

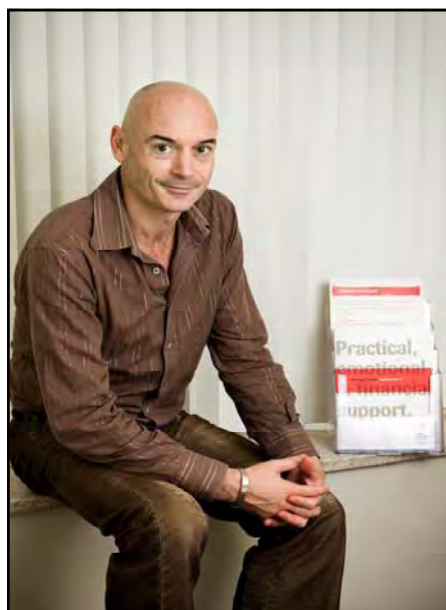
Rainbow News

February/March/April

First Edition - 2009

Sadness for so many - two losses in our community

JAMES FRASER



It is with great sadness to announce the sudden passing of James Fraser on Monday 17 November.

Initially working in the sector as a volunteer, James joined the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF) staff team in 2004. He started out as a Housing Support Worker at BG House. Then he moved into the main office as a caseworker, focusing on BGF clients with multiple and complex needs. Recently, James had been appointed to the position of Manager of BGFs Supported Accommodation program, a reflection of both the consistently high quality of his work at BGF and the esteem and confidence with which he was held by the organisation.

James was many things to many people.

To his family, he was Uncle Jamie and a loved family member. His family resided in the UK with a sister living in Queensland.

...continued on page 6

ERIF (Georgina Benham)



A tribute to Saint Erif (Georgina Benham)

In loving memory of our Saint; our fairy Godmother, mother, nanna, sister, aunty, queen, friend, story teller, herstory box, mentor, community leader, tireless volunteer, peace maker and peace keeper. A carer to all who arrived; known and loved by many - some for a long time, some for a life time and some for a short special moment. She has impacted on all our lives in so many positive and inspiring ways. Her vision is alive in many ways, none more clearly of late than in Tropical Fruits where she told us one last time on New Years Eve that "community is precious, love each other".

There isn't a soul touched by her that cannot recall her many wise and humorous sayings. The sound of her voice is not to be forgotten.

We are all richer for the privilege of having her in our midst. She takes with her the love of many in her journey on to organise the next big event!

...Vonnie, Punita and Katrina

USEFUL WEB PAGES

www.acon.org.au

Information about ACON and programs

www.positivelife.org.au

View Talkabout magazine online

www.treatmentsupdate.info

Up to date information on HIV treatments and testing

www.afao.org.au

Information about AFAO, including *HIV Australia*

www.hepatitisc.org.au

Comprehensive information about Hepatitis C

www.napwa.org.au

National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS

www.ozegay.com

Local gay website with info and profiles

www.tropicalfruits.org.au

Local gay and lesbian social group

www.byrongay.com

Comprehensive local gay and lesbian website

www.ozfaeries.com

Australian Radical Faeries - North Coast

www.hivandhepatitis.com

Info and articles on HIV, HCV and co-infection

www.napwa.org.au/node/685

TreatAware sponsored by NAPWA Australian treatments and clinical trials database

www.thebody.com/index.html

The Body - very useful and friendly US site

www.aidsmap.com

AIDSMap (UK) [(includes regular newsletter HATIP HIV and AIDS Treatment in Practice and HIV Weekly

www.aidsmeds.com

AIDSmeds.com and Poz.com - useful US sites specifically for poz community

www.medscape.com/hiv

Medscape HIV/AIDS (free registration required: lots of current clinical information)

www.clinicaloptions.com/HIV.aspx

Clinical Care Options (includes regular email updates, esp. good for conference coverage)

www.projectinform.org/

Project Inform (includes regular e-newsletter PI Perspective)

www.i-base.info

HIV Treatment Bulletin [HIV treatment information for healthcare professionals and HIV-positive people, monthly bulletin from HIV iBase UK charity]

If you are reading this page electronically you can link to the sites by holding down the Ctrl key and clicking your mouse.

RAINBOW NEWS

is a quarterly publication of
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Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of ACON, its associates, or the Editor. Publication of contributions will be at the discretion of the Editor.

Any articles containing racist, sexist, homophobic or defamatory remarks will not be published.

Contributions: Original contributions and letters are welcomed and encouraged. It is preferred that articles are submitted by email to imacdonald@acon.org.au in word format.

