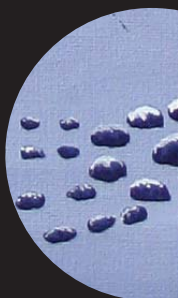


# protect our future

Learning and talking about HIV/AIDS, STI's and hepatitis C helps to protect ourselves and our future.

This information helps to improve understanding and support of our people living with these infections.



Revised and updated edition 2007

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## About this pamphlet

This pamphlet is written by Murri ones. It tells us how to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and Hepatitis C (Hep C). It also helps us to understand and support our people who are living with these illnesses.

This pamphlet is for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people no matter which mob you belong to - Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, city or country people, islander or mainlander.

It is important for all of us to be fully aware of the risks of HIV/AIDS, not only to ourselves, but also to our families, our youth and our communities. There are ATSI people in Queensland living with HIV/AIDS and unfortunately some have died from this disease.

This pamphlet is supported by Elders who went to the Minjerriba (Stradbroke Island) HIV/AIDS Elders Forum in 1999.

This information does not mean to offend anyone. Non-ATSI readers should understand, respect and not use ATSI words without consent when talking or writing to ATSI people.



## What is HIV?

### HIV stands for Human Immuno-deficiency Virus

- **Human** = This illness only affects people
- **Immuno-deficiency** = The immune system which fights germs in our bodies is deficient, that means it can't work properly
- **Virus** = A virus is a very small germ that can grow quickly and make us sick when it is inside our body

**HIV** attacks the body's immune system. The immune system is what protects and keeps our body healthy and strong.



## What is AIDS?

### AIDS is Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

- **Acquired** = To get infected with illness
- **Immune** = Our body's defence system which fights germs in our body
- **Deficiency** = When our immune system is damaged and not working properly
- **Syndrome** = A syndrome is not just one illness, it means a 'big mob' of illnesses

When the immune system has been badly damaged by **HIV**, a person can become very sick. **AIDS** is the name given to a 'big mob' of different diseases that make people who have HIV very sick.





## Is there a cure for HIV?

**No, there is no cure for HIV.**

There are medicines that can help to manage this illness. Many people living with HIV can live healthier lives if they find out early, start looking after their health and take HIV medicines, although these do not work for everyone.



## What are Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)?

**STIs are infections (germs) which can get inside our body when we have sex. Condoms can protect us from most STIs.**

Some of the most common STIs include herpes, syphilis (the pox), gonorrhoea (the clap) and Chlamydia.

Some of these STIs can cause open sores, cracks and breaks in the skin of a man or woman's private parts (genitals) or bum. These sores, cracks and breaks in the skin can let HIV into the body when people have sex without using a condom.

Some STIs can cause pus, blood and other fluids to leak or weep from open sores, or from a man or woman's private parts or bum. With some STIs, it is possible to not even know a person has them unless they have a check-up.

**We should have a sexual health check-up regularly (every 6 to 12 months) or get treatment by a doctor for anything that does not look or feel right with our private parts or bum.**

**If we have an STI and have sex without a condom, we can easily spread these germs to our sex partner/s.**

Some STIs, if left untreated, can cause infertility (unable to have babies).

**Most STIs can be treated, controlled and cured.**

**For more information about STIs, don't be shame or embarrassed to talk to the local sexual health worker or doctor.**



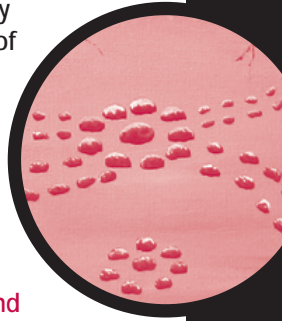


## Who gets HIV and STIs?

**Anyone** can get HIV or an STI if they have unsafe sex (see below the list of things that are safe and unsafe when having sex).

If people inject drugs and share their injecting equipment with others, this can also put them at risk of getting or spreading HIV and other illnesses.

**Always using condoms when having sex, and always using new needles and syringes (fits) to inject drugs makes it more difficult to catch HIV and other STIs.**



## How to prevent catching HIV and STIs

**The best way not to get HIV or an STI is to always have safe sex.**

Safe sex is more than a man wearing a condom when he is having sex with a woman. There are other things people can do to make sex enjoyable and safe.



