

Jay Weatherill MP

Premier

Nat Cook MP

Member for Fisher

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SA announces HIV prevention drug trial

South Australians at high risk of contracting HIV will have access to the latest preventative technology study, as part of a State Government commitment announced today.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP is the latest prevention therapy in the fight against HIV.

Under a PrEP access trial, eligible South Australians who don't have HIV and who are at high risk of acquiring HIV may be prescribed a daily oral pill which, when taken consistently, has been shown to be effective in preventing HIV.

Although PrEP has been licensed for use in the United States since 2012, the Federal Liberal Government has been slow to act.

In May this year the Therapeutic Goods Administration listed Truvada®, in combination with safer sex practices, for PrEP to reduce the risk of sexually acquired HIV in adults but an application to list the drug on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme was not approved in August.

South Australia will commence negotiations with other states currently leading PrEP access trials.

Background

Truvada®, for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a pill that is taken once daily.

It is estimated that for every 13 people on PrEP, one HIV infection is averted.

Modelling indicates that around 500 South Australians may be eligible to be part of the PrEP trial.

Daily PrEP (marketed as Truvada) is considered safe and effective to reduce the risk of HIV infection in high-risk adults who are able to take the medication correctly and consistently.

A number of clinical trials conducted among men who have sex with men, heterosexual men and women, and injecting drug users have demonstrated that PrEP prevents HIV infection.

Over the last five years, there has been an average of 58 HIV infections notified in South Australia each year.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jay Weatherill

This is an important new trial for prevention medication for HIV. It will provide those South Australians living at risk of transmitting HIV with access to an additional effective prevention method.

The State Government is committed to providing the best possible health care for South Australians and our impending trial of this valuable medication is another example of this.

Quotes attributable to Fisher MP Nat Cook

We have a long way to go in our fight to remove HIV transmission in Australia, but a PrEP trial in South Australia is a step in the right direction.

We need to remove as many barriers as we can for those at risk of acquiring HIV – and prevention is always better than a cure.

South Australians deserve access to affordable PrEP and I urge the Federal Liberal Government to play its part in HIV prevention by adding it to the PBS.

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