

9.1 GLOSSARY

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS)

A syndrome defined by the development of serious opportunistic infections, neoplasms or other life-threatening manifestations resulting from progressive HIV-induced immunosuppression.

AIDS Councils

Community-based organisations established to provide education, support and care for people infected with HIV or at risk of infection.

Anti-retroviral

An agent that is active against a retrovirus. In this context, any medication that is designed to inhibit the process by which HIV replicates.

Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM)

Australasian Society for HIV Medicine Inc. is the peak Australasian organisation representing the medical and health sectors in HIV/AIDS and related areas.

Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)

The peak organisation representing State and Territory AIDS councils, the National Association of People with HIV/AIDS, the Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League and the Scarlet Alliance.

Australian Hepatitis Council (AHC)

The Australian Hepatitis Council is the leading national agency for people with hepatitis C and other chronic viral hepatitis.

Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL)

The Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users' League (AIVL) is the national peak organisation representing the State and Territory Drug User Organisations, and issues of national significance for illicit drug users. AIVL is a peer-based organisation which means that it is run by and for illicit drug users.

Australian National Council on AIDS, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases (ANCAHRD)

The Commonwealth Government's key advisory body on HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C, established to provide independent and expert advice to the Minister of Health and Ageing on the implementation of the National HIV and Hepatitis C Strategies. It is principally concerned with the identification of national needs, objectives and priorities and takes a public information role in matters related to HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C issues.

Australian National Council on AIDS and Related Diseases (ANCARD)

The predecessor to ANCARHD, this was the Commonwealth Government's key advisory body on HIV/AIDS.

Basic scientific research

Develops knowledge, techniques and expertise that can be applied to research into specific disease processes and the development of population health policies and interventions.

Best practice

On the evidence available, the best intervention to produce improved outcomes for an identified problem.

Blood-borne virus

A virus that may be transmitted via blood or body fluids that contain blood. Such transmission can result from sharing injecting equipment.

Clinical research

Health research relating to individual patients as well as the development and evaluation of treatments for diseases.

Clinical trial

A research activity designed to test a drug or treatment in humans and so establish its efficacy and safety and to identify groups of patients who can be expected to benefit from such a drug or treatment.

Cohort study

A research method whereby the same individuals are studied over time.

Co-infection

In this context, the term used to describe the circumstance in which a person is concurrently infected with hepatitis C and another blood borne virus such as HIV.

Combination therapy

The use of two or more types of treatment in combination, alternately or together, to achieve optimum results and reduce toxicity.

Communicable diseases

An illness caused by a specific infectious agent or its toxic products and that arises through transmission of that agent or its product from an infected person, animal or other reservoir to a susceptible host.

Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA)

The Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA) is a Commonwealth body with representatives from the Commonwealth, State/Territory health agencies and other Government and research bodies. CDNA meets on a regular basis and keeps track of disease outbreaks within Australia and New Zealand.

Community development

An approach to working with the community that aims not only to actively involve the community in dealing with the problem at hand but to increase the capacity of the community to deal with any future problems that arise. In the specific field of HIV/AIDS such an approach is used to establish community norms and standards that support health-enhancing behaviours.

Culturally appropriate

A term used to describe activities and programs that take into account the practices and beliefs of a particular social group, so that the programs and activities are acceptable, accessible, persuasive and meaningful.

Custodial setting

Refers to the various settings in which adults and juveniles can be detained or imprisoned.

Demand reduction interventions

Interventions designed to reduce the desire for and preparedness to obtain and use illicit drugs. Such interventions seek to prevent the uptake of harmful drug use and include abstinence-oriented interventions aimed at reducing illicit drug use and drug related harm.

Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA)

The chemical inside the nucleus of a cell that carries the genetic instructions for making organisms.

Discrimination

Any unfavourable treatment on the basis of known or imputed disease status; any action or inaction that results in a person being denied full or partial access to otherwise generally available services or opportunities because of known or imputed disease status. The definition includes discrimination on the grounds of known or imputed membership of particular groups that are commonly associated with the related disease.

Epidemiology

The study of the distribution and determinants of health-related states or events in specified populations and the application of the knowledge thus gained to deal with health problems.

Evidence-based practice

Involves integrating the best available evidence with professional expertise to make decisions.

Gay man

A homosexually active man who identifies himself as gay or is attached to the gay community, or both. Individuals can alter both their self-definition and the level of their community attachment over time. Education and prevention programs typically distinguish between gay men and other homosexually active men.

Genotype

A term used to classify the RNA genome of the hepatitis C virus according to the nucleotide sequence of defined regions of the genome.

Harm minimisation

The primary principle underpinning the National Drug Strategic Framework; the term refers to policies and programs aimed at reducing drug-related harm. Underlying the principle is the intention to improve health, social and economic outcomes for both the community and the individual. A wide range of approaches are involved, including abstinence-oriented strategies. Both licit and illicit drugs are the focus of Australia's harm-minimisation strategy. Harm minimisation includes preventing anticipated harm and reducing actual harm. It is consistent with a comprehensive approach to drug-related harm, involving a balance between demand reduction, supply reduction and harm reduction.

