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Patient Support Resources

“ For decades I lived with hep C.
I lived with the fear and
the worry and the dread of
discrimination. Now I just live.

– Lisa, cured of hepatitis C

”

Patient Support Resources



Barriers to getting hepatitis C care



Creating a friendly space



Making testing easy



Supporting your patients to start hepatitis C treatment



Health Promotion, Education and Support Resources



Patient Support Organisations



Barriers to getting hepatitis C care

People who inject drugs may face additional challenges in getting hepatitis C care, even with these new treatments. Below you'll find some tips on how you can make it easier for people who inject drugs to get the care they need.

People who inject drugs and people living with hepatitis C often face stigma and discrimination within the healthcare system, and also in society more broadly.¹¹

The patients you see might have been discriminated against in the past. This could make them reluctant to get healthcare, and either put off seeing a doctor as long as they can or avoid it altogether.¹²

These experiences may make them quick to react to perceived and actual discrimination, so it is important to consider how your patients might interpret your interactions.

The types of discrimination your patients might have experienced before include:^{11,12}

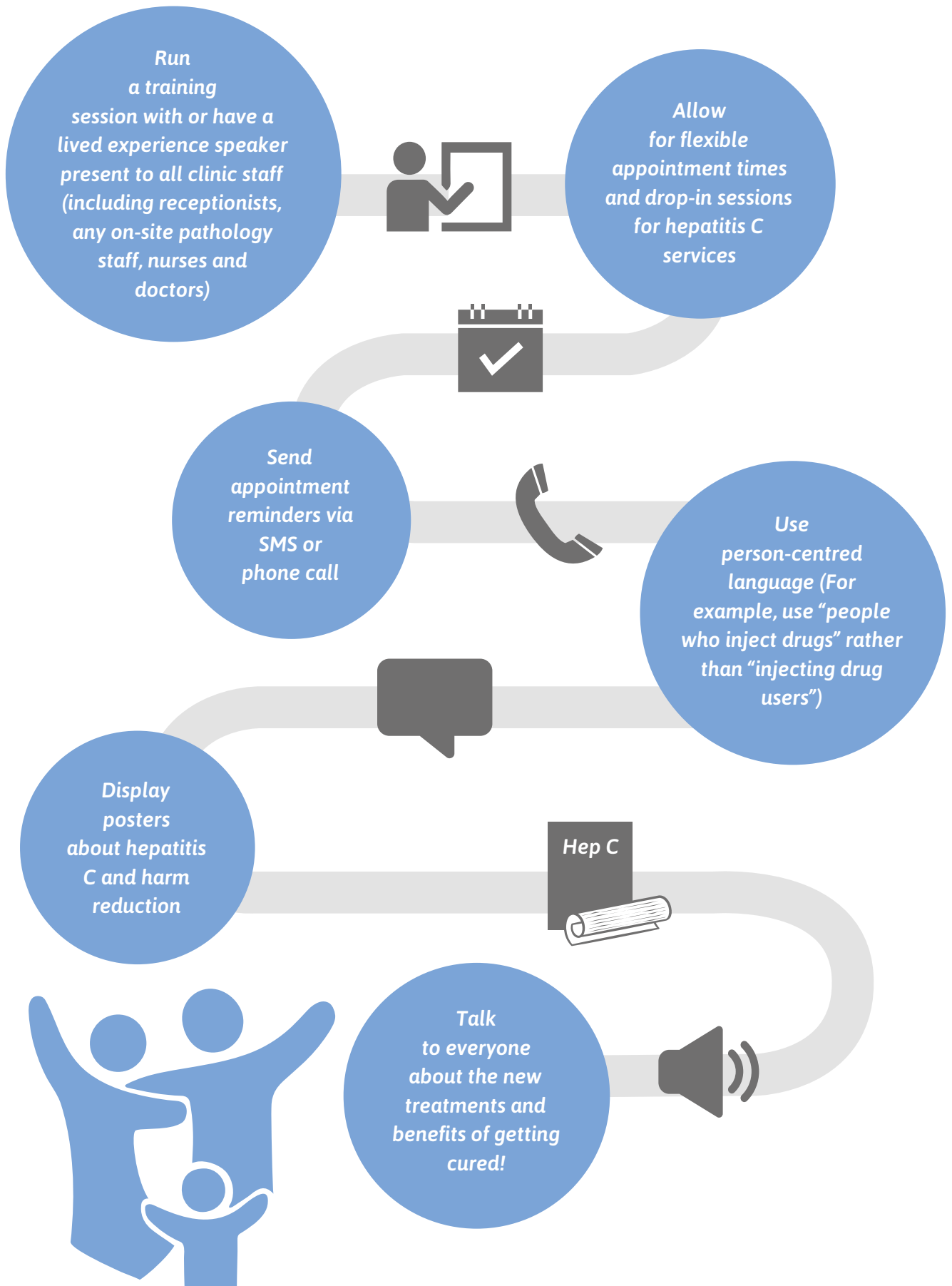
- Unnecessary deviations or extra precautions to standard infection control – e.g. double gloving
- Making people wait to receive services – e.g. until the end of a waiting list or to the end of day's surgeries
- Refusing medical care
- Unwillingness to perform surgical or dental procedures
- Unwillingness to provide pain relief medication
- Breaching their right to confidentiality
- Verbal/non-verbal cues such as being abrupt, unsympathetic, silence/uncomfortable pauses after disclosure, avoiding eye contact
- Asking personal questions about drug use or other behaviours without explaining why it is medically relevant
- Expecting patients to comply with requirements that are more difficult in their condition or situation – e.g. expecting a person who is homeless and without a phone or watch to always keep appointment times.

