

Impact of policy change to risk-based hep B pre-migration screening on hep B health undertakings in NSW

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Session 2B: Hepatitis B care pathways, community voices and equitable access

Thu, Aug 13

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters in which we all work, live and learn.

We recognise the incredible richness, strength and resilience of the world's oldest living cultures, including cultural practices, languages and connection to Country.

Artwork by Tracey Van Oploo, commissioned by HPNSW, 2025

What is a hepatitis health undertaking?



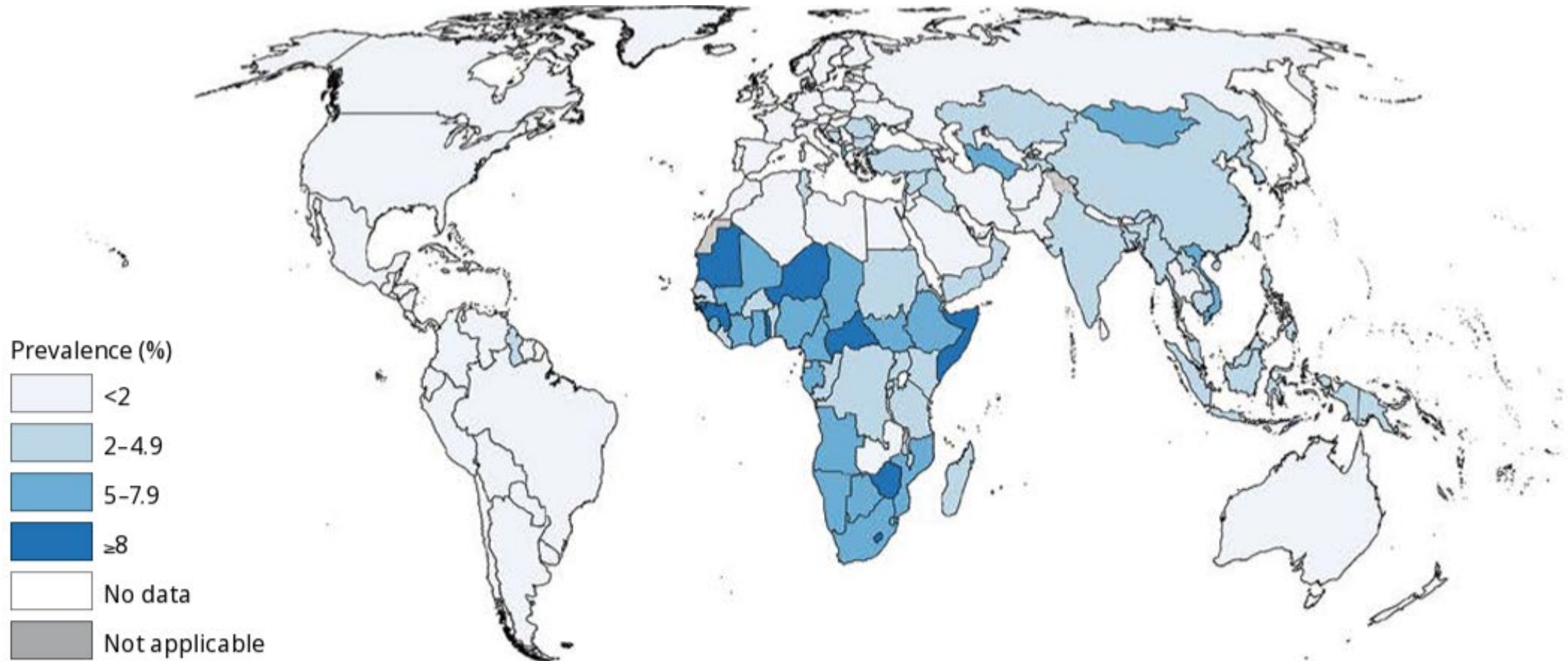
- Hepatitis B health undertakings links visa applicants to medical care after arrival in Australia
- Previously, limited to:
 - healthcare workers
 - pregnant people
 - applicants with clinical indicators or known history

On 1 July 2024, pre-migration screening expanded to:

- Provisional and permanent visa applicants aged 15 years or older
- Born in a country with $\geq 2\%$ hepatitis B prevalence

Prevalence of chronic HBV infection in general population at country level, WHO, 2024

- Based on migration numbers, estimated a four-fold rise in hep B undertakings in NSW (~1,000)



What did we do?

