

Advocacy and Social Inclusion People Living with HIV/AIDS

Presentation to the Destination Inclusion
Conference

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Madeleine Pattingale

Manager PLWHA SA inc



HIV/AIDS

- Numbers of people living with HIV
 - Worldwide **33.2 Million**
 - Australia – **Approx. 16,000**
 - SA – **1,108** diagnosed (1985 – 2007)
 - 90% Male – 74% MSM
 - 10% Female

History of HIV/AIDS in Australia

- » **1981** -The news hits Australia
- 1982** -1st case of AIDS diagnosed in Australia
 - » **1983** -1st AIDS death occurs in Melbourne
- 1984** -Babies die after receiving infected blood
 - » **1985** -173 cases of AIDS have been diagnosed in Australia.
- 1986** -399 cases of AIDS , 220 people have died.
 - » **1987** -769 cases of AIDS. 417 have died.
- 1989** –1st HIV/AIDS National Strategy
 - » **1993** – “*HIV doesn't discriminate, people do*”
- 1994** – New treatments show promise
 - » **1998** - The cumulative number of HIV infections is estimated to be 16,714

Effects of the epidemic

- Already marginalized groups that were organised
- HIV/AIDS advocacy a natural progress
- Affected population central to the health response which continues today

Stigma and discrimination

- Undermined response to the epidemic
- Advocacy required to mitigate negative effects

People Living With HIV/AIDS (SA) Inc

- Grassroots advocacy organisation, formed in 1995, borne out of poor service provision from Government and allied agencies
- Advocated for greater control and direction of services to positive people
 - Peer based service model

PLWHA (SA) Inc

- Currently provides:
 - **Advocacy**
 - **Support Workers**
 - **Transport**
 - **Vitamins**
 - **Massage**
 - **Support Groups**
 - **Community Lunches**
 - **Internet Access**
 - **Food assistance**
 - **Volunteer opportunities**
 - **Positive Speakers Bureau**
 - **Social Inclusion Activities**
 - **Community Centre**
 - **Opportunity**

Advocacy

- Critical in ensuring positive people have opportunities to remain socially included and deliver services
- Strong consumer representation in policy making and service design and delivery
- Advice to Government on policy direction and action plan implementation

Advocacy wins

- Organisational Independence
- Gaining control over service delivery
- Walsh report: reckless and deliberate infection notification requirements

Advocacy challenges

- Mainstreaming
- Poverty
- Housing
- Access to medication
- Ageing
- Reducing infection rates
- Stigma and discrimination
- Scientific disinterest