



# Media Release

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## Deferral Decision of PrEP Highlights Importance of QPrEP Study

Today the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) released minutes from its July 2017 where it made a decision on whether PrEP should be included on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

The decision made by the PBAC was a “deferral decision.” Further negotiation can still occur to move the deferral decision to a positive outcome.

Queensland AIDS Council calls on the pharmaceutical industry and the Federal Government to continue working together to ensure that PrEP is available to as many Australians as possible through a PBS listing. PBS listing is crucial, because we know that PrEP access is not equitable. Some States and Territories are yet to have a trial for PrEP in place, meaning importation is the only way to access PrEP for a number of people.

We know that PrEP works, we know that PrEP, if taken once daily is highly effective at preventing HIV transmission, and if we are to continue to reduce transmissions of HIV, then equal access to PrEP in Australia is required.

The deferral decision released by PBAC highlights the ongoing importance of the Queensland PrEP study – QPrEPd. First announced in April 2016 by the State Palaszczuk Government, the QPrEPd study has provided free PrEP to Queenslanders most at risk of HIV transmission.

“The decision to implement the QPrEPd study across Queensland has already reduced HIV transmission in the state. Now more than ever we need to support the QPrEPd study to ensure HIV transmission continues to decrease” said Michael Scott, Executive Director of Queensland AIDS Council.

It is important to highlight that places are still available for the QPrEPd study, and anyone at risk of HIV transmission should consider going on the study. People can find a list of sites for the QPrEPd study at <http://www.comeprepd.info/qprepd-project/>

The Australian Federation of AIDS Foundations (AFAO) remains focussed on equal access of PrEP to all Australians, and has commissioned research estimating that 31,000 gay men are at risk of HIV and would be eligible for PrEP nationally.

For further information contact Michael Scott, Executive Director, Queensland AIDS Council on (07) 3017 1777 or Nick Lucchinelli (AFAO) on 0422 229 032.

**ENDS**

*The Queensland AIDS Council was established in 1984 and is a community-based, not-for-profit, registered health promotion charity that works to improve the health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Queenslanders, prevent HIV and build the capacity of the community.*