- Revised the NSW Health patient and clinician undertaking letters
- Enhanced visibility of interpreter services

Translations

This information is also available in:

[Arabic | العربية](#) →

[Burmese | မြန်မာ](#) →

[Chinese-Simplified | 简体中文](#) →

[Chinese-Traditional | 繁體中文](#) →

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Hepatitis Health Undertakings

What is a hepatitis Health Undertaking?



As part of your visa approval, you signed an agreement with the Australian Government to have a follow-up health examination for hepatitis B or C infection.

This is called a Health Undertaking.

This follow-up health examination is important for your health. Even if you are well you still need a test. Many people with hepatitis B or C have no symptoms, but over time the virus may damage your liver and even cause cancer.

For more information on hepatitis B and C:

- [NSW Health Hepatitis B fact sheet](#)
- [NSW Health Hepatitis C fact sheet](#)

What do I need to do?

To finish your health requirement, you must:

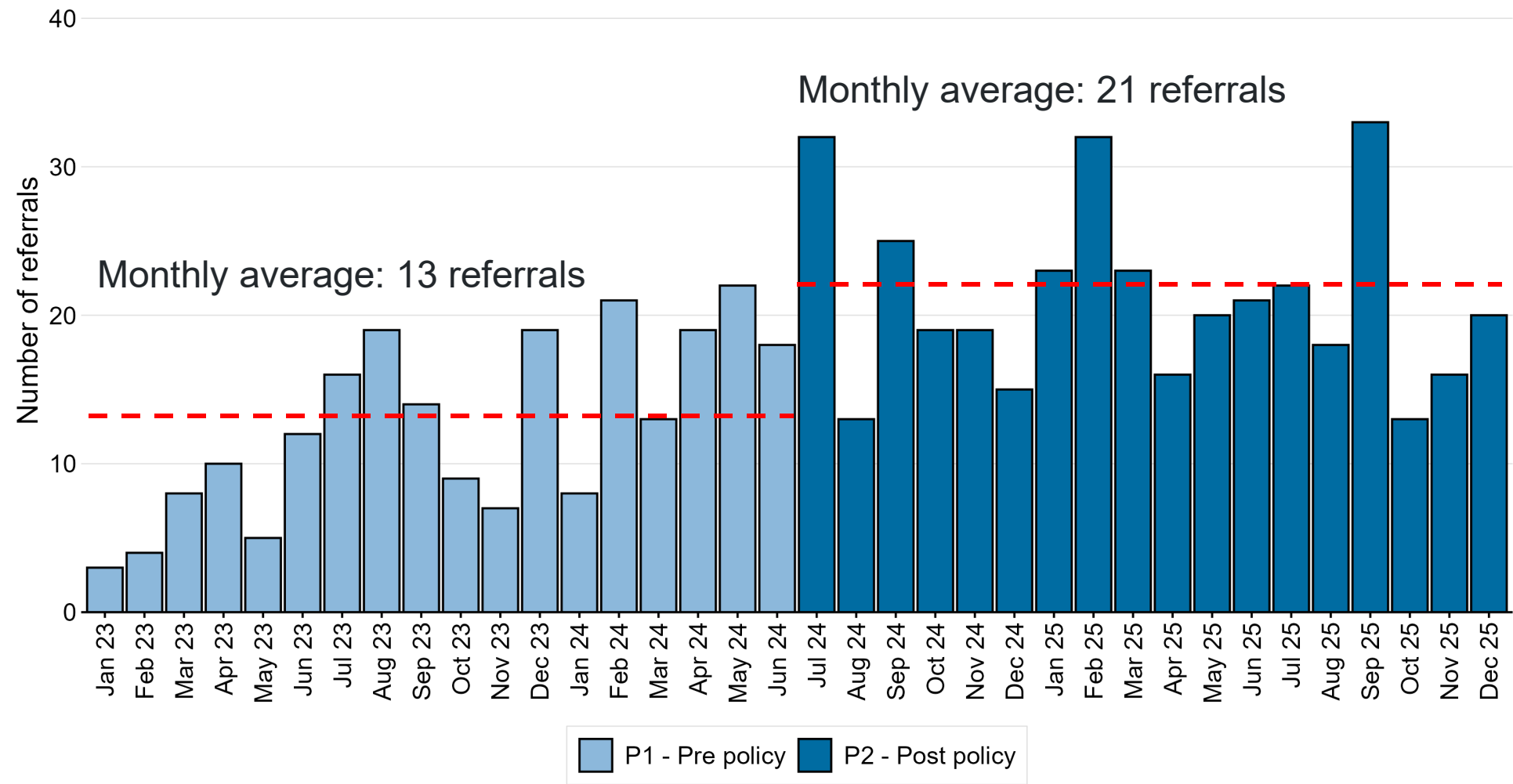
1. Make an **appointment with any doctor** within one month.
2. Take **these letters with you and show them to your doctor.**

Your doctor will test you for hepatitis B or C infection. They will tell you the result and provide you with information and treatment if needed.

