



1 June 2016

Mr Darryl O'Donnell  
Executive Director  
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations Inc  
PO Box 51  
NEWTOWN NSW 2042

Via email: [Darryl.O'Donnell@afao.org.au](mailto:Darryl.O'Donnell@afao.org.au)

Dear Mr O'Donnell,

Thank you for your letter of 28 April 2016 providing the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations' (AFAO) 2016 Federal Election Survey and requesting Labor's response.

Labor recognises the effort to end HIV undertaken by AFAO and its member organisations, including the AIDS Councils in each state and territory; the National Association of People Living with HIV Australia (NAPWHA); the Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL); the Anwernekenhe National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HIV/AIDS Alliance (ANA); and Scarlet Alliance, the Australian Sex Workers Association.

Please find our response to your letter below.

### **1. Implement the Strategy**

Labor commits to the principles of partnership, harm reduction and non-partisanship that are a globally recognised foundation of Australia's response to HIV.

A Shorten Labor Government will promptly implement the Seventh National HIV Strategy 2014-17, which sets the direction for Australia to reverse the increasing trend of new HIV diagnoses and works towards the virtual elimination of HIV transmission by 2020.

### **2. Focus on Prevention**

Labor recognises the importance of renewing efforts to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmissible infections, and blood borne viruses, in partnership with non-government organisations and driven by expert evidence.

A Shorten Labor Government will implement a positive recommendation from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee for Truvada as an HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis. This is in our National Platform.

Labor recognises the important contribution that needle and syringe programs have played in the prevention of HIV/AIDS and other blood borne viruses amongst people who inject drugs, and the importance of maintaining these services in order to prevent virus transmission.

**BILL SHORTEN AND LABOR. WE'LL PUT PEOPLE FIRST**

Labor will support and promote the importance of education to empower Australians to make safe, informed decisions about sexual and reproductive health.

### **3. Provide Treatment and Care**

Labor recognises the importance of access to treatment as a key factor in the prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS and supports universal access to treatment.

Labor recognises that many Australians with HIV are on low incomes and can have three or more serious health conditions in addition to HIV.

Labor believes that all Australians should have access to health care, regardless of their income.

A Shorten Labor Government will give a three-part guarantee that will ensure Medicare is protected.

Labor's Medicare Guarantee includes:

- Abolishing Mr Turnbull's GP Tax by stealth.
- Scrapping Mr Turnbull's \$5 increase in prescription costs.
- Legislating to ensure Medicare remains in public hands.

Only Labor will ensure that our universal public healthcare system, so vital to Australians with HIV, is guaranteed.

### **4. Strengthen the Enabling Environment**

If elected, a Shorten Labor Government will take advice from the National Health and Medical Research Council on making infectious diseases, including HIV, other blood borne viruses and sexually transmissible infections, strategic priorities.

Labor's preference is for national medical research funds to be prioritised according to the advice of experts, rather than being used as political election commitments. For this reason, Labor sought amendments to the Abbott-Turnbull Government's Bill to introduce stronger governance arrangements for the Medical Research Future Fund.

Labor believes that the blood donation deferral period for men who have had recent sex with another man should be guided by the scientific evidence base.

A Shorten Labor Government will establish a dialogue of law enforcement, community and public health experts to strengthen cross-portfolio understanding of new HIV prevention science.

### **5. Lead our Region**

The Abbott-Turnbull Government has taken Australia to its lowest level of spending on overseas aid as a proportion of gross national income (GNI) since the program began. It has devastated Australia's proud historical standing as a responsible and generous global citizen.

A Shorten Labor Government will reverse the \$224 million cut to overseas aid in the Liberals' last Budget. Labor will also commit an extra \$40 million a year.

Labor will stand by Australia's pledge of \$200 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria 2014-2016 allocation period.

**BILL SHORTEN AND LABOR. WE'LL PUT PEOPLE FIRST**

PO BOX 6222, KINGSTON ACT 2604 ABN 38 318 251 221  
T 03 8625 5000, Twitter: @AustralianLabor, facebook.com/LaborConnect, www.alp.org.au

Authorised by G. Wright, Australian Labor Party, 5/9 Sydney Avenue, Barton, ACT, 2600

A Shorten Labor Government will consider Australia's contribution to the 2017-2019 allocation in consultation with Australia's multilateral partners.

Thank you again for the opportunity to outline Labor's policies and to respond to the AFAO's 2016 Federal Election Survey.

Sincerely,

**ALP Information Services Unit**

Australian Labor Campaign Headquarters

[www.alp.org.au](http://www.alp.org.au)

**BILL SHORTEN AND LABOR. WE'LL PUT PEOPLE FIRST**

---

PO BOX 6222, KINGSTON ACT 2604 ABN 38 318 251 221  
T 03 8625 5000, Twitter: @AustralianLabor, facebook.com/LaborConnect, www.alp.org.au

Authorised by G. Wright, Australian Labor Party, 5/9 Sydney Avenue, Barton, ACT, 2600