



Australia Awards

Australia Awards HIV and AIDS

The Australian Government does not discriminate against you if you have HIV or AIDS. Australia Awards promotes equal opportunity for all Recipients¹.

Confidentiality

You are encouraged to disclose your HIV status to the Australia Awards team. This information will not be disclosed to anyone else without your written consent. With your consent, such information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis with relevant individuals to help develop a support plan for living in Australia.

Visas

The Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) requires all recipients to undergo a medical examination and meet the health requirement as part of the visa application process. The decision to issue a visa is based on overall health status and not HIV status. Tuberculosis is the only condition which prevents the grant of a visa as this is a public health risk. Those living with HIV are assessed in the same manner as all other applicants. Being HIV positive is not, in itself, sufficient for a person to fail to meet the health requirement. Should the health care and community services costs associated with HIV treatment for the duration of time the person is seeking to visit be above the significant cost threshold (currently \$40,000) or if services in short supply will be needed, he or she may be found not to meet the health requirement for a visa. Should this occur, a health waiver may be considered depending on the visa subclass applied for.

Treatment in Australia for HIV positive Recipients

Standard Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) does not cover pre-existing conditions and there is usually a one-year waiting period in which OSHC will not provide some benefits related to pre-existing conditions. It is important to identify a registered doctor who is trained in HIV management and care (known as an s100 prescriber) in Australia, which the National Association of People Living with HIV Australia (NAPWHA) can help you with. The Australian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM) also provides a list of trained prescribers¹ and can be contacted via the website www.ashm.org.au

Ensure you have the contact details of your doctors at home. You can then be able to call and verify the availability of medication in Africa if ever there is need to change the medication regimen.

If you are HIV positive and you choose to disclose your status, Palladium will ensure an appropriate support plan is developed to assist you.

Access to Medication in Australia

If you are already on Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART), NAPWHA recommends that you bring the maximum supply of ART with you initially. This is usually a three-month supply. Thereafter, further supplies can be imported under the Personal Importation Scheme² either from your home country or through a

reputable company such as www.aidsdrugsonline.com. As this is a pre-existing condition, insurance will not cover the cost of medication for the first 12 months.

HIV and the Law

The law in Australia protects HIV positive individuals against discrimination. It is also a criminal offence if a HIV positive individual negligently or deliberately transmits HIV or exposes other persons to HIV.

Counseling

Australia Awards will support HIV positive Recipients to access counselling where requested in Australia. You will be offered a list of counselling sites and support groups within your university town in Australia if you require this.

¹Recipient of an Australia Awards Scholarship or Short Courses

² www.tga.gov.au/consumers/personal-importation-scheme.htm#.UudZ9tLfQM8





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Support Groups and Organisations in Australia

NAPWHA is the peak non-government organisation representing people living with HIV/AIDS in Australia. NAPWHA provides advocacy, policy, education and outreach for people living with HIV/AIDS.

- napwha.org.au
- www.afao.org.au
- www.positivedirections.org.au
- www.straightarrows.org.au

How can I protect myself?³

- The surest way to avoid transmission of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) is to abstain from sexual intercourse, or to be in a long-term, monogamous relationship with a partner who has been tested and is uninfected
- Correct and consistent use of male latex condom during intercourse. Condom use does not guarantee absolute protection against STDs. The more sex partners you have, the greater your chances are of contracting HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases
- Condoms must be used correctly and consistently to be effective. Condoms used with a lubricant are less likely to break
- Do not share razors or toothbrushes as these may contain the blood of another person
- Do not share needles and syringes used to inject drugs, steroids, vitamins, or for tattooing or body piercing.

- If you are pregnant or think you might be soon, talk to a Doctor or your local health department about being tested for HIV. If HIV positive, drug treatments are available and can reduce the chances of passing HIV on to your baby

Support Groups and Organisations in Australia

Northern Territory:

Northern Territory Aids and Hepatitis Council
www.ntahc.org.au

South Australia:

Positive Life South Australia
www.hivsa.org.au

Queensland:

Queensland Positive People:
www.qpp.net.au

Victoria:

Positive Women – Supporting women living with HIV/AIDS
www.positivewomen.org.au

Tasmania:

Tasmanian Council on AIDS, Hepatitis and Related Diseases Inc.
tascahrd.org.au

Australia Capital Territory:

AIDS Action council of the ACT
www.aidsaction.org.au/aac

Western Australia:

Western Australia AIDS Council
www.waids.com

New South Wales:

ACON - HIV prevention, health promotion, and support services throughout NSW
www.acon.org.au

The Australia Awards are managed in Africa by Palladium on behalf of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

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