

## **The fourth edition of the National guide to preventive healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: updating guidance for the prevention of liver cancer.**

**Authors:** Allard N <sup>1,2</sup>, Combo T<sup>3</sup>, Hammond B<sup>4</sup>

1. WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis, Doherty Institute, Melbourne, Australia.

2. Department of Infectious Diseases, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

3. Burnet Institute, Melbourne, Australia

4. Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Melbourne, Australia.

**Background/Approach:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to develop liver cancer, be diagnosed late and have poorer survival than non-Indigenous Australian people. In recognition of the urgency of action a “Prevention of Liver cancer” chapter was included for the first time in the 2018, 3rd edition of the *National guide to preventive healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people* (National Guide). In the 4th edition was updated in 2024.

**Analysis:** The evidence base for the update National Guide and the liver cancer chapter was informed by current national and international evidence-based guidelines including the recently developed “Clinical practice guidelines for hepatocellular carcinoma surveillance for people at high risk in Australia”. Review was led by co-authors, ongoing liaison with a clinical lead, peer review and editorial oversight. Recommendations and were graded as strong, conditional or good practice points.

**Outcome:** The 2024 National Guide was updated. Expanded recommendations emphasised the importance of screening for and management viral hepatitis in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in primary care to prevent liver cancer or mortality from liver cancer. Screening for cirrhosis in at risk individuals using risk calculators and considerations of multiple comorbidities, diabetes, metabolic associated steatosis, alcohol related harm and early cirrhosis were included.

**Applications:** The new National Guide was launched in November 2024 and promoted to primary health care practitioners. The guidelines are relevant for all primary health care practitioners involved the care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They provide a framework to address health inequities and improve the prevention of and screening for predisposing factors and early detection of cirrhosis and liver cancer.

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:** The fourth edition is a joint initiative between the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). It was funded by the First Nations Health Division, Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care and undertaken by a project team and executive who coordinated all aspects of the project. The authors disclose no conflict of interest. Authors received a financial payment as Honoria for authorship.