



September 2021

MEDIA RELEASE

Peak bodies partner to boost sexual health education in WA

The Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) and WAAC, formerly WA AIDS Council, have partnered for the first time in their respective histories to support and better educate young people on relationships, sexual health and blood-borne virus issues.

The two closely aligned organisations will formally work together to build the capacity and capability within YACWA's Youth Educating Peers (YEP) Project, a peer sexual health and blood-borne virus education program which has successfully tendered for \$1 million of funding over the next five years from the Department of Health, WA.

The YEP Project works to support and educate young people on relationships, sexual health and blood-borne virus (SHBBV) issues by working in partnership with the WA youth sector and building the capacity of youth workers and youth sector agencies state-wide.

Sandy McKiernan, Chief Executive Officer, Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia, says the team at YACWA is genuinely excited to work more formally with WAAC throughout WA to deliver on sexual health programs and initiatives for young people and the youth sector in Western Australia.

"Historically, we have worked closely with WAAC's specialised sexual health clinic in Perth, known as M Clinic, but our agreement to form a more concrete relationship will enable us to boost our capacity to upskill peer educators, plan additional community outreach events and have a more streamlined approach to target young people most in need of this education," she says.

Lisa Dobrin, CEO of WAAC, says between them, the two organisations have close to 50 years of experience in offering sexual health and wellbeing services to both the youth sector and also the LGBTIQ+ community in WA.

"WAAC is dedicated to offering more sexual health support and education to young people in WA, and we're delighted that our reach will be greatly broadened following our partnership and the opportunities we now have to work more collaboratively with YACWA," she says.

"Whether it's looking at additional regional projects, working on increasing young people's awareness of STIs, or assisting in the education of youth workers in relation to blood borne viruses, we are confident that this partnership will greatly succeed in boosting sexual health education, knowledge and safety throughout WA."

Based in West Perth, WAAC exists to optimise the sexual health and wellbeing of all West Australians, in addition to improving access to health services and information, and reduce the transmission of HIV, STIs and other blood-borne viruses.



The Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) is the peak non-government youth organisation in the state which operates as a human rights organisation that seeks to address the exclusion of young people in a rapidly changing society. Its vision for WA is one that celebrates and engages young people in all aspects of the community, and strengthens the trust, cooperation, collaboration, professionalism and voice of the non-government youth service sector.

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