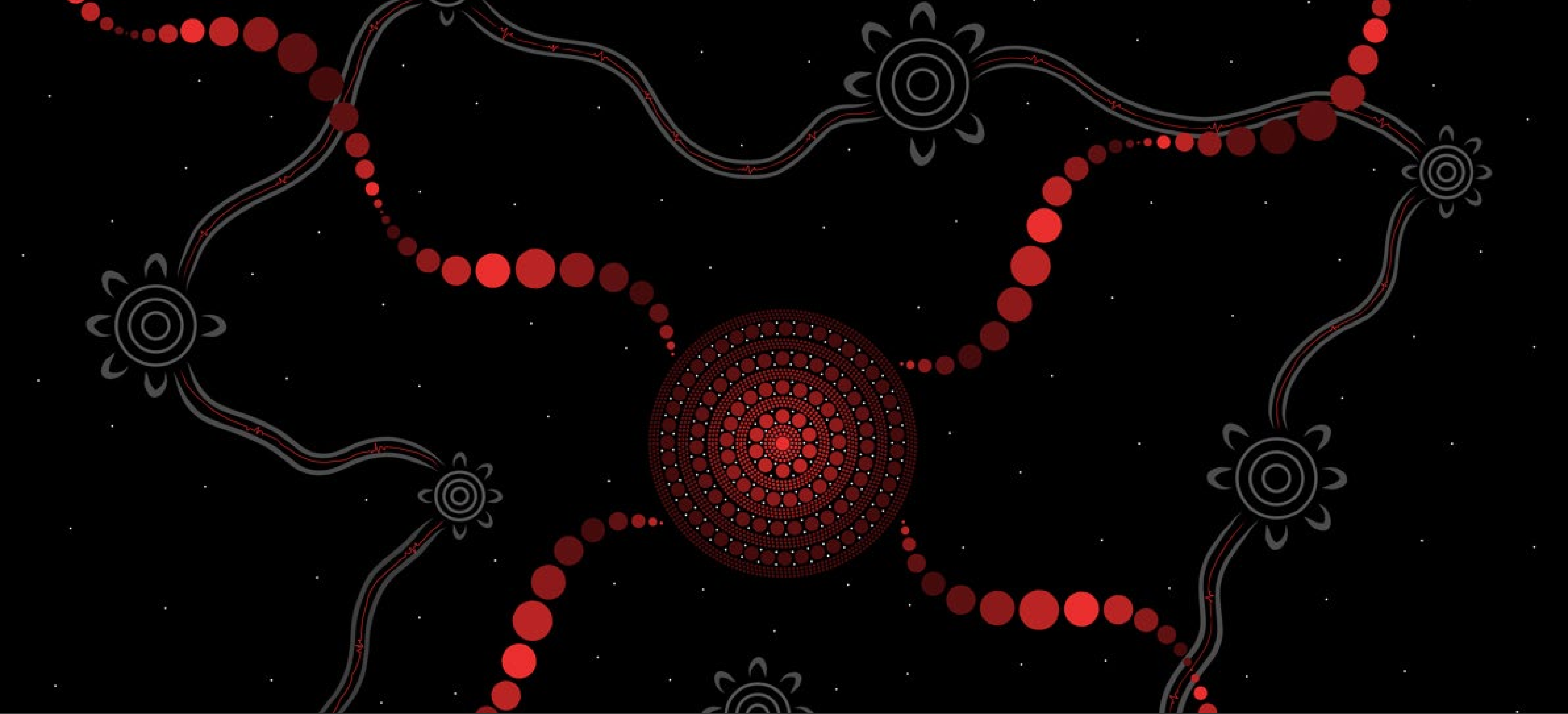


Enhancing hepatitis C testing and treatment through Community - Academic collaboration: A MODEL OF CARE

Smruti Raj
Community Hepatitis Educator
Hepatitis ACT





Hepatitis ACT acknowledges Aboriginal people as the Traditional Custodians of land on which we live and work. We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people and pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders, past, present and emerging.

This artwork is created by Richard Allan Jr.

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Hepatitis ACT is funded by ACT Health to administer the hepatitis C testing and treatment program at Hepatitis ACT and CAHMA (Canberra Alliance for Harm Minimisation & Advocacy).

The fingerstick hep C testing machine and related equipment are provided through support from the Kirby Institute as a part of the National Australian HCV Point-Of-Care-Testing (HCV POCT) Program.

