

Issue 134 – October 2018

Workshop completion

Respect Inc has advised that it does not host a sexual health workshop or a workshop for brothel licensees and approved managers on its website.

The Prostitution Licensing Authority (PLA) now requires that applicants for a brothel licence or an approved manager's certificate must complete the Respect Inc workshop for sex workers, found on their website homepage: www.respectqld.org.au.

Whilst the PLA understands that applicants are not sex workers, the workshop contains a range of relevant information for any person involved in the sex industry, including about sexually transmissible infections and safer sex.

The PLA also encourages sex workers at licensed brothels to complete the workshop.

PLA Annual Report 2017-18

The PLA Annual Report 2017-18 has now been published and is available from our website: www.pla.qld.gov.au/reportsPublications/annualReport/.

HIV diagnoses at seven year low

The Kirby Institute, *HIV in Australia: Annual surveillance short report 2018*, has revealed that HIV diagnoses in Australia are at a seven year low. According to the report: "There were 963 new HIV diagnoses in Australia [in] 2017, the lowest number of diagnoses since 2010, with a 7% decline over the last five years, and a 5% decline between 2016 and 17" (p. 3). In Queensland in 2017, there were 185 new diagnoses, the lowest number since 2013, when there were 181 diagnoses.

The primary transmission route continues to be male-to-male sex, accounting for 607 (63%) of diagnoses, in addition to 53 (5%) diagnoses for both male-to-male sex and injecting drug use. However, in the past five years, there has been an 11% decline in new HIV diagnoses attributed to male-to-male sex, and a 15% decline between 2016 and 2017.

238 (25%) of diagnoses were attributed to heterosexual sex. This is a 10% increase between 2013 and 2017, and a 14% increase between 2016 and 2017. The report says that: "These individuals are ... more likely to be diagnosed late (48%) including those born overseas (53%), indicating the importance of initiatives to raise awareness about testing" (p. 5).

According to the report: "HIV incidence among female sex workers remained at or below 0.13 per 100 person-years in the past five years (2013-2017), and was 0.13 per 100 person-years in 2017" (p. 3). This is described as being, "extremely low, among the lowest in the world, due to highly successful HIV prevention for this priority population, which must also be sustained" (p. 5).

The report estimates that in 2017, there were 27,545 people living with HIV in Australia, 11% of whom were undiagnosed. 87% of those diagnosed were receiving antiretroviral therapy and 95% of those on therapy had a suppressed viral load. This is important because: "HIV treatments do not cure the infection, but prevent it from causing illness and – while undetectable viral load is maintained – virtually eliminate the risk of onward transmission to sex partners. This is referred to as 'treatment as prevention' (TasP)" (p. 56).

The report is available here: www.kirby.unsw.edu.au/report/hiv-australia-annual-surveillance-short-report-2018

My Health Record

The August 2018 edition of *In Touch* included a piece about My Health Record, which was intended to briefly describe the initiative and some of its benefits and drawbacks. It encouraged sex workers to do their own research before deciding if My Health Record was right for them, taking into account their own unique circumstances.

The article noted that a My Health Record will be created for every Australian by the end of the year, unless they choose not to have one. At the time, the opt out date set by the Australian Government was 15 October 2018. The opt out date has since been extended to 15 November 2018.

Information on opting out is available here: www.myhealthrecord.gov.au/for-you-your-family/opt-out-my-health-record

Discrimination

The Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland (ADCQ) works to protect people from unfair treatment. It is against the law in Queensland for anyone to treat you unfairly because of your sex, race, an impairment, or because you are a legal sex worker. If you are refused entry to a club or are treated badly when renting a room, at work, when buying goods, accessing services or by a government worker because of these things, you may contact ADCQ to see if you can make a complaint.

It is not unlawful for an accommodation provider to discriminate if they reasonably believe the accommodation is intended to be used for sex work. They can refuse to provide the accommodation if it is to be used for sex work. However, if the room is not to be used in connection with sex work, it is unlawful to refuse to rent the room to a person because of the person's occupation as a sex worker.

Sexual harassment is also against the law in Queensland. This means that if people make unwelcome sexual remarks or a request for sex outside of your normal sex work or personal relationships, you may complain to ADCQ. Information is available in languages other than English and details on making a complaint can be found at www.adcq.qld.gov.au or by calling the ADCQ on 1300 130 670. This is a free and private service.

Changes in information

When a person applies to the PLA for a brothel licence or an approved manager's certificate they must supply a range of information. Sections 20 and 45 of the *Prostitution Act 1999* oblige licence and certificate holders to advise the PLA, in writing, of any change in information, within 10 days of becoming aware of the change. For example, a change in the ownership of the brothel premises, a change in residential or postal address, or a change in criminal history. The PLA sends various documents to licensees and managers throughout the year, necessitating a current postal address for each person. An easy way to advise of a change in information is by sending an email to plaadmin@iprimus.com.au.

2018 PLA meeting dates

The PLA Board generally meets on the first Monday of each month. Meeting dates for the remainder of 2018 are: 12 November, and 3 December. *Whilst current at the time of printing, these dates are tentative and subject to change without notice.*

Vacancies for approved manager positions

Utopia in Paradise: We are seeking an approved manager to join us. The ideal candidate will have full availability, including late nights and weekends. An opportunity for great work/life balance. All applications to be emailed to utopiainparadise@outlook.com.

Platinum 175: Seeking approved manager. Will be responsible for day-to-day management of the brothel including front of house queries, facilitating bookings, and inhouse sales and promotion. A high level of commitment to customer service, excellent work ethic, reliability, and excellent communication skills are essential. We offer competitive pay and work/life balance. Please email resume with cover letter to manager@platinum175.com.au (attention Tania) or call 0400701898.

Please note that approved manager advertisements may be submitted at any time for inclusion in the next edition of the newsletter. They should be emailed to plaadmin@iprimus.com.au.