

Spring 2013

Positive News

All the latest news from the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation



bobby
goldsmith
foundation

practical emotional
financial support

BGF Responds to Substantial Rise in HIV Diagnoses

Recent news from NSW Health this July reveals there has been a 24% rise in HIV infections in New South Wales. In 2012 alone, 409 NSW residents were newly diagnosed with HIV, compared to 330 in 2011.

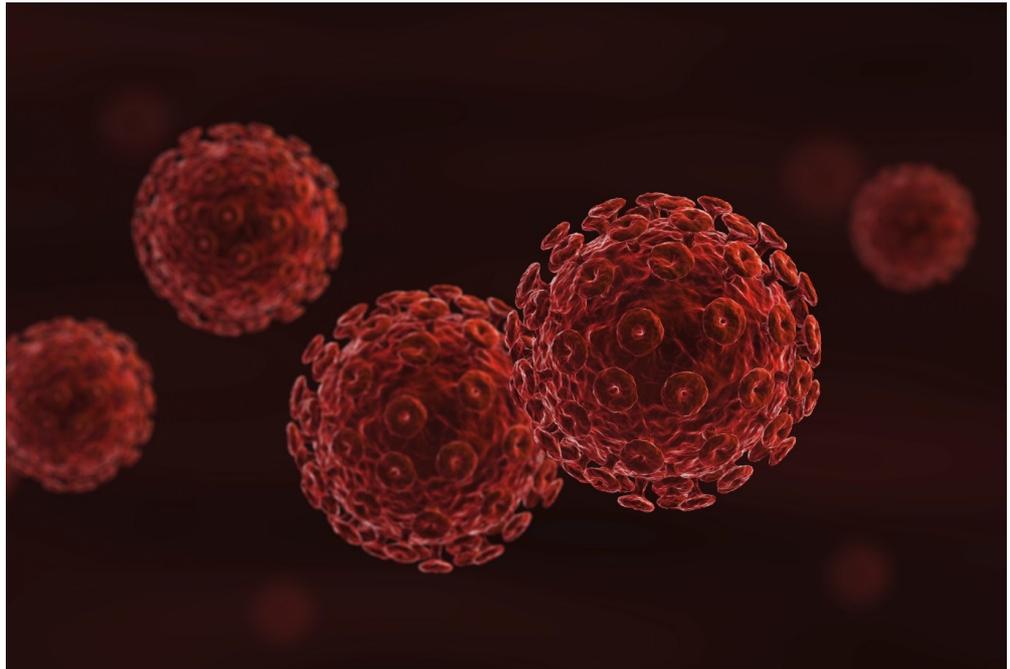
Following this troubling news, BGF is needed now more than ever. Before with a 15% increase in calls for help. To surpass these events and meet our goals, a revised Strategic Plan has been written.

First, BGF aims to build upon our current relationships with the NSW government, NSW Health, and Housing NSW, co-operating to end the transmission of HIV in NSW by 2020.

The "NSW HIV Strategy 2013-2015: A New Era" makes clear that antiretroviral treatment (ART) is a vital prevention measure because ART keeps those living with HIV healthy and well for as long as possible. It also reduces the risk of HIV spreading.

The NSW strategy also names BGF as the leading player in providing access to this treatment. In order to maintain this role, BGF will continue to fund access to ART for over 800 people living with HIV every year, allowing those individuals to live longer and fuller lives.

BGF's current Strategic Plan aims for us to be the first point of contact after an individual receives a positive HIV diagnosis, a moment where support is crucial.



HIV at the cell level.

Additionally, BGF plans to build its own support programs by carrying out further self-management education for people living with HIV.

The Stanford Positive Self-Management Program of Stanford University, California, is a prime example. It provides a method for HIV self-management and health improvement and has been running globally for nearly 30 years. BGF has become the first organisation within Australia now licensed to use this program.

Not only will such strategies further BGF's already vast support of those living with HIV, the 2013-2016 Strategic Plan will allow us to spread our reach to others in areas where HIV support services are not

currently active. BGF will be well placed to ensure that anyone receiving such difficult news can find the support he or she needs as soon as possible.

BGF's new Strategic Plan will allow us to increase the health and well-being of those living with HIV while collaborating with NSW Health towards the ultimate goal of ending HIV transmission in NSW by 2020.

