

Title: Reaching the regions – promotional strategies to drive hepatitis C treatment uptake: observations from the MOTIVATE C study

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Background:

The Methodical Evaluation and Optimisation of Targeted Incentives for Accessing Treatment of Early-stage Hepatitis C (MOTIVATE-C) study aims to assess whether financial incentives increase the likelihood of people with hepatitis C (HCV) infection to initiate antiviral therapy in primary care settings.

Methods

To promote the project and encourage participation across both metropolitan and regional Australia, a range of strategies have been implemented. Here, we provide a narrative overview of these strategies employed to promote, with a particular focus on those used in the regional settings.

Results

Identifying relationships with key stakeholders (such as community services, needle and syringe programs, alcohol and drug services, and prison re-integration programs) and peer-to-peer promotion proved challenging in regional Australia, where healthcare services are limited, and community-based networks are often fragmented or sparse. To address this, we implemented a TV advertising campaign to raise awareness of the project across regional Australia.

Between 15 May 2023 and 27 May 2025, a total of 908 people registered their interest in the project. Of these, 58.6% (n=532) were assessed as eligible and subsequently enrolled. Among those enrolled, 53.6% (n=285) were from metropolitan areas and 29.5% (n=157) were from regional areas. Notably, 56.1% (n=88) of the regional participants enrolled following the TV advertising campaign, which has been running intermittently since July 2024.

Conclusion: Regional TV advertising may be an effective strategy for promoting HCV treatment initiatives in regional Australia, particularly in settings where traditional outreach and stakeholder engagement are challenging.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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