

HOW HIGH IS TOO HIGH?

Data on the rates of STIs/BBV, terminations & unplanned pregnancies among international students in Australia

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WHO WE ARE

CEH Provides support to agencies in Victoria and across Australia on developing culturally competent service systems.

This is undertaken via **training, capacity building, research, resource development, project management and consultancy.**

Multicultural Health & Support Service (MHSS) form **partnerships with the community, education, support and advocacy**

Multicultural Drug Support Service (MDSS) **supporting communities affected by AOD and Mental health**





CEH ARE LEADERS IN

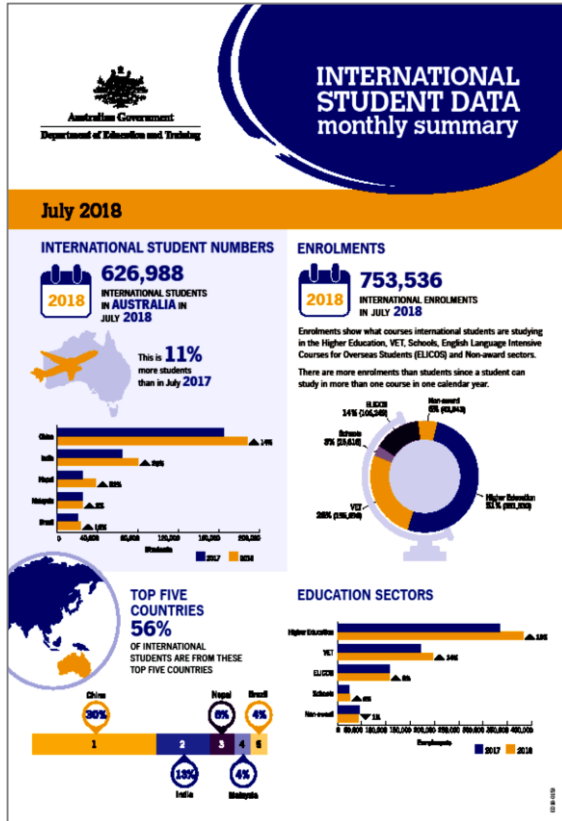
- Cultural Competency
- Health Literacy
- Community Participation
- Understanding Health Belief Systems

MHSS WORKS WITH



- Communities from refugee & migrant backgrounds, asylum seekers and mobile populations including international students
- Service providers, and
- Multicultural organisations including ethno-specific services

BACKGROUND



- In July 2018 there were 626,988 international students in Australia.
- This is 11% more international students than in July 2017.
- Contributes \$30.3 billion to the Australian economy.

WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS?



In recent years, health professionals and service providers working with international students have expressed concerns about their sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.

ISSUES FACING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SEXUAL HEALTH

What's the cause?

- Limited sex education in their country of origin
- Freedom and isolation of the immigration experience
- Limited access to health services including poor understanding of the OSHC and the Australian health care system
- Lack of evidence around the needs of international students

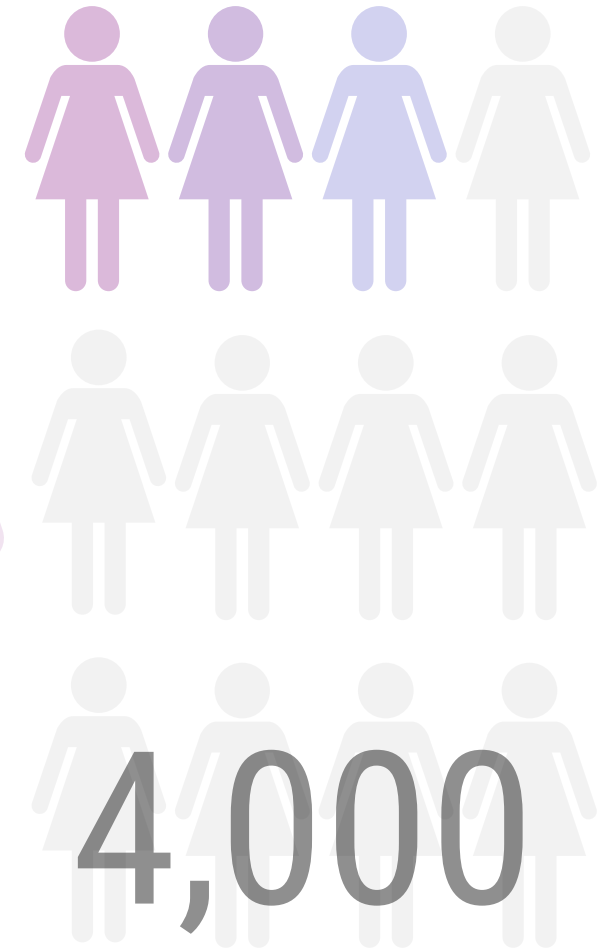
STIS/BBV DATA FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Kirby Institute's Annual Surveillance report on HIV, Viral hepatitis and STI's in Australia states:

- The highest HIV notifications rates in 2016 were in people born in Southeast Asia, North and South America and Sub Sahara Africa.
- HIV notification rates for those born in Southeast Asia fluctuated over the past 10 years but increased sharply between 2014 and 2016. It also increased steadily in those born in Northeast Asia
- The number of notifications for Chlamydia in Victoria have continued to increase since it became notifiable in 1991 with an 11 percent increase in 2017 compared to 2016.

UNPLANNED PREGNANCIES AND TERMINATIONS DATA

- High rates of unplanned pregnancies and abortion are characteristic in the female international student population.
- Unplanned pregnancies in the first 12 months are far more likely to result from lack of knowledge about contraception on arrival.
- It's a conservative estimate that there would be about 4,000 international students per year seeking an abortion in Australia.
- Statistical evidence to support this estimation is not publicly available.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SEXUAL HEALTH NETWORK (ISSHN)

The International Student Sexual Health Network is a network which was established in January 2015 convened by CEH for professionals working in the field who are addressing issues related to the sexual health of international students. It provides an opportunity for members to:

- Share information in research, policy and practice,
- Collaborate on various projects to promote the sexual health and wellbeing of international students who are studying in Australia

RECOMMENDATIONS

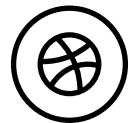
- 1 DEED be revised to eliminate the wait period for coverage for pregnancy related services.
- 2 The cost of all contraception is equivalent to that which an Australian citizen or resident would pay under Medicare.
- 3 DEED be revised to cover treatments of blood borne viruses including HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C, in order to prevent forward transmission of these viruses which continue to drive the epidemic in Australia.
- 4 Mandatory summaries of key claim items (non-identified quantitative data only) be provided annually by health insurance companies to individual universities for whom they provide coverage.

THANK YOU

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CEH – MHSS PROGRAM



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