NSW Health would like to take this critical time to remind people to stay safe, get tested, seek treatment and help prevent HIV infection.

For more information about the current state of HIV in NSW, please visit our website at www.bgf.org.au/where-am-i-in-hiv/.

Prefer to read your newsletter online? Let us know by sending a quick email to michelle.lesco@bgf.org.au.

Where Am I In HIV? Confronting, Dismantling the Stigma

In the lead up to World AIDS day on 1 December, BGF is further exploring the changing face of HIV. Again and again BGF has asked 'Where am I in HIV?'. Everyone has a story to tell. Whether you're positive or negative, we all have a connection to HIV. Incredibly moving stories are continually coming out of the woodwork.

I WAS SEEING THIS GUY ONLY FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS AND HE BECAME REALLY STRANGE AND AGGRESSIVE. AT THE SAME TIME I BECAME REALLY SICK AND I GOT COLD SORES FOR THE FIRST TIME. EVENTUALLY HE JUST SAID, "WELL AT LEAST YOU'LL REMEMBER ME FOREVER."

Abby was diagnosed in March 2012. Although she had trouble dealing with her HIV status to begin with, she has come to accept this part of her life and has committed herself to advocating for the positive community, battling the stigma she has faced.

"When I first got the diagnosis, I said I don't want to live with this. It just doesn't seem worth it. It was too horrible to imagine. The hardest part I found was seeing the reaction of those people who love you most. I found that a really painful experience."

While Abby found it emotionally challenging living with HIV, she now lives a full and happy life; "I feel absolutely hopeful for my future. My life feels exactly the same after diagnosis as it did before. I'm passionate about educating people about the virus and lessening the stigma. Outside of advocating for the positive community, I'll finish my law degree, keep working, and do all



Abby campaigns to remove society's stigma against HIV.

the other stuff that I was going to do anyway."

Abby's is a story that we're beginning to hear more often at BGF. In actuality, heterosexual individuals make up 14% of new HIV diagnoses in the last year, according to NSW Health. Individuals who would traditionally be labeled "low-risk" are presenting at higher rates.

Allan, in contrast, presents a starkly different side of HIV in Australia.

THERE'S NO REAL REASON HOW WE CAN SAY WHY WE'RE STILL HERE AFTER 28 YEARS. HOWEVER I'M GRATEFUL I AM.

Allan participated in some of Australia's first AZT drug trials to fight HIV after he was diagnosed in 1986.

"I was very lucky I was asymptomatic of receiving AZT. So by that I mean I didn't know it was AZT, but I had all the side effects that one would have. That stabilized my physical condition for a while. I think AZT saved my life at that point. I'm convinced."

While Allan was very sick with the side effects of the drug trials and

could not survive on the disability pension, the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation helped him pay his bills when he needed it most, until he could get back on his feet.

"Sometime after I had been receiving financial assistance from BGF, I made a donation of \$1,500 from memory. That's was a pittance compared to what they were handing out. I remember Mark the Client Liaison Officer said, 'Allan, it's not very often that we get somebody who gives us money back.'"



Allan is an advocate for BGF and our sector, as a whole.

The face of HIV is changing and if Allan and Abby are on our side, the stigma against HIV doesn't stand a chance. We are all a part of HIV and we all have a role to play in ending the stigma. Visit www.bgf.org.au to let us know where you are in HIV.

BOBBY GOLDSMITH FOUNDATION

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Save the Date: BGF Baked Dinner and You're Invited!

BGF will soon be launching its new 'Baked Dinner' fundraiser, a great way to have a night in with friends and raise money for the most vulnerable people living with HIV.

It's not unusual to spend between \$50 and \$100 per person on an average night out. For the BGF's Baked Dinner, having a great night at home with friends can mean donating that money to a good cause without skimping on the fun.

How? Plan a BGF Baked Dinner party! Invite a few friends. Dig up some old favourite recipes. Then donate what you might have spent at

a restaurant or pub to a deserving charity. Together you raise money and have a great night.

We will be running our Baked Dinner fundraising initiative now through December, in honour of World Aids Day on 1 December.

