**Transcript**

***Rachel Koelmeyer – The experience of living with HIV in Australia***

So I work as a Research Officer in the Living with HIV program at the Australian Research Centre in Sex and Society at La Trobe University. Our research program basically does social research to look at what it’s like to live with HIV in Australia. So looking at both the clinical and social aspects of living with HIV in Australia. So, treatments for HIV these days are very effective and so people with HIV can live close to a normal life span. However, people living with HIV are also affected by poverty, discrimination and have difficulty with their social relationships, so there’s a need to have further understanding about the social aspects of living with HIV.

So, the research program I work within they do a national survey of people living with HIV every two to three years and now this provides information, current information about the current experience of living with HIV and that’s used we put together a public report on that study and that is used by service providers and governments to have a good understanding of what the needs and experiences of people living with HIV are in Australia. That helps them to tailor their services to meet the needs of people with HIV.

So, what I guess we’re hoping that with our research we can help to make further improvements in the experience of living with HIV. So I guess the ideal goal would be to see that people with HIV can live a life in a similar way to people who are HIV negative can. And also we aim to try and help services and government use their resources in the best way possible by providing them with information about the experience of living with HIV in Australia.