## What is safe sex?

**Safe Sex is:**

- a **man** using a condom on his buddu (penis) when having sex (vaginal and anal or bum sex).
- Cuddling
- Kissing
- Massaging
- Licking
- A man and woman touching each other's private parts (mutual masturbation). Women should avoid getting a man's cum (semen) in any cuts, sores, or breaks in the skin on their hands. **Men** should avoid getting any fluids from a woman's junnu or pinnarni (vagina) in any cuts, sores, or breaks in the skin on his hands. Men and women should cover any cuts or sores with water-proof bandages.
- HIV cannot be spread from mouth to buddu, or from mouth to junnu or pinnarni unless the mouth is bleeding heavily. However, HIV can be spread from buddu to mouth, or from junnu or pinnarni to mouth, if there are cuts or sores in the mouth.

**For more information about safe sex, don't be shame or embarrassed to talk to the local sexual health worker or doctor about STIs.**



## How to use a condom

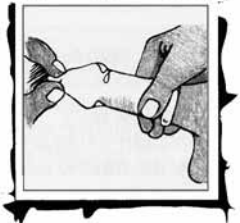
Check expiry date and open with care.



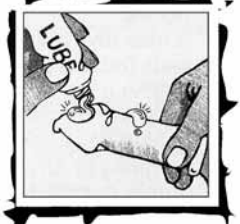
Pinch the top so air doesn't get trapped as you roll down.



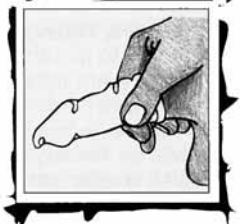
Roll the condom on when the penis is hard.



Use 'big mobs' of water-based lubricant on the outside of the condom before having sex.



After sex when withdrawing (pulling out), hold the base of the condom so cum (semen) doesn't spill out.



## What is unsafe sex?

### Unsafe Sex is:

- men having vaginal and/or anal (bum) sex, without using a condom and 'big mobs' of water-based lube on their buddu (penis) and cumming (ejaculation).
- men having vaginal and/or bum sex, without using a condom and pulling out (pulling their buddu out) before cumming.
- women and men should avoid giving oral sex to someone if they have cuts, sores in their mouth or have bleeding gums because this can let HIV into their body. It is safer to not brush your teeth for at least two hours before giving oral sex to someone.
- some STIs are easier to get from giving someone oral sex, like the clap and chlamydia.
- rimming (licking someone's bum) is unsafe for STIs like the clap and chlamydia. To prevent catching STIs from rimming, use a dental dam, glad wrap or a condom that has been split open and covers the bum hole. HIV cannot be passed on by rimming.

If you have questions about what's safe and what's not, be game and talk to the local sexual health worker or doctor.

## We can't get HIV from

- safe sex (see "what is safe sex?")
- kissing – we can't get HIV from someone's spit (saliva)
- touching someone – like shaking hands, hugging, cuddling or massage
- sharing food and drink, knives, forks, spoons, drinking glasses
- caring and looking after someone who has HIV/AIDS
- mosquitoes, head or genital lice (crabs), fleas, ticks and other biting insects
- swimming pools, bath water
- toilets

## Is there a test for HIV?

Yes, there is a test.

Talking to our local doctor will help us to understand what it means to have an HIV test and how to protect and look after ourselves in the future. We shouldn't feel shame to talk with and ask questions from our doctor or nurse before and after having the HIV test – they are there to help us.



## What to do if we have been exposed to HIV

HIV can take years before it makes someone sick, so it's possible to have the illness and not know.

We can't tell if we have HIV by the way we look or feel. It is not only gay people who get HIV – everyone can!

Remember, it's not who we are that counts, it's **what we do**.


The only way to find out if we have caught HIV is by having a check-up that tests for HIV. This test can be done by our local sexual health worker, doctor, health service or sexual health clinic.

**If we know or think we have been exposed to HIV from:**

- **having sex without a condom**
- **a condom breaking while having safe sex**
- **sharing fits**

**There is a special treatment now available called PEP (post exposure prophylaxis). But we must go to a doctor straight away.**

**PEP** is best if it is started within 2 hours or up to 3 days of the HIV risk.



If we think we have come into contact with HIV we should go to a sexual health clinic or accident and emergency at the nearest major public hospital (base or general hospital) as soon as possible. PEP treatment is not available from anywhere else.