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Deadline for the next May /June /July edition is Thursday 2 April 2009

This is the February/March/April 09 edition

Ian Macdonald Content Editor

Sioux Harrison Layout and Design

Stacy Hughes Proof Reader

Thank you to all our dedicated volunteers that pack/distribute Rainbow News

**Contributors to this issue include:
Tania Lienert, Neil McKellar-Stewart,
Roy Starkey and Ian Macdonald, Chris
Clementson and Sioux Harrison.**


BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

From the Manager's Desk

Tania Lienert

Changing of the guard.....for six months

By the time this publication reaches you, Tania Lienert who has been the Northern Rivers Manager for the past three years will have taken up a six month secondment with Southern Cross University (SCU) working on a research project on end of life care. This research project has the potential to shed new light on the needs of GLBT community members and HIV positive people in this region facing death, whether that occurs in old age or earlier through illness.

Tania's secondment is a step forward in ACON's collaboration with Southern Cross University around research issues that will be of benefit to our community. It also is a wonderful opportunity for Dr Tania to rekindle her passion for research while continuing her strong leadership role in issues that are important to ACON's constituents in the Northern Rivers.

To ensure that services are culturally appropriate for our community at the end of their lives, by taking into account issues such as the particular nuance of sexuality, a strong evidence base is required. The work that Tania is embarking on with SCU will help ACON to advocate effectively with mainstream services and government in the provision of appropriate care for our community's ageing and terminally ill.

The benefits of this research collaboration with SCU are exciting but it is also important that the on ground leadership of ACON's work here continues. To this end, Dermot Ryan who has been on loan to our Sydney office as Education Manager is returning home to take up the Branch Manager's role in Tania's absence. Many of you are familiar with Dermot's work as Education and Community Development Officer over recent years and will be pleased to welcome him back to Lismore in this leadership position.

Thanks also go to Ian Macdonald who is the Acting Northern Rivers Manager for the next few weeks while Dermot completes his work in Sydney. The ACON staff team in Lismore is working together to keep providing strong services now while looking to the future by enabling the important research that Tania is undertaking to occur.

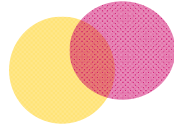
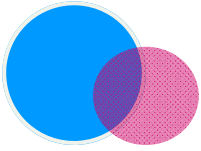
I want to acknowledge Tania's significant contribution as Branch Manager for the past three years and wish her well in her secondment with SCU. We look forward to her return in late July.....and reaping the benefit of this valuable research.

Chris Clementson
Northern Region Manager

HAVE YOUR SAY

You can have input into ACON's activities and programs in a number of ways. Once a year, in March/April, we hold our annual Branch Planning Day where stakeholders can attend and give feedback about our activities and suggest new ones according to ACON's strategic priorities and local needs. A suggestion box is located in the foyer of the Branch Office at 27 Uralba St, Lismore, where you can make suggestions or voice compliments or concerns anytime. You can leave your contact details and you will receive a reply, and anonymous suggestions will be answered here in Rainbow News. Recently we received a request for more books for children and families about lesbian and gay families. We have now dedicated a section in the library to this topic, are purchasing some new books and will gratefully accept any donations on this topic.

Alternatively, if you have any questions or concerns about any aspects of service delivery from the Branch, or would just like to introduce yourself, please do not hesitate to contact the acting Branch Manager Ian Macdonald on 6622 1555 Monday to Friday. Email: imacdonald@acon.org.au (February/March) or Dermot Ryan April to July. Email: dryan@aon.org.au



Invitation

The ACON Board is holding a
Community Consultation

about our Strategic Plan
for the next three years.

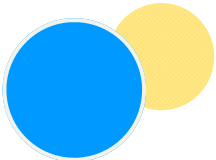
Come and have your say

4-6pm Thursday 12 February 2009

Cedar Room,
Lismore Neighbourhood Centre
76 Carrington St, Lismore

RSVP: 6622 1555 or 1800 633 637

Contact ACON for transport information and
assistance.



ACON is a community based non government organisation promoting the health and wellbeing of a diverse gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community, and a leading agency in HIV/AIDS policy development and program delivery. We provide HIV prevention, health promotion, advocacy and care and support services to members of our communities including Indigenous people, injecting drug users, sex workers and all people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

TROPICAL FRUITS

**Are you a member of Tropical Fruits yet?
Call 02 66226440 and "Get Fruited"**

**ACON sends its heartiest congratulations to Tropical Fruits for their
'best ever' NYE Party.**

**We look forward to working with you again over the Easter Weekend.
Log on to www.tropicalfruits.org.au to see all the pics from NYE 2008
and the coming events for 2009.**

