

## **Monitoring and evaluation of nurse-led models of care: a critical gap in the evidence towards hepatitis C elimination.**

### **Authors:**

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**Introduction:** To achieve hepatitis C elimination, nurse-led, community-based models of care are critical, but the contribution of nurses has not been adequately quantified, because of gaps in data collection and reporting. We aim to reflect on the design, implementation, and evaluation of nurse-led models-of-care to find ways to support nurses to build the evidence for their work.

**Method:** The Eliminate Hepatitis C Australia (ECA) partnership funded 21 projects 2019–2022; four delivered nurse-led models in community settings. Each nurse-led model-of-care care was designed according to local needs. Nurses implemented models delivering testing, received referrals, and/or facilitated access to treatment. Nurses were responsible for evaluation, with some technical support provided by ECA. We compare project outcomes and reflect on the ECA team learnings of evaluating nurse-led care.

**Results:** Four nurse-led models were implemented in four jurisdictions; three involved nurse-peer partnerships; two included financial incentives; three were the primary community-based treatment service in their jurisdiction and one was a clinical trial. In total, 3,102 people were tested through these models; 179 tested HCV RNA positive and 144 people were treated for hepatitis C. Three projects reported test positivity; two reported both HCV antibody and HCV RNA positivity and one project reported overall positivity, but the type of test was not recorded. No project reported a complete cascade of care.

**Conclusion:** There is significant variation in the implementation of nurse-led models of care, particularly the entry point of people into the care cascade. This variation must be acknowledged in the design of monitoring and evaluation frameworks and the metrics collected and reported. Nurse-led care should be data driven but to achieve robust evidence, nurses need to be empowered to prioritise and lead data collection and reporting. Partnership between nurses and program evaluators are urgently needed to build nursing evaluation capacity.

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