Welcome to the Spring addition of What’s HARPening. Wow doesn’t time fly … it is hard to believe Spring has sprung up on us again!

On behalf of the HARP Health Promotion Team we hope you find this newsletter of interest. The focus for this quarter is social media…facts, perceptions and reality.

As we know, it is all around us, in our private and working life, and is changing at a rapid pace. The new challenge for HARP is keeping up and ensuring that we are able to provide high quality health interactions, campaigns, health resources and advice on a platform that is meaningful to the priority populations we serve.

This is not so easy for many Local Health Districts however it is still very achievable if you work in partnership with other organisations with a similar mandate, and collaborate to achieve the desired outcome.

Regards Jen Heslop

HIV And Related Programs (HARP) Manager

**Did you know….?**

In December 2013, of Australians aged 14-17 years:

⇒ 89 per cent have a mobile phone
⇒ 69 per cent of mobile phone users have a smartphone
⇒ 56 per cent use their mobile phone to go online
⇒ 72 per cent go online more than once a day


In 2012-2013, 96% of Australian households with children under 15 had the internet at home http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/8146.0Chapter12012-13

By the age of 16–17 years 97% of young people use at least one social networking service (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2009)

Research tells us that:

⇒ 13% of 16 to 17 year olds said they or a friend had sent sexual images to someone else.
⇒ 18% of 16 to 17 year olds said they or a friend had received sexual images of someone else
⇒ 88% of self generated images had been collected and put on other sites**

Focus on... Sex in the Online World

We live in a culture that is becoming increasingly dependent on social media and social network sites (SNS) for our daily personal interactions. Whilst this is especially true for young people, sharing information and connecting to friends online has become an integral part of daily life for persons of all ages. We now have access to a plethora of networked technologies – from the more familiar and mundane internet, email and texting to social network sites like Facebook, Twitter, and onto a range of innovative apps to meet nearly every information and networking need.

It is a dynamic and evolving landscape with changing technologies and trends but as a cultural phenomenon, social media has reshaped the information and communication world. Engagement with social media is simply an everyday part of life, akin to watching television and using the phone. People are increasingly socialising, interacting and communicating privately, in groups or on masse without being in the same physical space and quite frequently, without knowing each other beyond the online world. Social media has become an important public space and online relationships are common and normal.

Social media has a significant place in sexual lives and intimate relationships. Through technology, people are meeting partners, flirting and seducing, negotiating and enjoying sexual encounters, notifying partners of STIs, breaking up and making up. The online world allows anonymity and experimentation. It is at once, private and exposing, revealing and obscuring, safe and dangerous and therefore presents challenges and opportunities, particularly for young people and those who are concerned for their sexual health and well-being.

Young people in Australia are accessing sexual health information through the media. Google is often the first port of call but online bulletin boards and forums are popular for young people wanting to ask about intimate and sensitive issues such as sexual health, practices, and identity in digital spaces due to the anonymity and confidentiality these spaces can provide. The new media technologies are therefore an evolving area for sexual health communication between sexual health professionals and young people.

The use of social networking sites for sexual health promotion in Australia is in its infancy and these programs have not been well described in the published scientific literature or evaluated for their effectiveness in improving health outcomes. Most organisations use Social Networking Sites (SNS) as simply an additional online location in which to have a presence, alongside their organisational website, using similar content and making little attempt to encourage social activity and engagement. This implies untapped potential for SNSs to be increasingly used in more diverse ways for health promotion, including for the delivery of campaigns and interventions and for interacting with target populations.

Sexual Health clinical services are also increasingly turning to technology and social media and networking sites to enhance clinical service provision and efficiency. New strategies include electronic SMS notification and appointment reminder systems and contact tracing websites. Recent literature has shown these strategies to be useful in improving screening rates and receipt of results, and reducing waiting lists and time spent with sexual health clinicians.
Focus on... Sex in the Online World continued

Some examples of Technological Sex Aids

The Internet

Sexual health information needs to be readily accessible. When a person has a sexual health question, internet search engines can provide an immediate answer however sifting through hundreds of search engine results is time consuming and the trustworthiness of the information can be suspect. Websites with “.gov” or “.org” suffixes and those hosted by reputable organisations such as Family Planning and AIDS Councils are consistently reliable but there are other independent sites that provide high quality, accurate and accessible information and interactivity with users.

