

A New Multidisciplinary approach to HCV (Hepatitis C) treatment at Casuarina Prison, Western Australia

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Background: HCV elimination as a public health threat is a World Health Organisation priority with higher prevalence's of HCV persisting in Australian prison populations. At Casuarina Prison, Western Australia's largest male prison, inmates face challenges as described in the 2022 'Health of people in Australia's prisons' report including higher prevalence's of chronic disease, mental illness, recent illicit drug use and HCV. The 2023 consensus statement on the management of HCV in Australian prisons states priorities are high coverage testing, swift treatment and harm minimisation strategies including opioid agonist therapy & needle/syringe access, yet many barriers to care persist. This presentation describes the multidisciplinary model of care developed at Casuarina Prison to achieve better HCV case finding and treatment from May 2025- February 2026.

Methods: A new multidisciplinary approach to case finding and treatment at Casuarina prison has improved outcomes for those incarcerated with HCV.

Results: Our model of care includes a dedicated BBV (Blood Born Viral) nurse, primary care/mental health nurses, and general practitioners all supported by a public health physician, BBV Project Officer and staff at the Department of Justice Health and Wellbeing service, and also the Fiona Stanley Hospital Gastroenterology Department. We use centralised data and dynamic workflows to find and treat HCV cases at the earliest opportunity. During this time we have found 170 cases of HCV, starting 116 on treatment, with only 3 cases of failed treatment.

Conclusion: Since May 2025 a new multidisciplinary approach to case finding and treatment of HCV has improved outcomes at Casuarina Prison.

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