



## No HIV transmissions from HIV-positive Australians in international study

*For immediate release*

26 July 2017 – The announcement of zero HIV transmissions for couples with different HIV status has the ability to change not only how people living with HIV (PLHIV) view themselves but more importantly how others view PLHIV.

The results of the Opposites Attract study was presented yesterday at the International AIDS Society Conference in Paris, France. It is the largest study to date analysing HIV transmission risk among gay male serodiscordant couples that is, where one partner in the couple is HIV-positive and the other partner is HIV-negative.

The study followed 358 couples from Thailand, Brazil and Australia from 2012 -2016 with almost half of the participants from Australia. The entire cohort engaged in over 12,000 acts of condomless sex where the HIV-positive partner had undetectable viral load (UVL) through adhering to antiretroviral therapy (otherwise known as treatment as prevention (TasP)), and the HIV-negative partner was not taking pre exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), resulting in zero cases of HIV transmission.

“PLHIV have accepted the stinging pain of rejection and discrimination for years based on the fact they were considered infectious,” said Richard Keane, President of Living Positive Victoria. “Now, based on proven scientific evidence, we can let go of some of the stigma and feel confident that the sex we negotiate with our partners cannot inadvertently result in an HIV infection.”

Treatment as prevention is just one of other biomedical prevention tools that have been found to effectively reduce the risk of HIV transmission. Other interventions are still in research stages and are essential to stop the spread of HIV.

“Along with other preventative measures such as PrEP, using TasP and maintaining an UVL can reassure PLHIV about their own health – that undetectable equals untransmittable. It’s going to take the effort of everyone to see an end to new HIV transmissions,” said Keane.

Victoria recently released its state HIV strategy last month that outlined HIV stigma and discrimination as a key target to aid in zero new transmissions. These results are another vital tool in the Victorian HIV response as HIV stigma and discrimination continues to be a major barrier for people to get tested or seek treatment.

“Both stigma and discrimination stem from misinformation about HIV. The challenge ahead is to get this information and the effectiveness of TasP into the minds of the community.”

Full details of the study can be found [here](#)

**-30-**

For media enquires please contact:

Randelle Anderson  
Senior Communications Officer  
0448 618 017