Harm reduction interventions

Interventions designed to reduce the impacts of drug related harm on individuals and communities. Governments do not condone illegal risk behaviours such as injecting drug use; they acknowledge that these behaviours occur and that they have a responsibility to develop and implement population health measures designed to reduce the harm that such behaviours can cause.

Health maintenance

In this context, promoting approaches, interventions and lifestyle choices that support continued management and monitoring of a person's health with the intention of reducing the severity and side effects of chronic hepatitis C infection and deferring the onset of advanced liver disease.

Hepatitis C virus (HCV)

An RNA virus transmitted through blood-to-blood contact.

Highly Specialised Drugs Program

Provides access (as Pharmaceutical Benefits Schedule items) to certain medicines for chronic conditions that because of their clinical use or other characteristics are restricted to supply through hospitals having access to appropriate specialist facilities.

Homosexually active man

A man who engages in male-to-male sexual behaviour, regardless of whether he identifies himself as gay, heterosexual or bisexual.

Human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV)

A human retrovirus that leads to AIDS.

Illicit drug

A drug whose production, sale or possession is prohibited

Incidence

The number of new cases of a disease in a defined population within a defined period.

Intergovernmental Committee on AIDS, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases (IGCAHRD)

A forum for regular Commonwealth and State and Territory liaison and coordination on policy, finance, programs and activities related to HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C. Membership comprises of an independent chairperson nominated by the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council, two representatives of each of the Commonwealth, State and Territory departments responsible for health, and one representative of each of the departments responsible for health in Papua New Guinea and New Zealand.

Mainstreaming

An approach to service delivery characterised by a move from specialist HIV/AIDS services towards increasing the capacity of the entire system to deliver appropriated services.

National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA)

The peak national organisation representing people who are HIV positive.

National Public Health Partnership (NPHP)

A broad, multilateral intergovernmental framework that enables a cooperative approach to the improvement of the population health system and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of its principal partners. Membership consists of senior health officials from the Commonwealth and each State and Territory, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Needle and syringe programs (NSPs)

Programs authorised to distribute, dispose of or sell needles and syringes.

Parliamentary Liaison Group

A non-partisan forum through which information is provided to members of the Commonwealth Parliament and in which policy discussions can occur.

Peer education

Any education process devised and implemented by members of a population subgroup specifically to alter the behaviours and attitudes of other members of that subgroup; for example, gay men delivering education programs relating to gay men's sexual health.

Pharmacotherapy

The use of pharmacological agents to treat disease. In this context, the use of HIV antiretrovirals.

Prevalence rate

The total number of all individuals who have an attribute or disease at a particular time or period divided by the population risks of having the attribute or disease at this time or midway through the period.

Prophylaxis

Any measure taken to prevent an adverse outcome from occurring. In this context, prescribing medication that is known to prevent an infection from taking hold at a time when a person may not be infected or ill but is at risk of developing that infection or illness.

Public Health Outcome Funding Agreements (PHOFAs)

The PHOFAs provide broadbanded funding to States and Territories to support their role in the achievement of nationally agreed outcomes in population health. States and Territories have the flexibility to use this Commonwealth assistance according to local needs and priorities, whilst ensuring that specific outcomes are met.

Retrovirus

A virus that inserts a DNA copy of its genome into the host cell in order to replicate. HIV is a retrovirus.

Ribonucleic acid (RNA)

A chemical similar to a single strand of DNA. In RNA, the letter U, which stands for uracil, is substituted for T in the genetic code. RNA delivers DNA's genetic message to the cytoplasm of a cell where proteins are made.

Safe sex, safe sexual practice

Sexual activity in which there is no exchange of body fluids such as semen, vaginal fluids or blood.

Seroconversion

The development of a detectable level of antibodies that occurs after a person has been exposed to and become infected by a micro-organism such as the hepatitis C virus.

Sexually transmissible infection

An infection—such as HIV, gonorrhoea, syphilis or chlamydia—that is transmitted through sexual contact.

Shared care

Arrangements for providing a continuum of health care where care and advice are shared between primary care physicians and specialists such as gastroenterologists, hepatologists or infectious diseases specialists.

Social and behavioural research

Research designed to identify the social and behavioural factors that affect disease transmission with the aim of enabling the development of specific interventions for specific groups. Social research also identifies support networks and quality-of-life factors to be considered in population health policies.

Supply reduction interventions

Interventions designed to disrupt the production and supply of illicit drugs.

Surveillance

In this context, the continuing scrutiny of all aspects of the occurrence and spread of a disease. The main purpose is to detect changes in trends or distribution in order to initiate investigative or control measures.

Viral load

The amount of virus present per cubic millilitre of blood, as measured by a viral-load test.

Virology

The science of investigation of virus structure, mode of action and disease processes and the identification of possible interventions at the cellular level. Developments in virological research can also contribute to the development of drug and vaccine therapies.