HEPATITIS ACT

Our vision: Better health and well-being of our community through the elimination of viral hepatitis



Hepatitis C and other BBV testing



Treatment and support for people living with hep C



Harm Reduction Services Secondary NSP



Educational Sessions



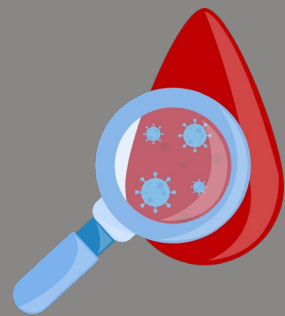
Community Engagement



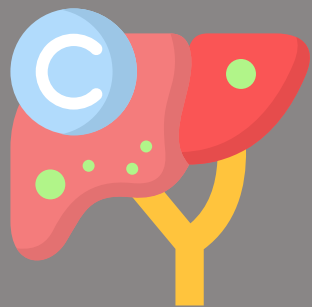
HepLink- confidential and free hepatitis information and support



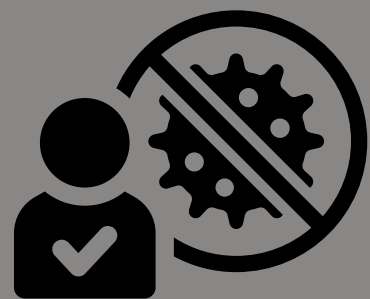
HEPATITIS C



Blood Borne Virus



Affects the liver



Curable



No vaccine or immunity

Transmission:

Sharing and using unsterile injecting equipment

Direct exposure to infected blood

Non-sterile tattoos, piercings and body arts

Sharing personal hygiene items

Unscreened blood products and organ transplant

Vertical transmission (mother to child)

Unprotected sex (blood exposure)

HEPATITIS C

What insights can we derive from the data?



Availability of DAA
(Direct Acting
Antiviral)
treatment via PBS

162,690 people living with
hep C (0.66 % prevalence)



74,400 people living with
hep C



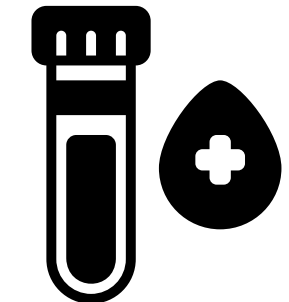
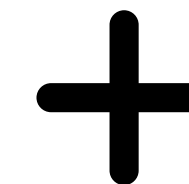
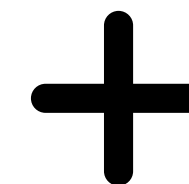
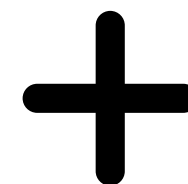
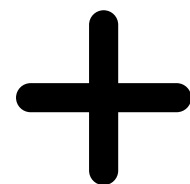
2832 people living with
hep C

Australia has committed to WHO's elimination goal: Eliminating viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030.

NURSE PRACTITIONER LED MODEL OF CARE : REACH, TEACH, TREAT



This project was funded by EC (Eliminate Hepatitis C) Australia and ACT government



Nurse practitioner led weekly clinic

Peer workers- support groups

Educational workshops

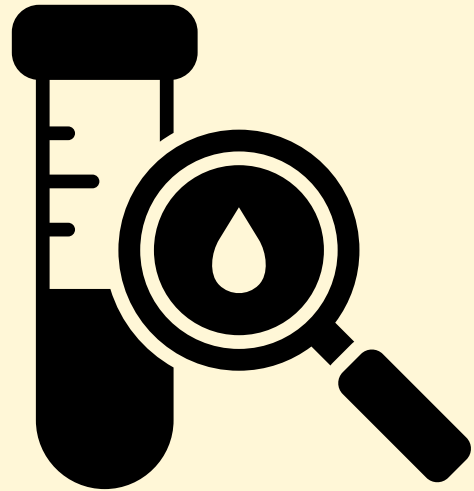
Treatment

Final blood test



Incentives

Reach, Teach, Treat project statistics 2021-2022



96 Tests



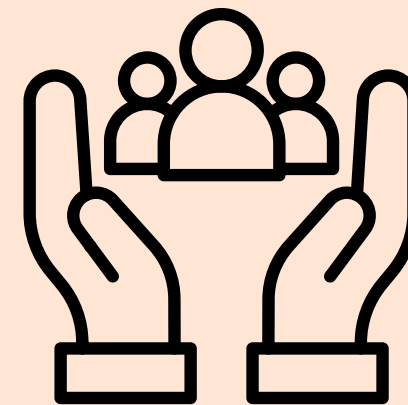
46 people tested positive for antibodies against hep C



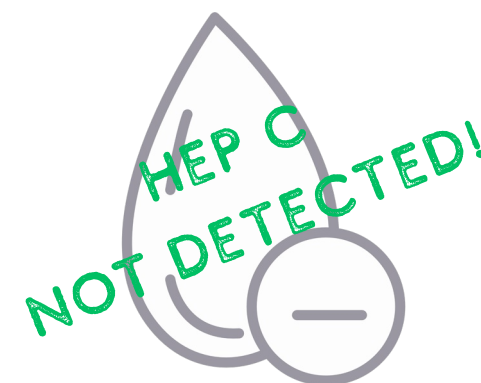
24 people tested positive for active hep C virus infection



23 Clinic Days



Over 200 contacts with participants (remote and in person)



10 people cleared hep C!