PEP is not a simple treatment and it must be taken exactly as the doctor tells us. It is not an easy morning after pill, it must be taken every day for four weeks.

The **PEP** medicines are very powerful and can make a person feel very sick with a belly ache, diarrhoea (the runs), vomiting (spewing up), headache and tiredness. There are other medicines that can help get rid of these side effects. **There is no guarantee that PEP will work.**

**Our best protection from HIV is to always have safe sex and to inject safely.**



## Living with HIV/AIDS

If we have an HIV test and it shows that we have HIV it is important to remember that we are not alone. It is normal to feel frightened and alone, angry or unsure about the future.

There are lots of people to talk to. We could talk to other people with HIV/AIDS to learn from them how they deal with the illness.

Talking to others who know and understand can help us to get on with our life.

Finding out early that we have HIV means that we can start looking after our health. This includes taking HIV medicines which our doctor can help us decide the right time to start. The HIV medicines help most people lead healthier lives. Most people with HIV live for many years without getting sick.

**Queensland Positive People (QPP)** is an organisation that can give advice about support groups and offer different sorts of helpful information. It is good to yarn and talk with other people who are living with HIV/AIDS, because they may have had some of the same feelings, fears and experience as us.

**The Queensland Association for Healthy Communities (QAHC)** is able to provide support and information about HIV/AIDS, Safe Sex Practices, STIs and Hepatitis etc.

Contact details for the nearest QAHC or QPP office are on the back of this pamphlet.

### **Sex and living with HIV:**

Living with HIV/AIDS does not mean we cannot have sex anymore, it just means having **safe sex** is more important for us and our sex partner/s.

Safe sex will help stop HIV being spread to our sex partner/s. Having safe sex protects us from getting other STIs and illnesses that can make us very sick.

### **Being pregnant and also having HIV:**

If a mother has HIV, there is a risk that HIV can be passed to her baby during pregnancy and after giving birth.

This can depend on:

- how much virus is in her body.
- if she breast-feeds her baby with her milk. Breast milk from a mother with HIV or a 'wet nursing' mother can give a baby HIV.

Being pregnant does not speed up HIV making a woman sick. There are HIV medicines that a mother can take to help protect her unborn baby from HIV.



## What is Hepatitis C (Hep C)?

Hep C is a germ (virus) that can cause damage to our liver over time. If left untreated it can make us very sick.

There are medicines that help some people with Hep C live healthier lives. Taking the medicines can be difficult, but a specialist doctor would be able to explain how and when to use them. People with Hep C should avoid certain foods, drugs and especially alcohol. This can make people feel very sick.

There are a lot more people living with Hep C than HIV in Queensland. **Anyone** who shares injecting equipment with others can get Hep C.

**It is very important that we all learn how to stop the spread of Hep C. It is especially important to explain the risks to our younger ones who might try injecting drugs.**

**Even if we don't inject drugs, it is good to know about Hep C so we can share what we know with others.**



## Who is at risk of getting Hep C:

- **Anyone** who injects drugs and shares needles, syringes (fits) and other injecting equipment is at risk of catching Hep C. Small amounts of Hep C infected blood can remain in used fits. The amount of blood can be so small you may not actually see it. This infected blood can then be injected into someone else's veins.
- **Anyone** who shares a razor or toothbrush with someone who has Hep C is at risk of catching it. Small amounts of Hep C infected blood can remain on a razor and toothbrush. The amount of blood can be so small, you may not actually see it.
- It is possible to get Hep C from having unsafe sex if there is blood present. Therefore it is safer to use a condom.

**If you are going to inject drugs, always use a new fit every time. If you have sex, do it safely.**

**If you are going to inject drugs, only use your own spoon, alcohol swabs, filter, glass, tourniquets and separate lots of water.**





## Information for people who inject drugs, how to inject safely:



Clean the surface you are going to prepare (mix-up) the drugs on. Use a clean cloth, soapy water or alcohol swabs.



Always use alcohol swabs on your fingers and on the spoon before you mix-up the drugs. This kills the germs that cause illness and infections. Alcohol swabs are only good for one use.



Always clean the spot you are going to inject, with a new alcohol swab. Remember to only wipe in one direction so that you don't drag dirt or germs back across the injecting spot.