All you need to do is let us know about your event. Host a cocktail hour, dinner party, high tea, brunch, game night or any other get together. Invite some friends and set a suggested donation price. Enjoy your friends while you help support BGF. Share your event online and invite others to get involved. Simple!



To start your party planning, visit our website at: www.bgf.org.au/events/big-baked-dinner/.

Local Activist Shares His Message and Inspiration

"I first learned about BGF back in the 90's when the HIV/AIDS epidemic was sweeping the country and world. My two brothers were both diagnosed with what, in those days, was a fatal disease!"

Ken Ingall (pictured at right), recalls an inspiring story, one of undeniable strength and courage.

It's no surprise that Ken watched his brothers and friends suffer from and struggle with, not only HIV but the emotional and widespread turmoil that comes with it. He is one of many to have had a front row seat as the horror unfolded.

"It was during this sad time we learned of BGF and the great work they did, not only for my family but for many others as well". Since those dark days, Ken has continued to stand up and fight the battle against HIV.

"I thought it was about time I tried in some small way to pay back BGF for all the help they provided my family during a very difficult time, especially on behalf of my Mother who was a single woman

trying to care for two terminally ill sons."

Ken has taken it upon himself to make sure that disadvantaged people living with HIV have access to their meds. He is providing individuals the choice to use their small amount of savings to buy food this month... instead of having to choose between their next meal and their next dose of crucial medication.

How? Ken is a monthly donor to BGF. He actively supports our work by making secure, automatic gifts every month directly through his bank account. It's the simplest way to give.

"I love the way the monthly donation just comes out of my account. I don't have to worry about remembering; it's just done and I know it will be well used to help others."

As a long time donor to BGF, Ken has helped support our clients in a range of innovative ways.

To mark his most recent birthday, Ken decided to have a dinner party



with his friends. In lieu of gifts, he asked his friends to consider giving him the cash equivalent as a donation to his favourite charity. "They were all very enthusiastic about the idea!"

Because of Ken's inspiring message and his courage in standing up to HIV, fighting to protect those he loves, many others are standing up too—pledging to continue to fight the battle against HIV.

Case Worker's Corner

From the 24th- 26th of May 2013, BGF and the Quest for Life Foundation held Pozquest for Women, a residential workshop providing self-help strategies for wellbeing and peace of mind. The program is designed to help people learn to confront the challenges of living with HIV, challenges such as grief, depression and loneliness.

Workshops were held in meditation, gentle yoga, and topics such as coping with emotions and strategies for improving wellbeing. Evenings were spent connecting with one another and sharing experiences, strength and hope.

Attendees included 15 women of diverse backgrounds from across NSW, as well as two BGF staff members. Women ranged in age from 26 to 61 years, with some women diagnosed in the past year,



and some having lived with HIV for more than 20 years.

Several women expressed that it was the first time they had a met another woman living with HIV—a truly remarkable feeling. All women reported a satisfying, even life changing experience. Some expressed “greater clarity” and “a different view of life”. As a whole, BGF is thrilled with the outcome.

For future PozQuest for Women events, please visit www.bgf.org.au.

Something Is Sizzling at Bunnings

Look for us at the Bunnings in Alexandria on World AIDS Day!

On Sunday, 1 December, your friends at BGF will be running a sausage sizzle to raise money for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people living with HIV.

We will be serving all the bbq necessities so come have a bite to eat and show your support at this special time of year. Whether you have some shopping to do or a hunger to fill, we'd love to see you.

The store is located at 8-40 Euston Road, Alexandria 2015. We will be there all day, from 9am until 4pm.

See you Sunday, 1 December!



Act now! Send your completed form to BGF in the reply paid envelope.

Alternatively, give online at www.bgf.org.au/donate or call now on 02 9283 8666.

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. You can change or stop your pledge at any time.

I pledge to help fight the battle against HIV!

Yes, I want to be a monthly donor. Please charge or debit the amount I've checked below each month.

Amount per month:

\$30 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other \$ _____

Payment method:

Visa MasterCard Amex

Card Number: _____

Expiry Date: _____ CCV: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Bank account:

Name of Bank: _____

Address of Bank: _____ Name of Account: _____

BSB Number: _____ Account Number: _____

I'd like to make a one-off gift of \$ _____ instead. I've included my credit card details or a cheque made out to the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation.