EC VICTORIA SUMMARY



The Eliminate Hepatitis C **(EC) Victoria Partnership** is a five year project (2017-2021) led by the Burnet Institute in partnership with St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (SVHM) and key stakeholders across the sector. It aimed to increase Hepatitis C (HCV) testing and treatment uptake among people who inject drugs (PWID) via a community based, nurse-led model of care. In order to meet WHO Elimination targets, Victoria needs to increase HCV treatments to ~1,160 PWID a year for five years. The results will be used to measure the impact on prevalence and incidence of HCV in Victoria and inform HCV elimination models in Australia and globally.

1. HEALTH PROMOTION

Funded partners to develop new health promotion resources for PWID:

- Hepatitis Victoria: 'Be free from C' Getting treated on the Outside
- Hepatitis Victoria: updated fitpack stickers
- Harm Reduction Victoria: 'ezy-card' resource

Convened an EC Health Promotion Working Group Activities included:

- Regular meetings to share information and lessons across the group.
- Improving the health literacy of client resources.
- Developed a catalogue of existing hepatitis C resources available in Victoria

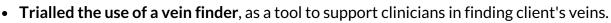


2. TRAINING & EDUCATION

- Established a website; HepCHelp to provide clinical HCV information to GPs (site was retired when HCV consensus guidelines were released).
- **Trained and mentored** individual providers at EC sites.
- Developed a FibroScan training & certification program and loaning agreement for Integrated Hepatitis C Nurses (IHNs) in regional areas.
- **Produced a series of clinical resources** to help clinicians understand requirements of HCV treatment and streamline pathways to liver fibrosis assessment and post treatment monitoring.
- Delivered hepatitis C training sessions for primary care nurses and people working in alcohol and drug settings, in collaboration with Victorian HIV and Hepatitis Integrated training and learning program, Primary Health Networks and ASHM.

3. CLINICAL SUPPORT

- Undertook a scoping exercise across 18 clinics with a high caseload of PWID and 12 IHNs to document models of hepatitis C care.
- Developed and disseminated 620 copies of the EC Practice Support Toolkit Australia-wide; a comprehensive resource for primary care providers to deliver HCV testing, treatments, and engagement in good quality hepatitis C care. These included:
 - Patient Support Resources, health promotion resources and patient information.
 - Provider Support Resources, clinical support resources and decision making tools.
 - Practice Support Resources , guidance for maximising MBS billing and Instructions to conduct database queries and searches, to assist case-finding of patients requiring care.
- **Direct provision of services at EC sites by EC nurses**, including on-site pathology, fibroscans, treatment assessments, referrals and support to service staff to recall and follow up clients.





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4. DATA SYSTEMS & SURVILLANCE

- Expanded ACCESS surveillance system, to include 16 primary care sites.
- Following consultation with clinicians, researchers and data experts we developed indicators to monitor the HCV care cascade.

6. PRISON PROGRAM:

- **Developed a state-wide program** on viral hepatitis assessment and treatment in prisons.
- Employed an Evaluation and Research Coordinator, for quality improvement and evaluation activities of the program.
- **Conducted a trial** to evaluate the effectiveness of a care navigator to link people released from prison into community-based hepatitis C care.
- Helped establish an annual reporting of hepatitis C treatment numbers among prisoners in each state/territory to contribute to the progress to elimination report.
- Contributing to the the development of a national consensus statement on the management of hepatitis C in Australia's prisons.

EC VICTORIA ACHIEVEMENTS

OUTCOMES:

- Across 11 primary care services, we have supported them to test 4473 and treat 1162 people.
- Across 14 prison sites, we have supported them to assess 2465 and treat 1,928 people.

FURTHER FUNDING:

- EC Victoria informed the design of the Eliminate Hepatitis C Australia Partnership, a \$11.3 million philanthropic grant (Paul Ramsay Foundation).
- RapidEC informed NHMRC Grant (\$1,459,971) & Gilead Grant (\$1,062,026) for the National Quickstart Trial and the CT2 Myanmar Project.
- PATH pilot led to funding for PATH EX-panded through Gilead Grants (\$171,248.31).
- SVHM have secured funding for 12 months to establish partnerships with MSIR, Community Corrections and the IHN Network to pilot new models of care for testing and linkage to treatment.
- EC Victoria lead to the successful NHMRC Program Grant on 'The elimination of Hepatitis C as a global public health threat' (\$7,001,475).

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION:

• Published 20 publications to date in multiple journals, including a series of supplements in Medicine Today to focus on the role of GPs in hepatitis C elimination.



5. RESEARCH & EVALUATION

- Rapid EC, a pilot study of rapid point of care testing to demonstrate the potential utility of these tests in reducing barriers to testing.
- EC Experience Cohort, a longitudinal study of people who inject drugs recruited from EC sites to identify barriers and enablers to accessing treatment.
- Peer Assisting Treatment of Hepatitis C (PATH) project, in partnership with Harm Reduction Victoria and Access Health, Salvation Army.
- Conducted a mapping of different populations of PWID to engage in HCV care, which has led to an ongoing systematic review of barriers and enablers to HCV care.
- Delivered a hepatitis C testing campaign to coincide with World Hepatitis Day in July 2019.