Only use sterile water in containers from chemists or needle exchanges. If you haven't got sterile water, you can boil up tap or tank water for a few minutes, but let it cool before using it.



Wash your hands before and immediately after injecting yourself or another person. Hep C spreads very easily between people by small amounts of blood on the fingers.



## Information for people who inject drugs

It is important if we inject drugs that it is done safely. Safe injecting reduces our chances of getting or spreading Hep C.

### These are some tips to make injecting safer:

- Always use a new fit every time we inject.
- If we don't have a new fit, think about taking the drug another way. Other ways of taking the drug are snorting (up the nose), swallowing, stuffing (up the bum) or smoking it. Remember, if we snort it, don't share the straws because they may have small amounts of blood on them.
- Always wash our hands in warm soapy water before and after we inject ourself or someone else.
- Only use your own spoon, alcohol swab, filter, glass, tourniquets and separate lots of water for mixing and rinsing. Hep C spreads very easily by sharing any of these things with others.
- Clean the surface we are going to prepare (mix-up) the drugs for injecting. Always use a clean cloth and soapy water, or alcohol swabs.
- Always use new alcohol swabs on our fingers and on the spoon before we mix the drugs. This kills the germs that cause illness and infections. Alcohol swabs are only good for one use. Remember to only wipe in one direction so that we don't drag dirt or germs back cross the spot we are going to inject. Swabs are available from needle exchanges and chemists.
- Always use sterile water in containers from chemists or needle exchanges. They don't cost much and they are much safer than tap water. If we haven't got sterile water we can boil up tap or tank water. Make sure that the water boils well for a few minutes and then cools down before we use it.
- Always choose a new spot to inject each time. This keeps the veins healthy and allows them to heal properly between injections.
- Watch where our fingers go. Hep C spreads easily between people by small amounts of blood on the fingers. Wash our hands immediately before and after injecting ourself or another person. Be sure that others who inject us wash their hands before and after injecting.
- If we already have Hep C, it is possible to infect ourselves again if we reuse our own or someone else's used fit. This can further damage and put stress on our body.



## How to get rid of dirty/used needles safely

If a person doesn't have a dirty or used fit container given out from a needle exchange, they should put any used fits in a strong container, such as a plastic bottle. The container should have a tight fitting lid and it should be strong enough so it can not be broken or punctured by the needle.

The container should be stored in a safe place until it can be handed into a needle exchange or chemist. Do not use a glass container as it may break easily.

Dumping used fits in drains, toilets, beaches and other public places is dangerous and illegal. Needle and syringe exchange outlets give out special containers to put used fits into. A person can return this container for safe disposal.

Everyone is allowed by law to have new and used fits. However, all fits must be kept in a sealed container in a safe place such as a locked drawer or cupboard.



## Disposing of dirty/used fits



Use the special containers to put used fits in. Needle and syringe exchange outlets give the container to you and you can return it to them for safe disposal.



Do not use a glass container as it may break easily. If you don't have a special container from a needle exchange, use a strong plastic container with a tight fitting lid that cannot be punctured by a needle.



All fits must be kept in a sealed container in a safe place like a locked draw or cupboard. Everyone is allowed by law to have new and used fits if they are safely stored.



## Other risks for catching Hep C & HIV

Sharing needles for body piercing, tattooing and blades for skin cutting or body scarring (for traditional reasons eg. ceremonies) can spread Hep C and HIV and other germs.

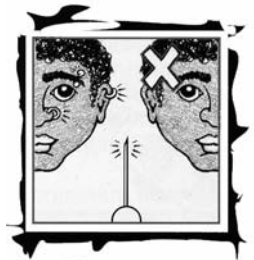
If having body piercing or tattooing done at home, make sure it is done safely. Make sure that the friend or relative uses new needles and washes their hands properly with warm soapy water before and after (or even better – wears new latex gloves). Do not share ink for tattooing as Hep C can live in the ink for a long time.

Body piercing and tattoos done in a tattoo or piercing shop should also always use new needles, fresh ink and latex gloves.

If we are having body scarring done for personal or traditional reasons (eg. ceremonies), the area of skin to be cut must be cleaned properly. Cleaning the skin with alcohol swabs or medical antiseptic from a chemist is best.

The person doing the skin cutting should wash their hands properly with warm soapy water before and after cutting our skin (or even better – wear new latex gloves). A new blade should be used on each person.

