

Mailing address

Building NR6
La Trobe University
Victoria 3086 Australia

T + 61 39479 8700
E arcschs@latrobe.edu.au
latrobe.edu.au/arcschs

Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCShS)
College of Science, Health and Engineering
School of Psychology and Public Health

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Communicate ‘Undetectable Equals Untransmittable’ clearly and without reservation throughout the community

The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society (ARCShS) at La Trobe University conducts national social, health and wellbeing research that advances knowledge and promotes positive change in policy, practice and people's lives.

ARCShS's work in HIV includes working with people living with HIV and partnering in many other social research studies across the world. We work closely with community and peer led health promotion organisations in the response to HIV, ensuring meaningful involvement of people most affected by the epidemic.

We believe all people, including people living with HIV, have a right to accurate and meaningful information about their social, sexual, and reproductive health.

In line with this, ARCShS strongly endorses the ‘Undetectable Equals Untransmittable’ (U=U) Consensus Statement issued by the Prevention Access Campaign (<https://www.preventionaccess.org/>)

The scientific evidence is clear. Early diagnosis and treatment with antiretroviral therapy (ART) restores people living with HIV to a normal life expectancy. In addition to this, someone living with HIV who has sustained, undetectable levels of virus in their blood cannot transmit HIV to their sexual partners.

Dr Graham Brown and Dr Jen Power lead a number of ARCShS studies with people living with HIV.

“Our national HIV Futures study shows that HIV stigma and the fear of transmission still impacts heavily on people living with HIV” said Dr Power. “U=U has enormous implications for people living with HIV, their partners and communities, and the entire response to HIV”.

“Our work with peer led programs for people with HIV highlights that stigma is a key barrier to the prevention, testing and treatment of HIV. U=U, and the science it represents, will strengthen our fight against stigma, enhance the quality of life of people with HIV, and bring us closer to ending HIV. This knowledge needs to be communicated clearly and without reservation throughout the community” said Dr Brown.

For more details contact:

Dr Graham Brown, Senior Research Fellow, ARCShS
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/arcschs>

graham.brown@latrobe.edu.au