One such example is Scarleteen
http://www.scarleteen.com/ an independent, grassroots sexuality education and support organization and website based in the USA but with international relevance and reaching users from around the world. Founded in 1998, Scarleteen.com is visited by around three-quarters of a million diverse people each month, most between the ages of 15 and 25. The site contains over 200 comprehensive sexuality, health and relationship articles, guides and factsheets, over 1,000 in-depth advice answers, extensive external resource lists for each topical section of the site and a collective blog. Interactive services are also a feature with 5,000 direct conversations via message boards which are staffed and highly moderated to provide a safe space and accurate information. There is also a text/SMS service for help and information via mobile phones, and an active presence on Facebook and Twitter.

An Australian example of a vibrant and interactive webpage is Red Aware http://www.redaware.org.au/ developed by YEAH, an Australian Youth led health promotion organisation supporting young people to take control of their sexual health through participation and leadership. The site encourages young people to “Think, Talk, Act” and to “get connected” by clicking through to social media pages to keep up to date with all the Red Aware events, competitions and news.

Sexting

Sexting is when sexual photos or videos are shared via mobiles or online posts. The proliferation of mobile devices with the ability to send pictures and video means that intimate images can be easily distributed far and wide.

Sexting between adults is not illegal (although it can be problematic if images are shared or forwarded without consent) however many adolescents may be unaware that their ‘sexting’ activities may be illegal. State and Commonwealth child pornography laws aren’t avoided on the basis that both parties are the same age or that the forwarding of the images was consensual. Anyone who sends, receives or even asks for a naked or sexual image of a person who is or appears to be under the age of 18 is at risk of committing a crime and of being charged.

Focus on... Sex in the Online World continued

Some examples of Technological Sex Aids cont’d

Contact testing support

Ensuring partners are tested and treated is an important way of controlling the spread of Sexually Transmissible Infections (STI).

The “Let Them Know” website was developed by Melbourne Sexual Health Centre to help people who have been diagnosed with an STI to tell their sexual partners that they might also be at risk. As well as frequently asked questions, this website includes examples of conversations, emails, text messages (SMS) or letters an infected person can use in informing their partner. It even sends an SMS or email to partners directly from the site, either personally or anonymously.

The “Better to Know” website is an online information space for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women. The website provides detailed information on STIs, HIV, testing and treatment. The STIs information is divided into two sections, Men’s Business and Women’s Business, so that sensitive information can be covered in a way that is respectful to Aboriginal culture.

An interactive feature of this site allows the user to receive periodical email or SMS reminders (3-monthly, 6-monthly or annually) to have a sexual health check. It also allows website users to notify their recent sexual partners that they may have been at risk of having an STI and encourage them to consider sexual health testing.

“Drama Down Under” is a similar service for men who have sex with men. As well as information about some of the most common sexually transmitted infections (STIs) experienced by gay men, the website also offers a sexual health testing reminder service and the ability to anonymously notify sexual partners if they are at risk of having acquired an STI.

Hook up apps

With so much online interaction, it isn’t surprising that an increasing number of internet users are finding their sex partners via a range of apps. Tinder and Grindr are examples where users set age and proximity requirements and then browse profiles for potential matches.

Neither app was built for the sole purpose of hookups but both have become sex interaction platforms with Grindr becoming widely known as a place for gay, bi-sexual, and bi-curious hookups. Sexual Health services are starting to experiment with pop up sexual health promotion messages on these sites to encourage condom use and STI testing.
“A LOT OF ABORIGINAL MEN SORT OF KEEP IT TO THEMSELVES”

Produced by Andrology Australia—the country’s peak authority on male reproductive health, this DVD for health professionals includes interviews and provides tips for how to initiate dialogue and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men about reproductive health.

Some of the topics covered include: male friendly health services, the role of the Aboriginal Health Worker, talking about sexual health, types of sexual problems, causes of erectile dysfunction, links between erectile dysfunction and chronic disease, cultural issues and sexuality.

For more information or to obtain a copy, visit https://www.andrologyaustralia.org/male-health-education-dvd/

Ansell Sex Ed. www.ansellsex-ed.com.au is the product of a partnership between Ansell and The Australian Research Centre In Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS) at La Trobe University, Melbourne.

This online resource is sponsored by Ansell and moderated by an experienced teacher and teacher trainer at ARCSHS. Ansell Sex Ed. is an on-line community library designed to support the sex education teachers of Australia with a range of information and resources. Sex Education professionals and teachers are invited to register and then share their wisdom and resources with other teachers. Australian teachers who register online are offered a free school sex education kit.