**DON'T SHARE NEEDLES**  
for body piercing  
or tattooing.



**DON'T SHARE INK**  
for tattooing.



**DON'T SHARE BLADES**  
for skin cutting.





## contact list

**The AIDS Medical Unit and Sexual Health Clinics** are able to provide a private and confidential testing service for STIs and HIV.

### **AIDS Medical Unit**

Biala Building  
Level 2,  
City Community Health  
Centre  
270 Roma St  
BRISBANE QLD 4001  
Phone: 07 3837 5622

### **Princess Alexandra Sexual Health Service**

Princess Alexandra Hospital  
Ipswich Road  
WOOLLOONGABBA QLD  
4102  
Phone: 07 3240 5881

### **Brisbane - Sexual Health Clinic**

Biala Building  
Level 1  
City Community Health  
Centre  
270 Roma St  
BRISBANE CBD QLD 4001  
Phone: 07 3837 5611

### **Cairns - Sexual Health Service (The Dolls House)**

The Esplanade  
Cairns Base Hospital  
CAIRNS QLD 4870  
Phone: 07 4050 6205

### **Gold Coast - Sexual Health Clinic**

2019 Gold Coast Highway  
(upstairs)  
MIAMI QLD 4220  
Phone: 07 5576 9033

### **Ipswich/West Moreton - Sexual Health Service**

Ipswich Health Plaza  
21 Bell Street  
IPSWICH QLD 4305  
Phone: 07 3817 2428

### **Mackay - Sexual Health & Sexual Assault Services**

C/o Community Health  
12-14 Nelson Street  
MACKAY QLD 4740  
Phone: 07 4968 3919

### **Mt Isa - Sexual Health Services**

Doreen Street Clinic  
MT ISA QLD 4825  
Phone: 07 4744 4805

### **Palm Island - Sexual Health**

Joyce Palmer Health Service  
Beach Road  
PALM ISLAND QLD 4816  
Phone: 07 4752 5100

### **Rockhampton- Sexual Health & HIV Services ClinicServices**

8 Canning Street  
ROCKHAMPTON QLD 4700  
Phone: 07 4920 5555

### **Sunshine Coast - Sexual Health Service**

87 Blackall Terrace  
NAMBOUR QLD 4560  
Phone: 07 5441 2459

### **Toowoomba - Sexual Health Service (Kobi House)**

Toowoomba Health Services  
Toowoomba Hospital  
Pechey St  
TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350  
Phone: 07 4778 9600

### **Townsville - Sexual Health Service**

35 Gregory Street  
NORTH WARD QLD 4810  
Phone: 07 4778 9600





**Queensland Association for Healthy Communities (QAHC)** is a community based health promotion organisation providing HIV and Hepatitis C prevention and sexual health promotion to gay and other men who have sex with men and A&TSI communities and which also promotes the health of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Queenslanders.

info@qahc.org.au

www.qahc.org.au

Statewide Administration: 1800 177 434

Men's Sexual Health: 1800 155 141

### **Brisbane & Southern Qld**

30 Helen Street, Newstead Qld 4006

PO Box 1372,

Eagle Farm BC Qld 4009

Phone: 07 3017 1777

Fax: 07 3852 5200

Email: info@qahc.org.au

### **Sunshine Coast & Central Qld**

10 Pikki St, Maroochydore Qld 4558

PO Box 2077,

Sunshine Plaza Qld 4558

Phone: 07 5451 1118

Fax: 07 5451 1611

Email: ssc@qahc.org.au

### **Cairns & North Qld**

290 Draper St, Cairns Qld 4870

PO Box 12112,

Cairns BC Qld 4870

Phone: 07 4041 5451

Fax: 07 4041 6092

Email: cns@qahc.org.au

**Queensland Positive People (QPP)** are an organisation for people living with HIV/AIDS. QPP provides support and help to people with HIV/AIDS and can serve as a contact point between HIV+ people.

**QPP – Brisbane: a safe environment, run by HIV+ people to find contact & support.**

Phone: 07 3013 5555

Statewide Resource Centre Freecall 1800 636 241

**Injecting Drug User (IDU)** information and services are available in Queensland. They are able to provide needle exchange and safe injection information, such as ways to reduce the risk of HIV and Hepatitis C. Queensland Association for Healthy Communities (QAHC) offices also have information for IDUs.