Your doctor will let public health know that you had an appointment, and public health will then tell the Department of Home Affairs that your **Health Undertaking is complete.**



Number of monthly hepatitis B health undertakings, NSW, 2022 to 2025

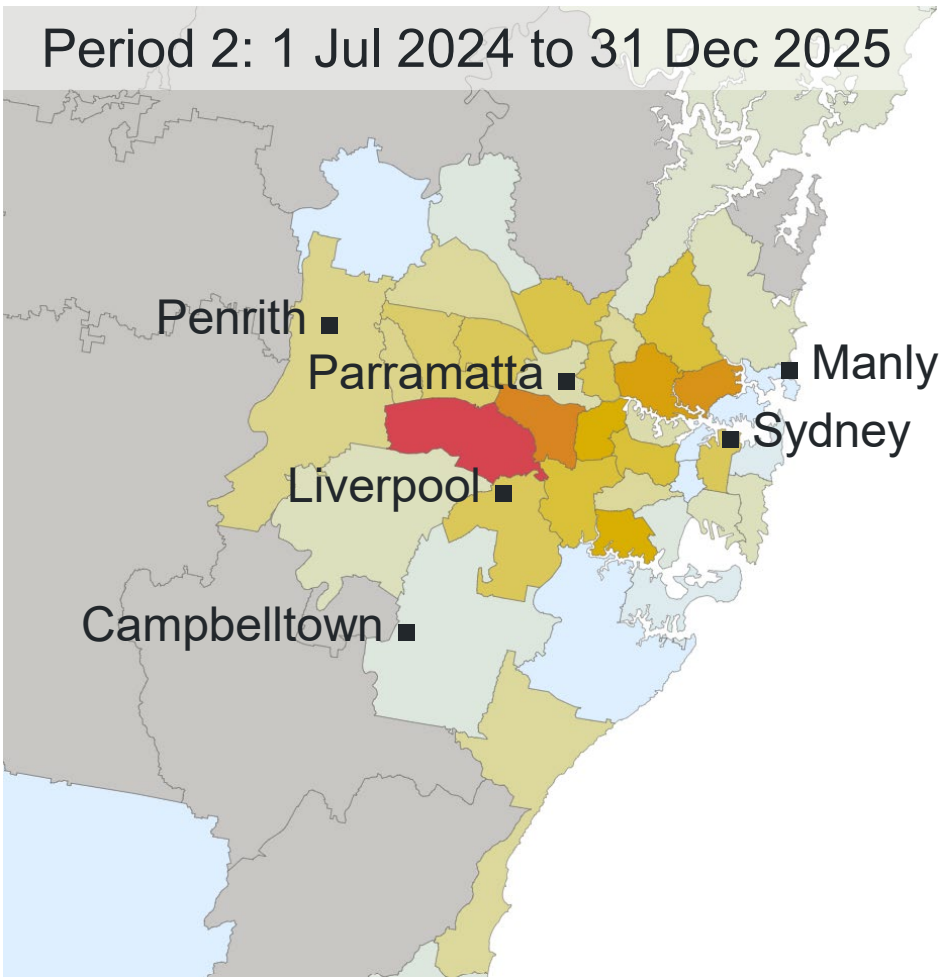
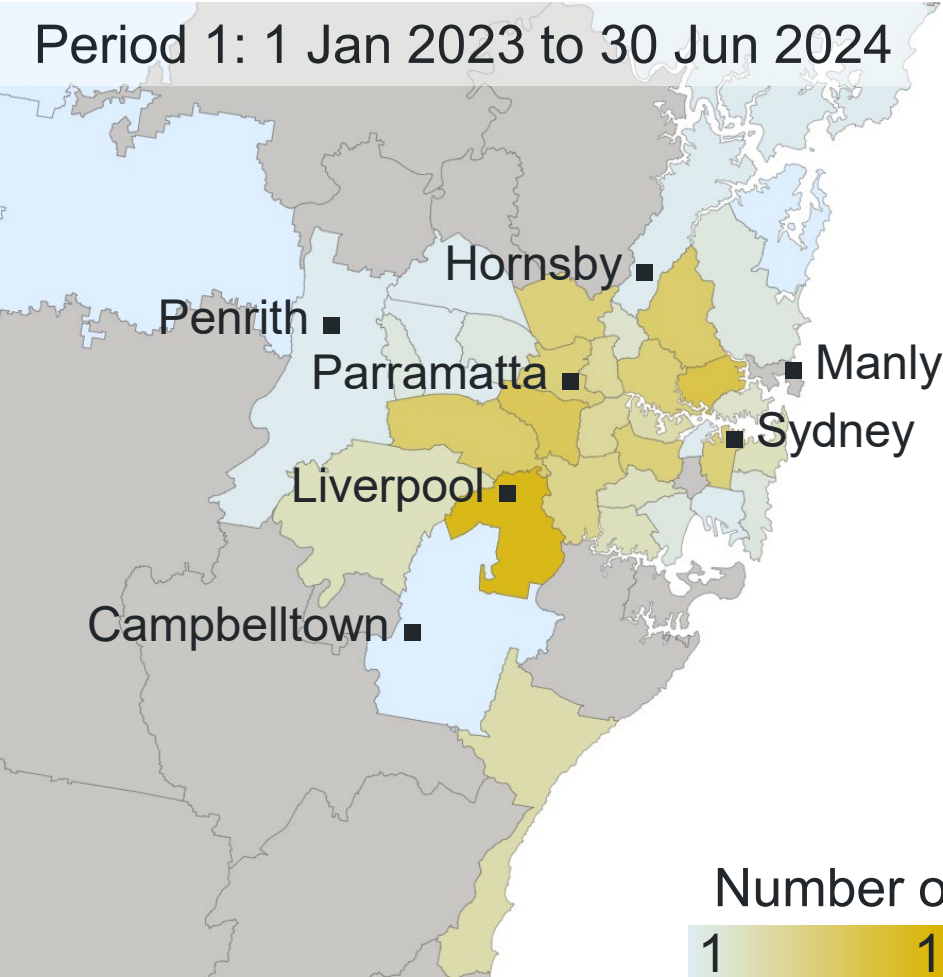