¹¹Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL) 2011, 'Why wouldn't I discriminate against all of them?', A report on stigma and discrimination towards the injecting drug user community, Canberra, Australia.

¹²ASHM & National Centre in HIV Social Research (2012). Stigma and Discrimination around HIV and HCV in Healthcare Settings: Research Report. Retrieved from: www.ashm.org.au/resources/Stigma_and_Discrimination.pdf

Creating a friendly space

You give your patients a much better experience and help keep them engaged in care by creating a hepatitis C friendly space. Here's some ideas of how to do this:



Making testing easy

We know that starting the conversation about hepatitis C testing can be tricky sometimes. To make it a little easier, we've pulled together some tips on how to start the conversation. You can find these, along with some of the key things to cover before performing a test, in the *Starting the Conversation Tool*.

Many people who inject drugs have veins that are difficult to access. This can make blood tests a traumatic experience.

The Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL) has produced a factsheet to help with difficult venous access. You can also get tips and tricks that might help on their website: bit.ly/aivl_bloodtest_tips

Strategies:

Get all the bloods done in one go. Reduce the number of blood draws, number of visits and streamline their pathway into care by using reflexive testing and APRI to assess for fibrosis.

Provide on-site pathology through either a pathology collection service or nurses/doctors.

Develop a 'champion blood taker' within your service.

Encourage your patients to drink some water before having their blood taken.

Warm up the venepuncture area with heat packs or warm towels before taking blood.

Allow your patients to self-collect blood under supervision.

Follow your patients' advice about which veins are most likely to be successful.

Request an ultrasound-guided venepuncture if needed. These can be provided at some hospitals.

Be sensitive to the trauma associated with repeated failed venepuncture.

Supporting your patients to start Hepatitis C treatment

Hepatitis C treatment is only one aspect of a person's life. A number of factors – like unstable housing or financial hardship – could be a barrier to your patient starting or following the treatment through to completion.

You can help your patient start and stick with their treatment by providing additional support. Here's some ways you can find out if your patient needs additional support:



Staying engaged

- Schedule appointments at the same time as opioid substitution therapy (OST) appointments or regular NSP pick-ups
- Collect multiple contact details for your patient, plus an alternative contact person and their details



Sticking to treatment

- Discuss logistics of accessing pharmacies, storage of medications and transport
- Ask your patient what they think would help them finish treatment.
 - daily dosing with OST
 - using a dosette box
 - setting phone reminders
 - taking tablets with other daily routine



Extra support

- Seek out any case managers or outreach workers/nurses who are already assisting the patient
- Discuss housing, finances and social support and whether any of these could be a barrier to starting or sticking with treatment
- Ask how their drug use, alcohol use, other health is going. Do they feel like these things are under control, and if not, if they want you to organise some help for them like a referral to AOD counsellor or general counsellor/psychologist

You can get more tips on how to discuss treatment readiness with your patients in our *Getting someone ready for treatment* tool, in the Appendix booklet.

Health promotion, education and support resources

There are plenty of health promotion, education and support resources available, and we've included a few of the key ones here in this Toolkit.