### **Hepatitis Council of Queensland – Brisbane**

PO Box 13172  
George St  
BRISBANE QLD 4003  
Info Line: 07 3236 0612

**Indigenous youth** who may be seeking information and support regarding emergency accommodation, drug and alcohol issues, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, sexuality issues and legal issues, can contact the following organisations. The Queensland Association for Healthy Communities (QAHC) offices can also provide HIV/AIDS information and referral to appropriate services.

### **Indigenous Youth Service – Brisbane**

60 Ferry Road  
West End QLD 4101  
Phone: 07 3393 0055

### **Logan Youth Health Service – Logan City**

2-4 Rowan Street  
SLACKS CREEK QLD 4127  
Phone: 07 3208 8199

### **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Health Service**

#### **Gladstone Road Medical Centre – Brisbane**

38 Gladstone Road  
Highgate Hill QLD 4101  
Phone: 07 3844 9599

#### **Stonewall Medical Centre –Brisbane**

52 Newmarket Road  
Windsor QLD 4030  
Phone: 07 3857 1222

### **Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Community Health Services (AICHS)**

#### **Brisbane AICHS – West End**

60 Ferry Road  
West End QLD 4101  
Phone: 07 3393 0055

#### **Bidgerdii Community Health Service – Rockhampton**

162 Bolsover Street  
Rockhampton QLD 4700  
Phone: 07 4921 3080

#### **Biddi Biddi Housing Co-Op – Atherton**

20 Jack St  
Atherton QLD 4883  
Phone: 07 4091 1297



**Charleville and  
Western Areas for  
ATSI Health**

16 -18 Eyre Street  
Charleville QLD 4470  
Phone: 07 4654 3277

**Gallang Place ATSI  
Corporation  
– West End (Brisbane)**

31 Thomas Street  
West End QLD 4101  
Phone: 07 3844 2283

**Goolburri Mobile  
Dental Service  
– Toowoomba**

56 Lyndsay Street  
Toowoomba QLD 4350  
Phone: 07 4632 0338

**Goondir Health Service  
– Dalby**

1 New Street  
Dalby QLD 4005  
Phone: 07 4662 6199

**Gumbi Gumbi  
Corporation –  
Rockhampton**

25 George Street  
Rockhampton QLD 4700  
Phone: 07 4922 8355

**Gurriny Yealamucka  
Health Services  
– Yarrabah**

9 Noble Drive  
Yarrabah QLD 4871  
Phone: 07 4056 9388

**Kambu Medical Service  
– Ipswich**

27 Roderick Street  
Ipswich QLD 4305  
Phone: 07 3812 3843

**Kalwun Health Service  
– Mermaid Waters**

14 Kortum Drive  
Burleigh Heads QLD 4220  
Phone: 07 5520 6799

**Mackay AICHS  
– Mackay**

31 – 33 Victoria Street  
Mackay QLD 4740  
Phone: 07 4951 2833

**Mamu Medical Service  
– Innisfail**

10 Ernest Street  
Innisfail QLD 4860  
Phone: 07 4061 4477

**Mudth Niyleta  
Corporation – Sarina**

35 Central Street  
Sarina QLD 4737  
Phone: 07 4956 2509

**Mulungu Health Service  
– Mareeba**

14 Sutherland Street  
Mareeba QLD 4880  
Phone: 07 4092 3428

**North Coast Aboriginal  
Corporation for  
Community Health –  
Maroochydore**

27 Evans Street  
Maroochydore QLD 4558  
Phone: 07 5443 3599

**Wuchopperen Health  
Service – Cairns**

13 Moignard Street  
Cairns QLD 4870  
Phone: 07 4080 1000

**Wuchopperen Health  
Service – Mt ISA**

8 Burke Street  
Mt ISA QLD 4825  
Phone: 07 4749 2929

**Yulu Burri Ba  
– Stradbroke Island**

19 Dickson Way  
Dunwich QLD 4183  
Phone: 07 3409 9596



## **Queensland Association for Healthy Communities**

### **Brisbane**

Ph 3017 1777  
Free call 1800 177 434  
[info@qahc.org.au](mailto:info@qahc.org.au)

### **Cairns**

Ph 4041 5451

## **Queensland Positive People**

### **Brisbane**

Ph 3013 5555