**A big thank you to all those Fruiterers who helped make this night a fabulous occasion.
Tropical Fruits would like to thank all the happy campers and guests who pumped and
danced the night away and will of course look forward to seeing you all again soon.**

WORLD AIDS DAY - THANK YOU TO ALL FROM ACON

ACON Northern Rivers staff would like to congratulate all the people involved in World AIDS Day and AIDS Awareness Week activities. These activities, held last December, were the collective effort of about 250 staff and volunteers of about 85 groups, including the North Coast Area Health Service, Lismore City Council, INTRA, the NSW Users and AIDS Association Northern Rivers peer support group, representatives of Lismore's diverse cultural groups who prepared a multicultural lunch and information forum at City Hall on World AIDS Day, school students and teachers, an army of people who sold Red Ribbons on the streets across the region and 70 businesses who helped with our Red Ribbon appeal.

It's great to see so many people working together for HIV/AIDS prevention awareness and services. Anyone who would like to get involved in this year's program, please contact ACON and let us know what you can do and when you are available for planning meetings.



**To all those generous donors who gave so
freely to our GLAM GOES GAUDY event
held at the Lismore Worker's Club on
5 December 2008**

Thank you!

**Local businesses and organisations that
made a contribution by way of gifts were:**

In Your Dreams Lismore
The Good Guys Ballina
Utopia Bangalow
Success Martial Arts South Lismore
S(A)X Byron Bay
Sanity Store Lismore
MHARS Car washing
Little Peach Bangalow
Howard's Storage Lismore
Lismore Workers Club
Noahs Arc Bookshop Lismore
NORPA City Hall
Book Warehouse Lismore
Fish 4 Tea
Dominoes Pizza Lismore
Bold & Beautiful South Lismore
Dragonfly Café
Caddies Café
Chandlers Lismore
Blue Tongue Café North Lismore
A Little Bit Cheeky Lismore

DID YOU PARTY HARD OVER THE HOLIDAYS?

**It's recommended that
Men who have sex with Men
have an STI* check every 3 months**

Call for a free and confidential STI check up*

Tweed Heads: (07) 5506 6850

Coffs Harbour: (02) 6656 7865

Lismore: (02) 6620 2980

Kempsey: 0418 207 939

Grafton: (02) 6640 2229

Port Macquarie: 0418 207 939

Call the

SEXUAL HEALTH INFORMATION LINE on 1800 451 624

for free and confidential sexual health information and support

Mon – Fri from 9am – 5.30 pm

*** No Medicare card required**

***An STI is a Sexually Transmissible Infection**

Sadness for so many - two losses in our community

...continued from page 1

James Fraser

To his friends, he was a generous spirited, fun warm guy that to borrow another's words " he had the ability to get over stuff, get on with it and see the humour in most situations". It certainly appeared that James knew how to enjoy his life, family and friends.

To his work colleagues, James was a dedicated HIV Worker, willing to advocate tenaciously for a desired outcome. To others he was a smiling co-worker who went out of his way to assist.

To his clients, he was a person that took their concerns seriously and responded with warmth and empathy. He traveled statewide to deliver services to clients and luckily for ACON Northern Rivers, this was one of BGF's regular pit stops.

And to me? James was a newly acquired mate, who simply made me smile whenever I had the pleasure to speak to him or see him. Many people will miss James and I am one of them.

....Sioux



bobby goldsmith foundation
practical emotional financial support

BGF HANDBOOK

BGF has just released a new Client Services Handbook which explains how you can become a BGF client and outlines in detail all of the services that the foundation provides to its clients. If you would like a copy of the new handbook, please contact Vicki Gibb on 1800 651 011 or vicki.gibb@bgf.org.au

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BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

BGF OUTREACH VISITS:

BGF will be visiting our local areas

In March and April

Byron Bay, Kyogle and Lismore

Wednesday 18 March to Friday 20 March

Coffs Harbour

Wednesday 29 April and Thursday 30 April

All by appointment

Appointments are available with

Sue Wood & Kit Ayers

New and existing clients are welcome.
To arrange an appointment, please contact BGF directly on 1800 651 011 or speak with your local service provider.

Bobby Goldsmith Foundation

P.O. Box 97, Darlinghurst NSW 1300

T: 1800 651 011

F: 1800 651 012

E: bgf@bgf.org.au

W: www.bgf.org.au

From The Health Maintenance Officer

Neil Mackellar-Stewart



The New Year ... Time for Health Work!

The New Year brings fresh energy and enthusiasm for many people. Resolutions are made, life changes planned and new projects commenced. It's a good time to reflect on changes that will make our lives as People Living with HIV (PLWHA) healthier, more energised and more satisfied.

Good nutrition has a key role in ensuring life is as healthy as possible. Fortunately most people with HIV no longer have to manage unintended weight loss. In the mid-1990's before Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART) became available HIV-related wasting was a very common experience and people often faced intractable weight loss. Thankfully in Australia we now have access to the best possible treatments so that at any particular time up to 80% of PLWHA will be receiving HAART. As a result, for people who are engaged in their medical care and treatment and who are doing good 'health work', death from AIDS-related conditions is exceedingly uncommon. Researchers are increasingly forecasting that HIV positive people might be able to live near-normal life spans because of HAART and access to medical services. Check out the references^{1,2} below for recent articles from studies in Denmark and the UK on how our life expectancy has returned almost to normal.

Despite the good news, HIV continues to impact on how we process our food, and ageing bodies and HIV treatments themselves suggest that we pay special attention to nutrition. Initial infection with HIV results in massive destruction of the reservoir of CD4+ T-cells in the gut-associated lymphoid tissue (GALT). Recent studies^{3,4} suggests that people with HIV may have up to 75% fewer CD4+ cells in their GALT than people who are uninfected with HIV. Additionally there may be three to four times the number of infected CD4+ T-cells in the GALT compared to blood plasma. One researcher⁵ provided this summary: 'CD4+ T cells fail to completely reconstitute in the GI tract in a majority of

patients despite protracted, apparently suppressive antiretroviral therapy; in contrast, CD4+ T cells reconstitute well in the peripheral blood.'

Consider the following things which can sometimes lead to unintended weight loss:

- HIV causes significant damage to the intestine, and probably results in ongoing inflammation. A damaged intestine can have difficulty breaking down food and absorbing nutrients.
- HIV diminishes the absolute number of CD4+ T-cells in the intestine and thus weakens the immune system there. This increases the risk of infection by other pathogens, some of which can cause diarrhoea. Prolonged and recurring bouts of diarrhoea can lead to weight loss.
- HIV seems to alter the way the body extracts energy from food, pushing it into more inefficient pathways.
- Fighting a long-term infection requires increased protein and other nutrients. If extra food is not eaten to provide these nutrients, weight loss can occur.
- Changes in the body's production of hormones occur as a consequence of HIV infection. Decreased levels of growth hormone and testosterone can contribute to reduced muscle mass and weight loss.

Recently Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston published⁶ further findings from their Nutrition for Healthy Living (NFHL) study programme. Their work indicates that their study population of 348 men living with HIV can be divided into three groups based on the type of food and drink that they consume. They observed three dietary patterns: juice and soda; fast food and fruit drinks; and fruit, vegetable, and low-fat dairy. Subjects in the fast food and fruit drinks pattern had the lowest fibre intake, highest HIV viral load, and lower CD4+ count than did subjects in the other two clusters.

From The Health Maintenance Officer

(cont.)

Subjects in the fruit, vegetable, and low-fat dairy diet pattern had higher intakes of protein, fibre, and micronutrients and the highest Body Mass Index (BMI) and CD4+ count.

Another study⁷ from the same programme indicated that depression is associated with decreases in total daily energy intake and in six of eight key dietary measures. This confirms what we might expect intuitively; people who are depressed often lack the motivation to prepare healthy food and do other health work to improve their wellbeing.

It is clear from this study and others from the same research group that good nutrition and good eating habits are essential for those managing HIV. To learn more about good nutrition check out the resources listed in the text box!.

You can download many of these from the Internet. For readers who are living with HIV may I suggest that you join the online forum for positive people in the Northern Rivers:

NORCOWAM <http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/home/norcowam/index.html>. This article and other resources are available online there. If you don't have an Internet connection and would like to read any of these resources, please don't hesitate to contact me and we may be able to assist you.

References

1. Lohse N et al. Survival of persons with and without HIV infection in Denmark, 1995-2005. *Annals of Internal Medicine*. 17 Jan 2007; 146(2): 87-95. <http://www.annals.org/cgi/reprint/146/2/87.pdf>
 2. The Antiretroviral Cohort Collaboration. Life expectancy of individuals on combination therapy in high-income countries: a collaborative analysis of 14 cohort studies. *The Lancet*. 26 July 2008; 372 (9635): 293-299. [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(08\)61113-7/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(08)61113-7/fulltext)
- Chun TW et al. Persistence of HIV in gut-associated lymphoid tissue despite long-term antiretroviral therapy. *J Infect Dis*. 2008 Mar 1; 197 (5): 714-20. Summarised in AIDSMAP <http://www.aidsmap.com/en/news/228EB3A8-F600-4C98-8608-A9A433E7DB99.asp>
4. Yuki S and Wong JK. Blood and guts and HIV: preferential HIV persistence in GI mucosa. *J Infect Dis* 2008 Mar 1; 197(5): 640-642 (Editorial comment).

5. Saurabh Mehandru, S. The Gastrointestinal Tract in HIV-1 Infection: Questions, Answers, and More Questions! Reprinted from *The PRN Notebook* December 2007, http://www.prn.org/images/pdfs/267_mehandru_saurabh.pdf
6. Hendricks KM, Mwamburi DM, Newby P, et al. Dietary patterns and health and nutrition outcomes in men living with HIV infection. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 2008 Dec; 88(6): 1584-92. Summarised in the 5 January 2009 issue of *CATIE News* <http://www.catie.ca/catieneews.nsf>
7. Isaac R, Jacobson D, Wanke C, Hendricks K, Knox TA, Wilson IB. Declines in dietary macronutrient intake in persons with HIV infection who develop depression. *Public Health Nutr*. 2008 Feb; 11(2): 124-31. <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=1643132>

Nutrition Resources for People living with HIV:

Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE). *A Practical Guide to Nutrition for People Living with HIV*. 2nd ed. October 2007 http://www.catie.ca/pdf/PG_Nutrition/nutri_eng.pdf

Community Research Initiative of America. Recipe for Living: Nutrition & HIV AIDS ACRIA Update 2002 Spring; 11(2): 1, 3-18. <http://67.199.24.77/files/ACRIA%20Update%20Spring%202002.pdf>

NAM (National AIDS Manual, UK) *Nutrition*. [booklet] 8th ed. 2008. <http://www.aidsmap.com/files/file1000893.pdf>

San Francisco AIDS Foundation. *Nutrition and HIV* (last updated 2006) *BETA (Bulletin of Experimental Treatments for AIDS)* http://www.sfaf.org/beta/2006_win/nutrition.html

The Body. *Diet, Nutrition & HIV*. Webpage. Last updated late 2008. <http://www.thebody.com/index/dietnut.html>

Tufts University. School of Medicine. Nutrition/Infection Unit. *HIV Nutrition & Health*. Webpage. Last updated 24/6/08. <http://www.tufts.edu/med/nutrition-infection/hiv/health.html> [this site has an excellent article *Building a High Quality Diet* which includes many helpful tips]

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Nutrition for Everyone*. Webpage, last updated 11/8/08. available on The Body website: <http://www.thebody.com/content/living/art49361.html?ts=pf>

HIV HOW SAFE ARE YOU PLAYING IT?

UNSAFE

- receptive anal sex without a condom (bottoming)
- insertive anal sex without a condom (topping)
- anal sex and pulling out before cumming

LOW RISK

- oral sex

SAFE

- anal sex with a condom and water based lube
- rimming
- mutual masturbation
- fisting (with gloves) & fingering
- watersports
- kissing

Pick up your copy of
THE BASICS
pamphlet here

Having an STI, ulcers, cuts, bleeding or an infection can increase the risk of HIV for each of the above activities. Remember that what is safe for HIV is not necessarily safe for other STIs such as syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhoea and LGV.

02 9206 2000 1800 063 060 acon.org.au

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BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

ACON will be hosting a workshop with a difference around the topic 'HIV the Basics' on March 19 at Tropical Fruits HQ Phyllis St South Lismore.

Who is this for?

It's for gay men who are either poz or neg, men who are in active sero-discordant relationships and EVEN THOSE men who may not yet know their status.

IT'S ALL ABOUT UNSAFE SEX and LOW RISK SEX and SAFE SEX
all with a different flavour and some pretty interesting alternatives.

Interested ? Then book a place with Sioux on 6622 1555

ACON Northern Rivers

2009 Gay Men living with HIV Retreat

The Fabulous Northern Rivers Retreat is on again

Friday 27 March - Sunday 29 March

At the picturesque venue we have used in the Northern Rivers hinterland

Registrations will commence in early February!

- ☆ Step out of the humdrum of the daily grind!
- ☆ Chill out in a healthy, natural, safe, secure environment with other gay guys living with HIV!
- ☆ Make new friendships and hook up with old friends from the region
- ☆ Discuss issues that impact on our lived experience of HIV.
- ☆ Enjoy tasty and interesting food provided by our experienced chefs. Our nutritious menu for Poz men gets better every year!
- ☆ Sleep in your own camp gear or comfortable bungalow accommodation.

Details of the Workshop programme are still being finalised.

We'll have the same kinds of fun activities and stimulating programmes.

There will be a whole day free to walk in the beautiful bush adjoining the Nightcap NP, canoe on our private serene dam, or just hang out in the green, leafy camping grounds.