It’s complicated - The social lives of networked teens

What is new about how teenagers communicate through services such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram?

Do social media affect the quality of teens’ lives?

In this eye-opening book, youth culture and technology expert Danah Boyd uncovers some of the major myths regarding teens’ use of social media.

Boyd explores tropes about identity, privacy, safety, danger, and bullying. Ultimately, she argues that society fails young people when paternalism and protectionism hinder teenagers’ ability to become informed, thoughtful, and engaged citizens through their online interactions.

Download the book here.
A video showing a snapshot of the PASH Conference that occurred in April 2014 is now available for viewing. Visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0P2q2lk539Q&feature=youtu.be

A video of the Q&A session at the conference is also available. Visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FqrMol6LseM

The “Sex in Other Cities” website, developed by the Western Australian AIDS council (WAAC) in collaboration with the WA Department of Health, Sexual Health and Blood-Borne Virus Program, aims to increase awareness of maintaining safe sexual practices when travelling or working overseas.

Australians of all ages love to travel. “Sex in Other Cities” is about finding the best parties in the world and sharing hot tips to make the most of them.

There are many reasons for travelling; for fun, adventure, business, love... We also like to have sex when travelling. In recent years, more Australians have acquired HIV and other infections whilst travelling or living overseas than ever before. Often fueled by alcohol and other substances, travellers can become uninhibited and take risks they would not necessarily take at home.

They meet new people and often increase the amount of sexual activity and number of sexual partners. Australians may also have sex with a sex worker overseas, without necessarily exchanging money. In order to stay safe, take your own condoms and lube and use them, every time.
North Coast HARP and PASH (Positive Adolescent Sexual Health) partnered to host a Safe Sex Marquee at the 2014 Splendour in the Grass Festival. Located in the festival campground along with over 20,000 happy campers, HARP staff, PASH peer leaders and volunteers were kept busy distributing 18,500 condoms, 6000 condom tins and thousands of safe sex resources. Festival goers were invited to interact via mini quizzes and the “Playsafe” activation game. The introduction of Willy and Wonty – two large inflatable penises— to the festival was a great success with many taking up the invite to pose and take photos with these “interesting” characters. The generosity and support of the Splendour organisers and the Four Seasons condom company was crucial and is much appreciated. The PASH consortium continues to flourish and gain momentum and there are plans for similar activities in the future.

Nearly 14000 delegates representing 172 countries attended the 20th International AIDS conference held in Melbourne 20-25 July 2014. The AIDS 2014 website links to a wealth of information including access to the latest developments in HIV related programming, policy and scientific research.


For copies of the strategies visit: www.health.nsw.gov.au/hepatitis
This training is free of charge to participants and lunch is provided. Registration is essential and must be made through:


Online training is also available.
# MID NORTH COAST & NORTHERN NSW

## Tweed Heads
**Clinic 145**
Lvl 1, 145 Wharf Street
Tweed Heads
07) 5506 6850
Outreach to Murwillumbah and Pottsville

## Health Promotion and Education
**Coffs, Clarence, Hastings & Macleay Areas**
Tweed, Byron, Richmond Areas
02) 6620 2980
02) 6562 6066

## Clinic 229
Grafton Base Hospital
Arthur Street
Grafton
02) 6641 8712
(NB This is a new phone number)

## Lismore Sexual Health Service (Tara House)
4 Shepherd Lane
Lismore
02) 6620 2980
Outreach to Byron Bay
(alternating between HIV Specialist Clinic by appointment on Mondays & drop in Clinics on Tuesdays)

## Services include:
- Information and education about sexually transmissible infections and safe sex.
- Screening, treatment and management of sexually transmitted infections

## Clinic 916
Coffs Harbour Health Campus
345 Pacific Hwy
Coffs Harbour
02) 6656 7865
Outreach to Dorrigo

## Lismore Liver Clinic
29 Molesworth Street
Lismore
02) 66207539
Outreach to Byron (weekly)
Tweed and Casino (monthly)
Macleay (fortnightly)

## Clinic 33
Kempsey Community Health
Polwood Street
Kempsey
02) 6562 6066

## Clinic 33
Port Macquarie Health Campus
Maclaren Building
Morton Street
Port Macquarie
02) 6588 2750

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For further information, contributions or feedback or to be placed on the email distribution list contact

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**Playsafe**
All you need to know about sexual health
playsafe.health.nsw.gov.au