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Test. Treat. **Cure** hep C.

## Pilot project to increase HCV testing and treatment rates in Murray Bridge, South Australia

This project was made possible with funding from Hepatitis Australia

Thank you to Hepatitis Australia & all the organisations in Murray Bridge who supported this campaign

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### BACKGROUND/AIMS & METHODS:

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#### Background

Murray Bridge – 80km from Adelaide, pop. 20,000

Lower than average incomes and educational attainment and higher unemployment.

#### Aim

Increase knowledge, linkage to HCV testing and treatment uptake in Murray Bridge via a whole of community approach

#### Approach

Local consultation, education, awareness raising activities, communications and media strategy, branding and logo development, and capacity building of local health workforce

#### Target audience

local health workforce > affected community > wider community

#### Timeline

Planning Dec 2016 – Jan 2017, implementation Feb-May 2017, data collection until Dec 2017

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**RESULTS:**

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**Outputs***Education:*

- 9 consultations with workforce or community members
- 30 workforce education sessions provided to 243 workers – including a GP training event with 15 clinicians
- 11 community awareness raising events – 511 community members

*Communications:*

- Media – newspaper and radio promotion, website, facebook
- Promotional items – T shirts, coffee cups & coasters at local venues, fitpack labels, posters
- Resource distribution – mail out to local orgs, letter box drops (>5,700 letterboxes), GP packs
- Advertising within GP clinics – third party media company

**Outcomes**

- 31 people from MB accessed treatment during 2017 (out of estimated 200-250 HCV+)
- New GP prescribers in the area increased from 1 to 11 over same period



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**CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS:**

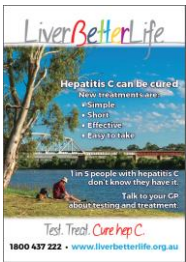
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- Local community and workforce were highly supportive – did not encounter negative attitudes to HCV campaign
- However, confidentiality and stigma concerns in a small rural town
- Good engagement with GPs for education session, but difficult to engage GPs in data collection re HCV testing & treatment uptake
- Local pharmacies were easier to engage re numbers of people getting scripts
- Significant work involved within a short timeframe – to measure treatment uptake needs longer timeframe.
- Murray Bridge is only 1 hour from Adelaide – would need to adapt to run in rural areas at a greater distance.

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