



**ashm**

Supporting the HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Workforce

## HTLV-1 Special Interest Group Roundtable 3

25/10/18

Sydney Masonic Centre, Sydney

The HTLV-1 Special Interest Group welcomed the announcement in May 2018 by the Federal Government of \$8 million to address emerging communicable diseases affecting the Indigenous population, particularly in remote communities. The Special Interest Group identified the following suggested priorities for work, which the ASHM HTLV-1 Working Group will take forward to investigate suitable implementation and funding mechanisms.

*“Remember that people are sitting in Central Australia right now, without information, transmitting the virus to their loved ones and children.*

*Transmission is ongoing, right now, and is preventable.”*

-quote from HTLV-1 Special Interest Group participant

### Priorities for work:

1. **National guidelines** covering HTLV-1 testing, management and treatment of co-morbid conditions should be developed, with ASHM as the coordinating agency.
2. An **Indigenous reference group** for HTLV-1 must be created to inform all existing and new research on HTLV-1 in Central Australia. This group must include representatives from affected communities and acknowledge existing structure with ACCHOS.
3. A **public health response** to HTLV-1 in Central Australia is still lacking, with no data that this is a benign infection.
4. Many proposed and ongoing **research** projects were presented at the meeting. These must be prioritised to make the best use of the funding available.
6. The **HTLV-1 endemic area** in Australia must be more clearly defined. Limited information is available on the prevalence of HTLV-1 outside of communities already involved in studies.
7. Further exploration of **national surveillance** options for HTLV-1, including the possibility of listing it as a nationally notifiable condition should be conducted.

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