Barriers!!!!

Making testing accessible for everyone

Missed connections

Financial constraints for people to commute for blood tests, workshops and to pick up medications

Waiting on prescriptions
(no stock at pharmacies)



NATIONAL AUSTRALIAN HEPATITIS C POINT-OF-CARE TESTING PROGRAM

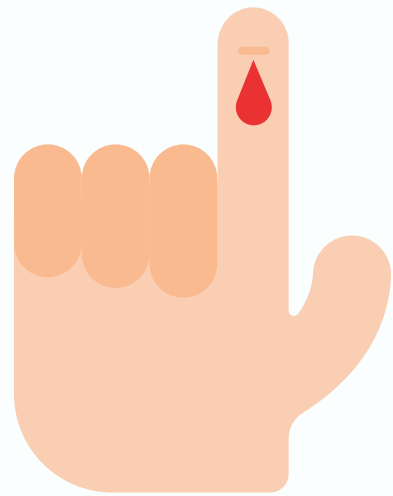
A network of sites to scale up point -of-care
Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) RNA testing in settings
providing services to people at high risk of
acquiring HCV infection.



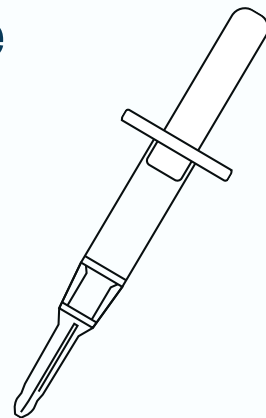
Flinders University
International Centre
for Point-of-Care
Testing



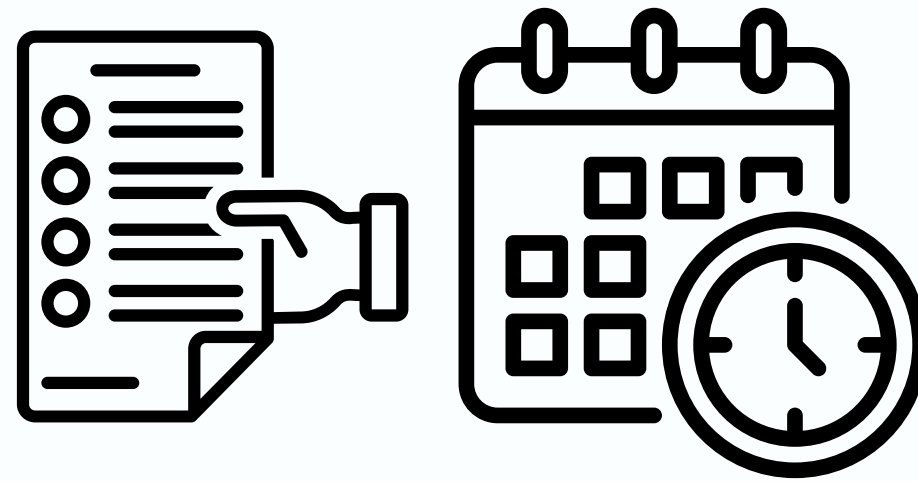
POINT OF CARE TESTING FOR HEPATITIS C:



A finger prick test
(no venous puncture
required)



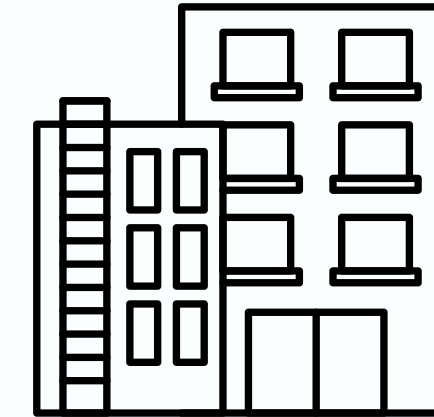
Smaller amount of
blood than venous
puncture



Reduced number of
appointments



Faster results: only
takes an hour



Can be done where
the patient and
equipment is



Can be performed by
peers or other people
(trained operators)

INTERCHANGE HEALTH CO-OP



- In-house GP service offered by clinical program partner Interchange Health Co-op.
- To support people who have just tested positive or those who need extra support during ongoing treatment.
- On-site support, prescription, referrals to the specialist if needed and any additional support required.