Further information, including a full program, details of activities, cost, location and everything else you need to know, will be available in early February when our planning has been finalised.

Make your early bird booking NOW!

Contact: Neil McKellar-Stewart, HIV Health Maintenance

P: (02) 6622 1555 OR 1800 633 637 (freecall)

E: nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au

Roy's Backchat

Roy Starkey, Client Services Officer

Welcome to 2009, I hope that everyone enjoyed the "silly season" and the break that many of us were fortunate enough to be able to have. This will be a year of adjustment for many and one adjustment will be caused by the changes recently enacted by the Commonwealth Government ending many forms of discrimination in legislation. While applauding these changes we know we have made some gains, but for many there will be some loss as well.

ACON has always advocated for a Grandfather clause so that same sex recipients of Centrelink payments in long term relationships are not negatively impacted by these equality changes. ACON is continuing to advocate for this with the Federal Government. If you wish to support ACON in this advocacy please write to your local Federal Member so that they can take this evidence of community concern to the Minister.

However until we know the outcome of this advocacy we need to prepare for the prevailing circumstances.

The changes regarding the manner in which Centrelink payments to couples will impact on our community. This will bring payments to same sex couples into line with our heterosexual counterparts. Couples, who are recognised as such, may experience a change in payments and this of course will have an impact on their financial state. This will vary depending on the information Centrelink holds on your personal circumstances.

The impacts on individual couples will vary, especially if one partner is employed.

Changes to any arrangement especially financial can affect the manner in which two people relate, and this can have a long term effect on the relationship, especially if one person feels dependant upon another for their day to day existence.

Remember that the changes to Centrelink payments, and how Centrelink views your circumstances, will come into effect in July 2009.

ACON will be keeping all informed as information is available to us. We are fortunate that in this office a good relationship has been established with our local Centrelink staff who are always willing to assist our community.

ACON is here to assist you through these changes, and to assist you with referrals to professionals to adjust to these changes.

Centrelink has set up a helpline for those who may wish to enquire about their specific circumstances, call 136 280 and pick from the options given. In early January I actually rang the helpline number as a "quality control" measure.

The person who answered the line was helpful, courteous and well trained in answering my questions. I was not asked for a Customer Reference Number (CRN), or any personal details. I was merely asked about circumstances which may have impacted on my payments. These questions were based on the following:

1. Financial aspects: joint accounts, mortgage arrangements, who pays for utilities or groceries etc
2. Nature of the household: did we have separate bedrooms, common areas of the shared house etc
3. Social aspects: how was the relationship viewed by outsiders, and relatives
4. Presence or absence of a sexual relationship
5. Nature of the commitment to the other person living in the household

Centrelink have fact sheets on their website: www.centrelink.gov.au and follow the link "recognition of same sex relationships".

ACON in partnership with Lismore Community Legal Centre and the Inner City Legal Centre will be holding a further information night on this subject.

Where: Lismore Workers Club.

When: 5.30pm Thursday 26 February 2009

Please attend to have your questions addressed.

In the coming weeks ACON Northern Rivers will be engaging with members of the local gay community who use beats.

If you are a regular user of beats in the Northern Rivers area, and if you would like to learn more about this project then please contact Ian Macdonald at ACON on 6622 1555 or via email to Ian at imacdonald@acon.org.au.

**ACON RECOGNISES THAT THIS IS AN AREA OF ACUTE SENSITIVITY
ANY ENQUIRY MADE WILL ALWAYS BE HANDLED IN CONFIDENCE BY ACON**

HIV HEALTH MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

ACON HIV Health Maintenance Officer
Neil McKellar - Stewart is available for one-on-one HIV health and treatments information.

Contact Neil on 6622 1555
1800 633 637 or
nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au



The Sex Workers Outreach Project

For information and support around working in the sex industry

Condoms and lube at cost price

The Professional and Ugly Mugs also available



ACON VITAMIN SERVICE

ACON offers, at **REDUCED RETAIL PRICES**, a range of quality vitamins and nutritional supplements to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Check out our monthly specials.

For further information call ACON on:
6622 1555 or 1800 633 637

SECONDARY NEEDLE and SYRINGE PROGRAM

Clean 1 ml syringes and sharps bins
Referral and information service

For more information call
1800 633 637

Provided as part of ACON's commitment to HIV prevention



Don't have access to a computer or the Internet?

ACON Northern Rivers has a public access computer available for community members use, soon to be upgraded to broadband. This service will be available at ACON during office hours from Monday to Friday, but must be pre booked.

Free usage. 5c for b/w printing. 10c colour.

GLBT library, newspapers and lounge also able.
Drop in for a cuppa!