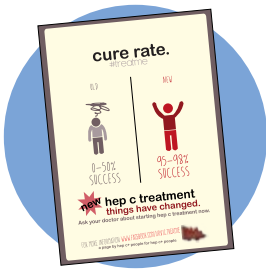
A full catalogue of resources is available online at ecpartnership.org.au/resources

The Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) website project allgood.org.au/ also has a catalogue of resources and webpages about hepatitis C in various languages, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait languages, Chinese, Urdu, Punjabi, Burmese, Khmer, Dari, Hindi, Thai, Lao, and Vietnamese. It also hosts a list of Aboriginal Health services.

Hepatitis C Health Promotion Resources for Display

Format available in

A3 Posters, PDF



Material

Hep C treatment things have changed (Seven different posters available)

Produced by & order information

Harm Reduction Victoria

Available for download and ordering online:
bit.ly/hrvic_posters

Hard copy or PDF brochure and A3 poster in English; brochure also in Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic



Be free from Hep C – brochure and poster

Hepatitis Victoria

Available for download and ordering online:
bit.ly/hepvic_befreefromhepc

Hep C Friendly Clinic Resources for Display

Format available in

Material

**Produced by &
order information**

Poster and PDF

Clinic EC Partnership Poster
(Option 1)

EC Partnership
ecpartnership@burnet.edu.au



Poster and PDF

Clinic EC Partnership Poster
(Option 2)

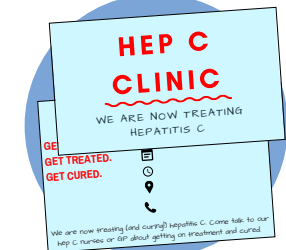
EC Partnership
ecpartnership@burnet.edu.au



Poster and PDF

Clinic Details EC Partnership
Poster

EC Partnership
ecpartnership@burnet.edu.au



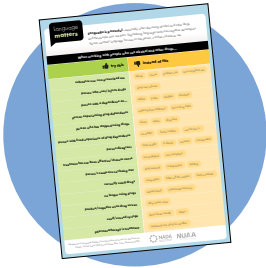
Clinic Details EC Partnership
business cards and stickers

EC Partnership
ecpartnership@burnet.edu.au

Stigma and Discrimination Training & Education Resources for Practice Staff

Format available in

Two-page PDF



Material

Language Matters Poster

Produced by & order information

NADA & NUUA

Available online for download from:
bit.ly/nada_languagesmatters

Online Course



A Normal Day – online podcast education course

ASHM and AIVL

Available from:
lms.ashm.org.au/

Lived experience speakers



Speaking Peer-spectively Program

Lived experience speakers with CURRENT experience with:

- substance use - various substances, injecting and otherwise
- experience with Hepatitis B - living with and treatment of
- experience with Hepatitis C- living with and treatment of
- experience with HIV - prevention and treatment
- experience with stigma & discrimination as a person who uses drugs and/or as a person with a BBV

Harm Reduction Victoria

email admin@hrvic.org.au
call **9329 1500**

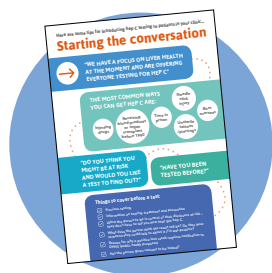
hrvic.org.au/speaking-peer-spectively

Tips for providers

Format available in

Material

Produced by &
order information



Starting the Conversation Tool

EC Partnership
ecpartnership.org.au/resources



Getting Someone Ready
for Treatment Tool

EC Partnership
ecpartnership.org.au/resources

Client Support Resources

Format available in

Material

Produced by &
order information



Personal blog that tracks the progress of the hep C elimination effort in Australia. Written by a person with lived experience. Views expressed are their own and not HRVic's.

