

MEDIA RELEASE

Australia's \$48m Fiji HIV commitment will save lives

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Health Equity Matters, the peak body for Australia's HIV response, has strongly endorsed Australia's life saving \$48 million investment to support the Pacific nations as they grapple with the world's fastest-growing and most troubling HIV epidemic.

The commitment was announced by the Foreign Minister at today's World AIDS Day Parliamentary Breakfast in Canberra. It includes an immediate investment of \$5 million in 2025-26 for Fiji's national HIV Outbreak Response Plan and broader support through Australian Support to Pacific HIV Action (ASPHA).

New HIV cases in Fiji have surged since 2023, with the country officially declaring an outbreak in January 2025. Over 3,000 new transmissions are expected this year alone.

"Fiji is facing a serious public health emergency," Health Equity Matters CEO, Dash Heath-Paynter said. "Fiji's health system is overwhelmed and Australia's assistance is sorely needed.

"This outbreak will not be resolved quickly or easily which is why it is heartening to see the Albanese Government commit to a sustained, multi-year investment.

"Australia has a responsibility as close friends and neighbours to support the response which will emphasize harm reduction and integrate tuberculosis assessments. Australia's excellence in addressing HIV at home will be deployed to support Pacific nations in responding to HIV. This is solidarity in action, and we commend the Government's decision."

Today's announcement builds on the Commonwealth's three year, \$266 million commitment to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. That delivers \$13.60 in direct benefits to the Indo-Pacific for every Australian dollar invested, supporting HIV treatment, prevention and advocacy programs across the region. Global Fund investments have saved over 26.5 million lives in the Indo-Pacific since 2002.

"The Australian Government deserves credit for maintaining its commitment to the Global Fund alongside this commitment to Fiji. These investments demonstrate that Australia understands infectious diseases don't respect borders," Mr Heath-Paynter said.

"On World AIDS Day, we commemorate the 44 million people we have lost to this epidemic since it began more than four decades ago, and we strengthen our resolve to end HIV as a major health threat."

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