Lesbian Health Services

Lesbian health information and referrals are available at the ACON Northern Rivers

ACON has recently launched a number of lesbian specific resources which are available in the office. Our office also stocks the latest copies of Lesbians on the Loose, Cherie and the gay and lesbian newspapers.

One on one information, support, and referrals for PLWHA clients.

Roy Starkey our Client Services Officer is available Monday to Friday, from 10am to 4pm to discuss any issues. Phone 6622 1555 to make an appointment.



Lesbian Counselling

In partnership with ACON counselling for lesbian and bisexual women is available Mondays at Lismore and District Women's Health Centre
25 Uralba St Lismore 6621 9800.

Northern Rivers Events and Activities Feb/Mar/Apr 09

FEB	TIME	WHAT	CONTACT
8	Lunch	Bent Events Men's BBQ	0413 918 288
12	4 - 6pm	Community Consultation	ACON to enquire
14	Brunch	Bent Events at Bold and Beautiful	0413 918 288
13/27	12 - 2pm	Luncheon Club	via Neil ACON or Nick via minyon@bordnet.com.au
26	5-30	"Coming Out to Centrelink " A community forum for same sex couples will be held at Lismore Workers Club	Community Legal Centre 6621 1000

MAR	TIME	WHAT	CONTACT
8	Lunch	Bent Events Men's BBQ	0413 918 288
13 (only)	12 - 2pm	Luncheon Club	via Neil ACON or Nick via e minyon@bordnet.com.au
14	Brunch	Bent Events at Bold and Beautiful	0413 918 288
18, 19 ,20	TBA	Bobby Goldsmith Foundation Outreach Byron Bay, Kyogle and Lismore areas	1800 651 011 for appointment

APR	TIME	WHAT	CONTACT
2	5pm	RAINBOW NEWS DEADLINE	via Ian ACON
11	8pm - 2am	Tropical Fruits Party	Tropical Fruits - 6622 6440
12	Lunch	Bent Events Men's BBQ	0413 918 288
18	Brunch	Bent Events at Bold and Beautiful	0413 918 288
24 (only)	12 - 2pm	Luncheon Club	via Neil ACON or Nick via minyon@bordnet.com.au
29-30	All day	Bobby Goldsmith Foundation Outreach Coffs Harbour	1800 651 011 for appointment

Lismore and District Women's Health Centre



Lismore & District
Women's Health Centre Inc.

Lismore and District Women's Health Centre
25 Uralba Street Lismore NSW 2480 Telephone 02 6621 9800
Opens Monday to Friday from 9-00 am to 5-00 pm

ACON OUTREACH VISITS

ACON Northern Rivers; Client Service Officer Roy Starkey provides regular outreach visits to Grafton, Coff; Harbour and Tweed.

Grafton Clinic 229 (02)6640 2229	1st Monday of month	2 February 2 March 6 April
Coff; Harbour Sexual Health Coff; Harbour Health Campus (02) 6656 7865	Last Friday of month	27 February 27 March 24 April
Tweed Head; Clinic 145 (07) 5506 6850	2nd Tuesday of month	10 February 10 March 14 April

Contact Roy Starkey 6622 1555/1800 633 637 to make an appointment

IN THE BEGINNING - SUPPORTING NEWLY DIAGNOSED GAY MEN

Neil Mackellar-Stewart

Genesis is a workshop program offered through a collaboration between ACON and Positive Life NSW that is designed for gay men who have been diagnosed with HIV within the last two years, or who feel that they wish to move forward after processing the period following their diagnosis (however long that may be). It also provides you with an opportunity to meet other guys in the same situation as yourself. This happens in a totally safe, confidential and supportive environment.

Genesis is free of charge but you will need to commit to the program. It may be delivered over a weekend (as it is in Sydney) or over a series of regular (weekly/fortnightly/monthly) workshops.

Genesis gives you an opportunity to explore a wide range of issues surrounding HIV including its impact on your life expectations, living with HIV, how your immune system works and the impacts on your future life.

ACON Northern Rivers is interested in offering Genesis in May, however, we need to find out the level of support for such a program.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

If you're interested please call us, drop us a line, or email us your ideas.

We're particularly interested in hearing your ideas about:

- where we should run **Genesis**
- what format the workshop/s should take
- anything else that you'd like to have in the programme

Neil McKellar-Stewart, our HIV Health Maintenance Officer will be interested in hearing from you!

Please have your ideas to him before Friday, 10 April 2009:

T: 02 6622 1555 or 1800 633 637

E: nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au

If we don't receive enough expressions of interest we won't be able to run **Genesis!** Let us know if you're interested and please spread the word to anybody you know who may be looking to become involved with this program..



