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Australasian Society for
HIV, Viral Hepatitis and
Sexual Health Medicine

The importance of family planning services (including Church-run clinics) in PNG strengthen the SRH outcomes of the general population

Position statement

The Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) – the peak body representing the HIV and Sexual Health Workforce clarifies its position on family planning in PNG.

ASHM has worked in international programs based in Papua New Guinea (PNG) to build the HIV and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) capacity of the health workforce; also in partnership with PNG government, church-based and non-government organisations since 2002. To date, ASHM's partnership work in PNG with church-based organisations have elicited positive outcomes for the health workforce and the individuals who are serviced by this workforce.

Background

- ASHM acknowledges that the delivery of healthcare services in PNG can be challenging due to the decentralised nature of the health care system and geographical remoteness.
- Healthcare services and facilities are operated by the government, Christian church organisations and non-government organisations. Particularly in rural areas, the provision of health services and facilities by Christian church and non-government organisations is significant.
- The PNG National Department of Health plans to centralise health services through the creation of Provincial Health Authorities which will manage funding and coordinate Christian church and non-government health services and facilities.
- Family planning in PNG is supported by many government policies, including the National Family Planning Policy.

ASHM affirms:

- The importance of family planning services in PNG that strengthen the SRH outcomes of the general population
- The importance of a strong and functioning referral system (i.e. whereby any healthcare worker can refer a patient onwards to receive appropriate healthcare services and support)
- that working to ensure the sustainability of HIV and Sexual Health services is an effective and efficient use of funds.
- Our commitment to constantly monitor efficacy and ensure funding is being directed to the organisations and services with the most impact.

For further information

- The World Health Organisation's publication – **Papua New Guinea: Actions for Scaling up Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (2017)**, concisely outlines and summaries PNGs national policies on family planning as well as the current national status on the provision of long acting, reversible contraception. <http://www.who.int/iris/handle/10665/258650>

Date of Position Statement

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