

Australian-first clinical tool for prescribing HIV PEP launched

New clinical tool includes updated advice from national guidelines

4 August 2025 - As Australia approaches the 2030 goal of virtually eliminating HIV transmission, a new clinical tool has been released to support Medical and Nurse Practitioners to prescribe HIV post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

HIV PEP involves taking antiretroviral drugs daily for 28 days to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV following exposure. The new tool walks clinicians through the steps needed prior to commencing a patient on PEP, from conducting an HIV risk assessment through to when it is and isn't recommended.

Jude Armishaw, a Nurse Practitioner and Clinical Advisor working on the tool, said it is critical that people potentially exposed to HIV start PEP as soon as possible, ideally within 24 hours post-exposure, and no later than 72 hours.

"When prescribing PEP to reduce the risk of HIV, there are many factors prescribers must consider while under immense time pressures," said Jude.

"This Australian-first resource is comprehensive yet easy to navigate and supports clinicians to confidently prescribe PEP on a case-by-case basis."

The clinical tool accompanies the release of the fourth edition of the Australian National Guidelines for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) after Non-Occupational and Occupational Exposure to HIV. The newest edition covers the latest evidence-based recommendations on prescribing HIV PEP to encourage full adherence and provide person-centred care, including:

- Inclusive, culturally safe, and appropriate language when consulting with patients
- Considerations around affordable options and access to HIV PEP
- GP prescribing of HIV PEP
- Advice for patients who have missed doses or have additional exposures while on PEP
- Shared decision-making with patients about reducing on-going exposure risks.

"When someone presents to a healthcare service following potential exposure to HIV, it can be a stressful experience for them," said Jude.

"Utilising the latest HIV PEP guidelines, healthcare practitioners can help their patients to feel informed, safe, and involved in the decision-making of their care."

"And, importantly, a PEP presentation provides an opportunity to open up a conversation about ongoing HIV prevention strategies."

The Decision Making in HIV PEP tool can be downloaded at ashm.org.au/resources/decision-making-in-hiv-pep/

- **ENDS** -

Media contact

Brooke Heinz

Marketing and Communications Coordinator, ASHM

media@ashm.org.au

0422 650 425

About the Australian National Guidelines for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) after Non-Occupational and Occupational Exposure to HIV (Fourth Edition)

The Australian National Guidelines for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) after Non-Occupational and Occupational Exposure to HIV (Fourth Edition) outlines the updated Australian recommendations for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) following potential or known exposure to HIV in sexual, occupational, and non-occupational settings. Risk of transmission, the timing of PEP, baseline assessment, preferred regimen and follow-up are outlined, including the use of PEP in the era of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)-subsidised HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).

The Australian National Guidelines for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) after Non-Occupational and Occupational Exposure to HIV (Fourth Edition) was created by ASHM, and funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. The guidelines are created in consultation with an Expert Reference Group of Clinical Advisors.

The full Australian National Guidelines for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) after Non-Occupational and Occupational Exposure to HIV (Fourth Edition) can be accessed online at pep.guidelines.org.au

About ASHM

ASHM is a peak professional body representing healthcare professionals working in HIV, viral hepatitis, other blood-borne viruses (BBVs), sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and sexual and reproductive health.

<http://www.ashm.org.au>