



# A Thoughtful And Collaborative Approach To Hepatitis B Is Essential When Working In Remote Aboriginal Communities

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## Conflicts of interest

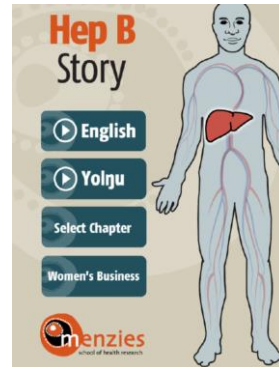


- Nil.

## Early days of Hep B research



- Sarah Bukulatjpi and Jane Davies identified a need for education for HBV patients through the outreach liver clinic service.
- “Hep B story” app developed.



## Early days



- Community sero-survey project, “**Know your Hep B Status**”.
- Mother to child transmission - **BAMBI** project.





## Early days



- We encountered unexpected reactions to the HBV projects.
- Many people had never heard of HBV.

- Many people were too embarrassed to talk about HBV.

## HBV Education



- Needed to address the lack of health literacy surrounding HBV.
- People needed to know what HBV was before deciding to participate in the research projects.
- Encouraged to attend clinic for HBV test if uncomfortable talking to researchers.



“Must be patient, give proper time to think, don’t push them.

When we started this project people felt uncomfortable, we just leave those people, they not ready, we walk away and say OK.

Sometimes they hear from other people and then come back and ask us”

*Roslyn Dhurrkay 2018*

## Culturally appropriate approach

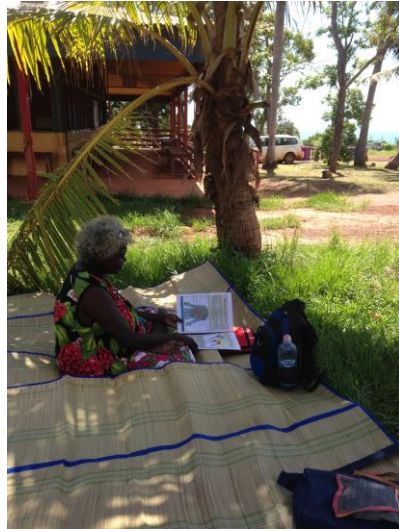
- Followed the lead of Community Based Researchers (CBR's) - experts in local knowledge.

- CBR's decided the best way to deliver Balanda information to Yolŋu.



“When Balanda tells the story, Yolŋu doesn’t understand whole story, they don’t know about hep B, don’t hear story right and get confused.”

*Roslyn Dhurrkay 2018*



## Culturally appropriate approach

- Very important that women talk to women and men talk to men.
- “Not have yapa (sister) and wawa (brother) together hearing the story.”
- Kinship laws.
- Women’s business.



## Culturally appropriate approach



- Needed to be very careful that we didn't make mothers feel guilty for potentially passing on HBV.
- Important family was educated too.



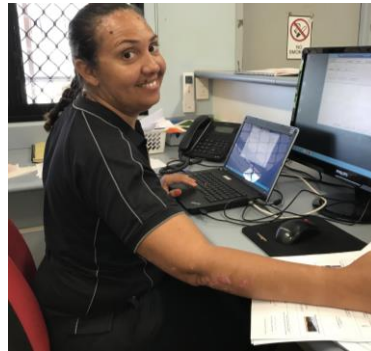
## Logistics



- Need to work around cultural obligations:
  - Family
  - Ceremony
  - Death/Funerals



## Research and Service Delivery



## Importance of Education



- People know what HBV is, how to prevent passing it on, importance of staying on treatment.
- Want people to feel comfortable talking about hep B so they come for regular check-ups and stay healthy
  - Blood test
  - Tablets
  - Vaccination



## Good Things



- Important to include positive information – hope.
- Aboriginal people not alone – other Indigenous populations across the world have same issues.
- Combine traditional lifestyle and foods with Western medicine



## Things to consider



- Be patient and build trust.
- Be mindful of cultural obligations and priorities.
- Encourage people to go to clinic for HBV check-up – it's ok to say **no** to the research.
- Accept things do not always go to plan.

## Things to consider



- Work alongside the health clinic, provide education – both patients and health workers.
- Feedback progress of research and any findings to health clinic, council and other involved groups.
- Positive messages are important.



“We stand together and share knowledge and do research in proper way”

*Roslyn Dhurrkay 2018*

“We correct each other, we are all advisors”

*George Gurruwiwi 2018*

## Acknowledgements



### Menzies Hep B Research Team

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- Lilly Yuen
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## Questions?