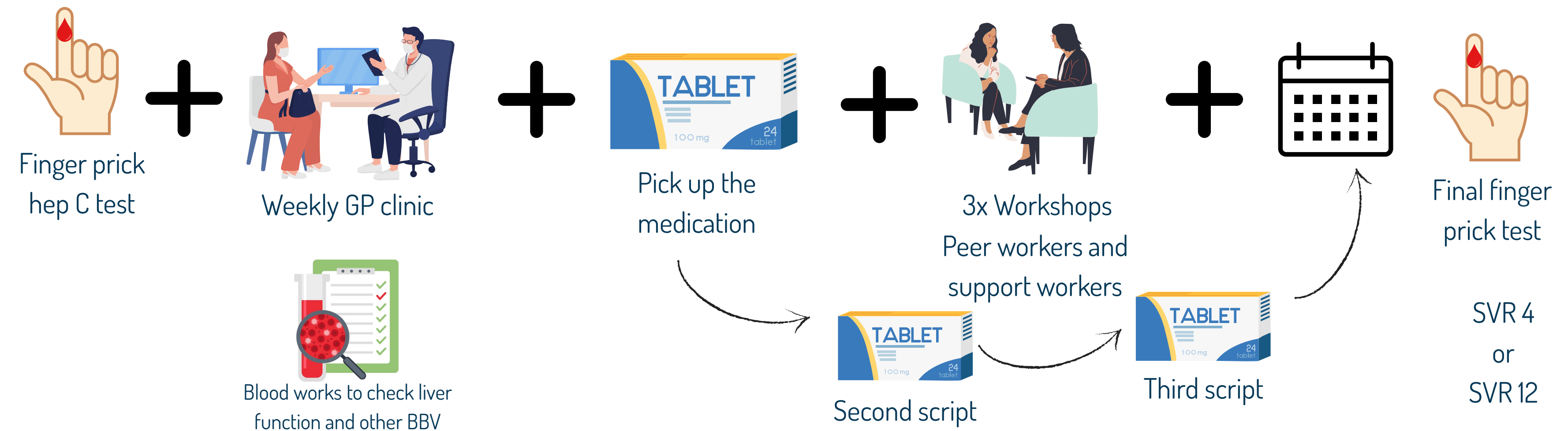


PEER-LED MODEL OF CARE : REACH, TEACH, TREAT, THRIVE



This program is funded by ACT Health. The testing equipment and apparatus are supported by Kirby Institute under National HCV

POCT.



OUTREACH TESTING

Providing support and engaging with people where they are!