Available online:
hrvic.org/the-hepalogue



Hepatitis Victoria Infoline
- business cards & posters
advertising service

Email: info@hepvic.org.au to
order some business cards or
posters

Format available in

Material

Produced by & order information



Hepatitis Victoria
Prison Resource

Hepatitis Victoria

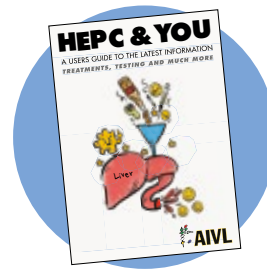
Email: info@hepvic.org.au
to get access to this resource

A5 booklet and PDF

Hep C & You
information booklet

AIVL

Order hardcopies by emailing
info@aivl.org.au or visit
aivl.org.au/resource



Square booklet and PDF

Liver First information booklet

AIVL

Order hardcopies by emailing
info@aivl.org.au or visit
aivl.org.au/resource

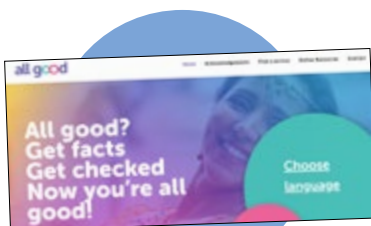


Website with pages in various
languages including audio

ASHM All Good website project,
information pages in various
languages including playable
audio

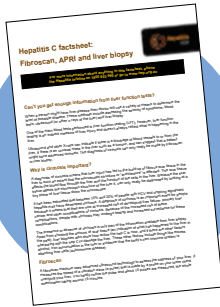
ASHM

allgood.org.au/languages/



Format available in

1-2 page pdf's



Material

Hepatitis factsheets:

- Antibody testing
- PCR tests
- Pregnancy and children
- Sex and transmission
- Liver Function Tests
- Tattooing and Piercing
- Disclosure
- Discrimination
- Workplace issues

Produced by & order information

Hepatitis NSW

Available online for download from: bit.ly/hepnsw_factsheets

Safer Using Tips Poster



Poster #1 gives facts about the risk of sharing and tips on ways to avoid risks

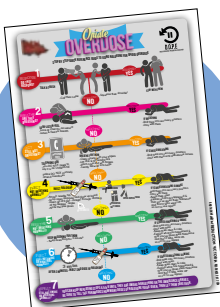
Poster #2 gives tips to reducing drug related harms while injecting, snorting or smoking illicit substances.

Harm Reduction Victoria

Available for download and ordering online:

www.hrvic.org.au/resources

Opioid overdose / Naloxone administration instruction poster. A3 size.



Step by step quick reference guide on how to respond to an opioid overdose and how to administer naloxone

Harm Reduction Victoria

Available for download and ordering online:

hrvic.org.au/resources

Patient Support Organisations

The following organisations provide resources, education and support for people who are living with hepatitis C or at risk of hepatitis C.



Hepatitis Victoria

Hepatitis Victoria is the peak not-for-profit community organisation working across the state for people affected by or at risk of viral hepatitis.

You can refer patients to call the Hepatitis Infoline to find out more about resources, support and education opportunities available to people living with viral hepatitis. Calling the Hepatitis Infoline is free and confidential. Hepatitis Victoria also has resources available in languages other than English.

 hepvic.org.au/

 **Hepatitis Infoline – 1800 703 003**



Harm Reduction Victoria

Harm Reduction Victoria is Victoria's peak community organisation for people who use drugs. Harm Reduction Victoria provides education, practical support, information and advocacy to people who currently use and have in the past used illicit drugs, their friends and allies.

You can refer your patients to the Pharmacotherapy, Advocacy Mediation and Support (PAMS) Service if they are having problems with their provider or the pharmacy dispensing their medications. Free call: 1800 443 844 PAMS is a state-wide telephone service run by Harm Reduction Victoria and funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services.

You can help your patients access various harm reduction resources, including substance-specific brochures and overdose response posters and factsheets, by directing them to the 'Resources' section on the Harm Reduction Victoria website.

You can also refer your clients to 'The Hepalogue' to read about real life experiences of hepatitis C treatment. It is a personal blog that tracks the progress of the hepatitis C elimination effort in Australia. Views expressed are those of the individual not Harm Reduction Victoria's.

 hrvic.org.au/

 **Free call to 1800 443 844**



Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL)

AIVL is the national peak body for state and territory organisations for people who use drugs. AIVL's purpose is to advance the health of people who use or have used illicit drugs. This includes a primary focus on reducing the transmission and impact of blood-borne viruses. AIVL works towards the implementation of peer education, harm reduction, health promotion and policy/advocacy strategies at a national level.

You can refer your patients to the resources on AIVL's website, including the NSP directory, information on legal issues associated with drug use, and factsheets on a range of health topics including vein care and preventing blood-borne viruses.

 aivl.org.au/

 02 6279 1600



DirectLine

DirectLine is a confidential, free hotline for AOD counselling and referral in Victoria.

 directline.org.au/

 Call 1800 88 236 for assistance