

Melbourne Gay Community Periodic Survey returns to 2017 Midsumma Carnival

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10 JANUARY 2017 — During the 2017 Midsumma Festival the Victorian AIDS Council (VAC) will again bring the most significant survey of gay and bisexual men’s sexual health in Australia, the Gay Community Periodic Survey, to Melbourne.

Along with the Centre for Social Research in Health (CSRH) and the Kirby Institute at UNSW, VAC will be conducting the Melbourne Gay Community Periodic Survey in 2017, beginning at this year’s Midsumma Carnival on Sunday, 15 January. From Carnival until the following Sunday, 22 January, gay and bisexual men who have sex with men (MSM) will be asked to participate in the survey at a range of locations across Melbourne, including medical clinics, social venues such as pubs and bars, and sex-on-premises venues.

Only Melbourne men who have had sex with another man in the past five years should complete a survey form, as well as men who don’t live in Melbourne but who regularly participate in the Melbourne gay community. The survey is inclusive of trans men who have sex with men.

The survey is completely anonymous, and the results are communicated later in the year via LGBTI and other media, through public meetings and seminars, in online reports, and through journal articles.

In 2016 the results attracted significant media attention when the survey revealed “open relationship” to be the most common relationship status among the men surveyed.

First conducted in Melbourne in 1998, the short survey takes a snapshot of gay men’s sexual practices related to the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. The survey is important because it gives a snapshot of the lives of gay and homosexually active men in Melbourne from year to year. It allows comparisons to be made over time and for a picture to emerge of the changes in sexual practices and partnering habits, drug use, HIV and STI rates, and testing habits.

“All same-sex attracted guys are welcome to participate, including trans guys: gay or bi, HIV-negative or HIV-positive, we want you to fill out the survey. Not all questions need to be answered by everyone. There are specific questions for men who are living with HIV and general questions that all can answer,” said VAC’s Tex McKenzie

“Look for the survey in bars, dance clubs, medical clinics and sex-on-premises venues in the week after Midsumma Carnival if you don’t see us there.”

VAC CEO Simon Ruth added: “The information we get every year from the Periodic Survey is invaluable. This data helps us know what issues are affecting our community, and where to focus our efforts when it comes to health promotion—from HIV and STI prevention to mental health and alcohol and drug issues.”

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For more information, contact:

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