Media Release

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**HIV PREVENTION STUDY TO COMMENCE APRIL 2017**

South Australians at a high risk of acquiring HIV will have the opportunity to benefit from the latest HIV prevention medication through a new partnership.

Following the announcement of the Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) access trial late last year, Victoria’s Alfred Health has been chosen to partner with the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI), SA Health and local clinics for the study to begin in April.

The study will examine the impact of expanding the use of PrEP across South Australia.

SAHMRI’s Executive Director, Professor Steve Wesselingh said the PrEP trial is an important step towards preventing HIV among South Australians at high risk.

“Over the last five years, there has been close to 60 new HIV infections in South Australia each year,” Professor Wesselingh said.

“PrEP is an antiretroviral medication taken daily by people at the highest risk of HIV to prevent them from acquiring HIV. PrEP has been shown internationally and nationally to reduce the number of new cases and we hope the same success will occur here in South Australia.

“We are pleased to join with Alfred Health and SA Health to progress this trial.”

Associate Professor Edwina Wright from Alfred Health said the PrEPX-SA study in South Australia will draw from the successful Victorian PrEPX study, which has been underway since July 2016.

“The strength of the Victorian PrEPX study is that we worked in close partnership with Victorian clinical services and community organisations, and we will adopt this approach in South Australia,” Associate Professor Wright said.

“We are excited for the opportunity to work with South Australia to build a PrEP response that specifically meets the needs of South Australians by working closely with clinicians, local sexual health clinics and the community.”

The trial in SA is an important step in ensuring people here have the same opportunities as those in other jurisdictions, where PrEP trials are underway.

“We want to include people from culturally and linguistically diverse populations and Aboriginal people so that these communities are not adversely affected by HIV,” Professor Wesselingh said.

“SAHMRI will play an important role in monitoring and evaluating the trial as it is rolled out. At the end of the day, we, like other jurisdictions, want to minimise the number of new HIV cases each year and move toward a goal of no new cases in South Australia.”

Local sexual and general practice clinics will play an important part in the PrEPX-SA access trial for study participants.

The majority of the trial will be run from Clinic 275 and the O’Brien St General Practice, but it is likely a number of key regional centres will be established to ensure the wider at-risk community can also participate.

Details will be finalised with Alfred Health and SA Health in the coming weeks.

To find out more about PrEPX-SA and to register your interest in the study, join the PrEPX-SA Study Information Register at [www.alfredhealth.org.au/prepxsa](http://www.alfredhealth.org.au/prepxsa)

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