I'VE GOT NO SYMPTOMS. DO I HAVE AN STI?

to find out visit www.whytest.org or call the Sexual Health Hotline on 1800 009 448 for your nearest sexual health clinic

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

ACON, Northern Rivers

Ian Macdonald, Acting Manager (Feb/Mar)
imacdonald@acon.org.au
Dermot Ryan Acting Manager (April/July) dryan@acon.org.au
Amber McBride, Lesbian Health Project Worker
amcbride@acon.org.au
Ian Macdonald, Education and Community Development Officer
(Apr to Jul) imacdonald@acon.org.au
Neil McKellar-Stewart, HIV Health Maintenance Officer
nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au
Roy Starkey, Client Services Officer - rstarkey@acon.org.au
Sioux Harrison, Admin/Volunteer Officer - sioux@acon.org.au

Legal

HALC - HIV/AIDS Legal Centre NSW
Free legal advice - 1800 063 060 / 9206 2000

Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre - 6621 1000
Free legal advice, information and referral. Women's Outreach
Court Support and Legal Education.

NSW Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers

Byron Bay	Sgt. Murray Powell - 6685 9499
Grafton	Snr Constable Paul Johnston 6642 0222
Lismore/Ballina/	6623 1599 Insp Nicole Bruce
Tweed Heads	Snr Constable Kellie Quinn 07 5536 0999

Support

SHAIDS - Sexual Health & AIDS Service - 6620 2980
Australian Bisexual Network (Northern NSW and Country
Queensland) 1800 653 223 / ausbinet@optusnet.com.au

Transgender Support Group
Jackie - ph/fax 07 5538 8922

GAMMA (Gay and Married Men's Association) 1800 804617

COAL (Coalition of Activist Lesbians)
Lavender: 0448 251 348

PFLAG Northern Rivers - Parents, Families and Friends of
Lesbians and Gays
Phone Robin and Richard 6687 4726 (h) / 6620 6112 (w) PO Box
227, Lismore NSW 2480

Lemon Sundaes Lesbian Parenting Group
6624 6446 or 6685 1990

Gay Dads NSW Dominic 0400 296 253 nsw@gaydadsaustralia.com

Freecall Numbers

ACON Sydney - 1800 063 060
24-hour HIV Treatment Support - 1800 454 510
AIDS Hotline - 1800 451 600
BGF - 1800 651 011 / Fax 1800 651 012
Domestic Violence Crisis Line NSW - 1800 656 463
Hep C Info & Support - 1800 803 990
Positive Life (NSW) - 1800 245 677
Lifeline - 24 hour counselling - 13 11 14

Services

Sexual Health Clinics

Clinic 145, Tweed Heads - 07 5506 6850
Grafton - Phone 6640 2229
Lismore, Byron and Ballina - 6620 2980

NCAHS Liver Clinic - for HepC clients 02 6620 7539

**Lismore and District Women's Health Centre including
ACON's Lesbian Counselling Service**
25 Uralba Street - 6621 9800

Women's Health Matters
Menopause, Osteoporosis and Incontinence
Phone 6620 2999

Mensline - Ph 6622 6116 / www.menandfamily.org.au

Gay and Lesbian Counselling Services
1800 184 527 (5.30-10.30pm, 7 days)

GayLine (Brisbane) - 1800 249 377

Dental (People living with HIV/AIDS)
North Coast Area Health Service - 6620 2617

Public Dental Health
Call for locations of other public dental clinics or to make
appointments for the Lismore area - 1300 651 625

Tweed Shire Women's Services
PO Box 407, Murwillumbah 2484

Social

Sista-Link (Tweed Region Lesbian Network)
Host regular women's coffee group at Murwillumbah 6672 2868
Tweed Ph 0439 744 322
sista_link@hotmail.com

Feathers Women's Social Club
Monthly dances for women
07 5535 2821 or 07 5559 5877
3rd Saturday @ Nerang RSL, 69 Nerang Street, Nerang

BLSG (Ballina Lesbian Social Group)
email blsg2005@hotmail.com or contact Helen 0407 226 967

Tropical Fruits Social and support for gays, lesbians and friends
ph/fax 6622 6440

Radical Faeries 130 acre land sanctuary, north of Nimbin. Come
and visit, gatherings, rituals, communal workdays. Call us first
6689 7070.
Email ozfaeries@yahoo.com / Website www.ozfaeries.com

Blues Sisters Softball Team lesbian-bi-queer and queer-
friendly. Contact Sheila 6624 6734.

Lemon Sundaes Lesbian Parenting Group 6624 6446 or 6685
1990

Gay Dads NSW Dominic 0400 296 253
nsw@gaydadsaustralia.com