

**GETTING TO  
ZERO**



**November 19, 2015**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **World AIDS Day in Bendigo**

Bendigo will recognise World AIDS Day with a free community barbecue on December 1.

World AIDS Day raises community awareness about issues surrounding HIV and AIDS.

The day gives people the opportunity to show support for those living with HIV and commemorate those who have died.

The Getting To Zero event will be hosted by the Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative with support from Bendigo Community Health Services, Bendigo Health and the Country Awareness Network.

The barbecue from 11.30am at 13-15 Forest Street, Bendigo, will feature a guest speaker from Living Positive Victoria.

With reported HIV cases on the rise, particularly among heterosexual couples, the theme of World AIDS Day in Australia is 'Getting to Zero'.

"That means zero new HIV infections. Zero discrimination. Zero AIDS-related deaths," said CAN spokesperson Paula McCluskey.

"It's important for communities to remain vigilant about HIV and that includes understanding how the virus is transmitted and how to protect against it.

"Early treatment is important in getting the best health results.

“World AIDS Day is also a time to reinforce that people living with HIV should be able to live in any community without discrimination and free of any stigma.”

Ms McCluskey said people wanting to mark World AIDS Day were welcome to the Getting To Zero barbecue at BDAC.

AIDS Awareness Week runs from November 24 to December 1.

Bendigo will mark the week with a Bowling Over Stigma event at Bendigo Bowling Centre from 7pm on November 24 and a Community Information Stall in Hargreaves Mall from 11am on November 30.

The free barbecue lunch at the BDAC from 11am on December 1 and a Remembrance Celebration at the Rosalind Park bandstand from 6pm on December 1 will also be part of the week.

The 12<sup>th</sup> annual Toy Drive for kids affected by HIV will call on the people of Bendigo to donate new toys or money to buy toys to the CAN Resource Centre at 34 Myers Street in Bendigo during AIDS Awareness Week.

Bendigo people are urged to wear a red ribbon on World AIDS Day which is the symbol of HIV awareness and support.

For more information on the free World AIDS Day barbecue contact Tania or Charlie at Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative on 5454 2710 or Mary-Anne Richardson at Bendigo Community Health Services on 5448 1600.

For more information on AIDS Awareness Week events call CAN Victoria Bendigo on 5443 8355.

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