



Peer Mentoring Program



NGALA KAADITJ WADJUK MOORT KEYEN KAADAK NIDJA BOODJA
We acknowledge Noongar people as the original custodians of the land on which our office sits



Western Australian
AIDS COUNCIL



- The Peer Mentoring Program background
- What is a Peer Mentor
- How the program works
- Training
- Evaluation
- Moving forward

Background

- It has become clear that new interventions need to be developed to support and encourage positive health choices for PLHIV.
- Peer is defined as a person living with HIV who also has lived experience and an intimate understanding of the circumstances in which many clients live their lives.
- The need for a person-centered peer mentoring approach to guide, connect, refer, educate and accompany people with HIV on their journey has become evident in recent years.
- Social isolation and stigma have been barriers to positive engagement.



- Over the past 30 years we have come a long way but there are still challenges living with HIV in 2018 and this project aims to support and work with people with HIV by matching them with a peer.
- Research shows that the impact of peer mentoring on the health and wellness of people with HIV can be significant.
- Research also shows that working with a peer mentor benefits clients engagement in care, impacts treatment outcomes; including increased CD4 counts and decreased viral loads.
- For the peer mentor, research indicates that being involved in a program like this improves self esteem, confidence and a sense of empowerment, reduces isolation and development of a sense of community.
- All of these things combined to inform the need to develop this sort of program for PLHIV Perth and potentially other regions of WA.



Who is a Peer Mentor?

- Someone who is HIV positive
- Someone who has an interest in peer support
- A person who has commitment and reliability
- A person who understands and can set boundaries
- A person who is able to communicate effectively
- A person who is prepared to share their journey
- A guide and support for another person living with HIV



How the program works

- Initial intake
- Peer Mentoring Training – 2 day workshop
- Post training interview
- Matching to a client
- Ongoing monthly group supervision sessions
- One on one supervision if required



Peer Mentor Training

- Developed in consultation with The Vancouver STOP project, CATIE and Positively UK.
- Both projects have been in place for a number of years.
- They were keen to share information, evaluation and background information to help with the development of the WAAC Peer Mentor Program.



Training

- 2 full days of training.
- Participants must attend both days and complete training to be considered to be part of the program.
- Be made up of a range of sessions relevant to peer mentoring.
- First peer mentoring training was completed in April 2018.



First training evaluation

- 1 woman and 7 men completed the first training

Evaluation Feedback:

“I really enjoyed the course. Very well prepared and absolutely covered all the questions I had going into the course.”

“Well-paced and full of knowledge and practical work to make good peer mentors.”

“The content of the course has really given me the tools to go out and be the best peer mentor I can. It’s complemented my life experience to really excel in this program.”



“The content is very informative with the history and current information of HIV through the people and medicine.”

“The structure of the training was excellent. The interaction with other participants and meeting new people was a highlight for me.”

“Very interactive when needed, I was fully engaged at all times. There was a nice balance of theory and interactive discussions.”

“It was structured well, especially group work which helps with brainstorming and interaction with other group members.”



Moving forward

- Intake of clients now happening.
- Promotion of the project through professional networks for referral.
- 1 client matched with a peer in the first 2 weeks of the project.
- A second training in November 2018.
- The LaTrobe PozQol study will be rolled out with both mentors and their clients. The study looks at quality of life with a questionnaire on intake and at intervals whilst mentors and clients are involved in the program.



Questions