Characteristic	Overall N = 605	P1: Pre-policy N = 227	P2: Post-policy N = 378	p-value
Sex at birth				0.7 ¹
Female	310 (51%)	114 (50%)	196 (52%)	
Male	295 (49%)	113 (50%)	182 (48%)	
Age group (years)				0.2 ¹
0-19	11 (2.0%)	5 (2.5%)	6 (1.7%)	
20-39	200 (36%)	68 (34%)	132 (37%)	
40-59	207 (38%)	85 (43%)	122 (35%)	
60+	134 (24%)	41 (21%)	93 (26%)	
Unknown	53	28	25	
Region of birth				0.11 ²
African Region	17 (5.0%)	3 (3.6%)	14 (5.4%)	
Eastern Mediterranean Region	30 (8.8%)	2 (2.4%)	28 (11%)	
European Region	6 (1.8%)	2 (2.4%)	4 (1.6%)	
South-East Asia Region	20 (5.9%)	5 (6.0%)	15 (5.8%)	
Western Pacific Region	267 (79%)	71 (86%)	196 (76%)	
Unknown	265	144	121	
Interpreter needed	446 (74%)	167 (74%)	279 (74%)	>0.9 ¹
Attendance at GP				<0.001 ¹
Medical review form received	268 (47%)	124 (58%)	144 (40%)	
Laboratory notification received	280 (49%)	80 (37%)	200 (56%)	
Currently overseas	18 (3.1%)	7 (3.3%)	11 (3.1%)	
Lost to follow up	9 (1.6%)	4 (1.9%)	5 (1.4%)	
Unknown	30	12	18	
New or historic notification				0.4 ¹
New notification	387 (70%)	144 (72%)	243 (69%)	
Historical notification	165 (30%)	55 (28%)	110 (31%)	
Unknown	53	28	25	

¹ Fisher's exact test

² Fisher's Exact Test for count data with simulated p-value (based on 10,000 replicates) – Note: proportion of missing data 32-63%, interpret with caution.

Hepatitis B health undertakings in Greater Sydney, 2022 to 2025



60 km

Summary



- Hepatitis B undertakings increased 67% post-policy change
 - Increase less than expected
 - Possibly reflects the healthy migrant effect & impact of hep B vaccination programs overseas
- ~70% new notifications
 - Effective mechanism to provide initial linkage into care
- Interpreter need remained high 74%
 - Further translation resources needed
- Attendance to GP remained high
 - But shift from returning medical review form to receiving laboratory results
- Hepatitis B undertakings remained concentrated in Sydney
 - North Sydney, Western Sydney and South Western Sydney