forum

The 'Facilitating Primary Care in the Prevention, Treatment and Management of Blood-Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections' Forum (Forum) was hosted by the Sexual Health Ministerial Advisory Committee (the Committee) in Brisbane on 9 October 2019. The focus of the Forum on primary care was determined in alignment with the *Queensland Sexual Health Strategy 2016–2021* and in response to rising notification rates of some blood-borne viruses (BBVs) and sexually transmissible infections (STIs).

The Forum was opened by the Honourable Steven Miles MP, Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services, and was facilitated by Emeritus Professor Cindy Shannon, Chair of the Committee.

More than 130 representatives involved in delivering or supporting delivery of sexual health services and primary care across Queensland attended the Forum. This included general practitioners, sexual health physicians, infectious disease and public health physicians, along with representatives from Primary Health Networks (PHNs), Hospital and Health Services, Aboriginal Medical Services, non-government organisations (NGOs), Health Consumers Queensland, pathology providers, and medical professional peak bodies.

The Forum program commenced with a plenary keynote presentation delivered by Dr Sonya Bennett, Executive Director of Queensland Health's Communicable Diseases Branch which set the scene with respect to BBV and STI notifications in Queensland and the important role of primary care.

This was followed by a showcase session featuring six short presentations that highlighted services or innovative approaches to sexual health service delivery. Presentations focused on syphilis; contact tracing; a PHN and general practitioner STI continuous improvement initiative; a collaboration to raise sexual health awareness and increase testing amongst Year 11 and 12 school students; a statewide health promotion campaign aimed at stopping the rise of STIs; and a collaborative service aimed at testing and treating viral hepatitis.

A consumer panel discussion and a service delivery panel discussion complemented the earlier showcase session. These facilitated conversations aimed to highlight issues, barriers, challenges and positive experiences in sexual health care in primary settings and included audience engagement and participation.

The final session of the program featured concurrent group discussions, which enabled participants to engage in targeted, smaller group conversations around primary care service delivery, education and access.

A report from the forum which will include recommendations to further facilitate the role of primary care in relation to BBVs and STIs is now being prepared and will be considered in detail by the Committee prior to submission to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services.