hepatitisACT



Homelessness Hubs



Government
Housing Facilities

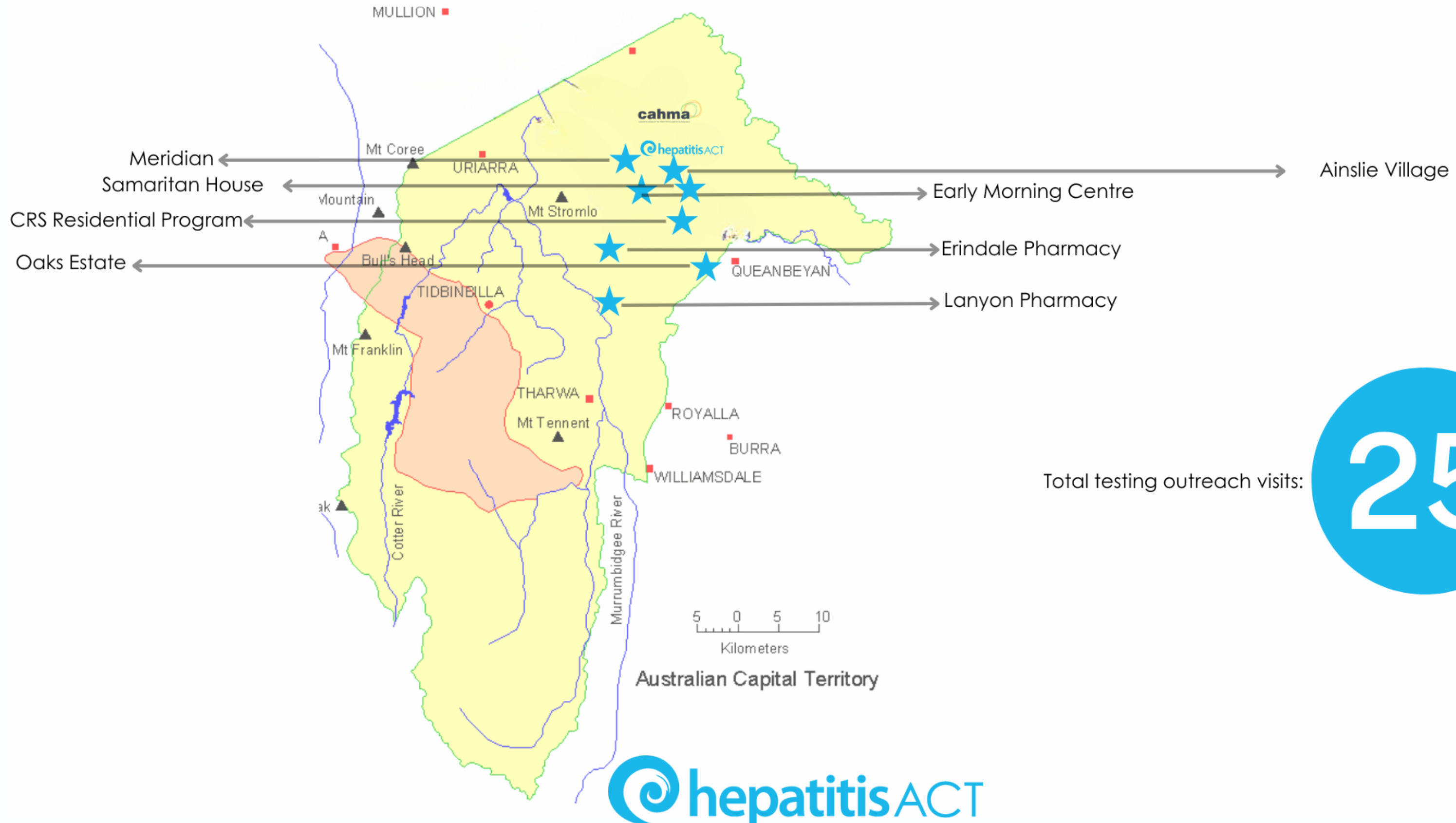


AOD Services

OUR PARTNERS: OUTREACH TESTING



RTTT testing outreach map



Total testing outreach visits:

25

RTTT testing outreach



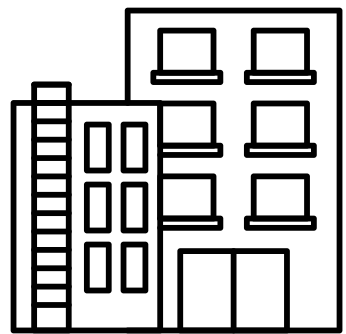
COMMUNITY AND CLINICAL PARTNERSHIP



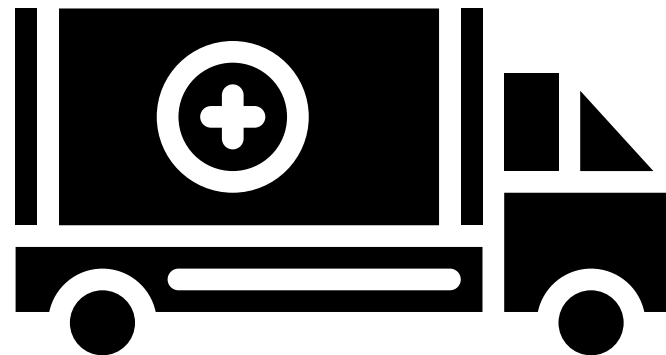
Homelessness Hubs



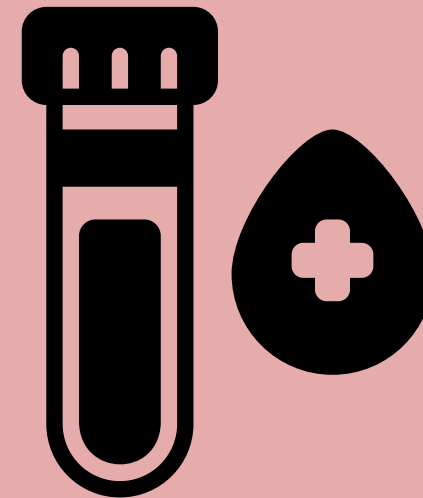
Dosing Pharmacies



Government
Housing Facilities



Mobile Clinics



Pathology
Lab



Pharmacy

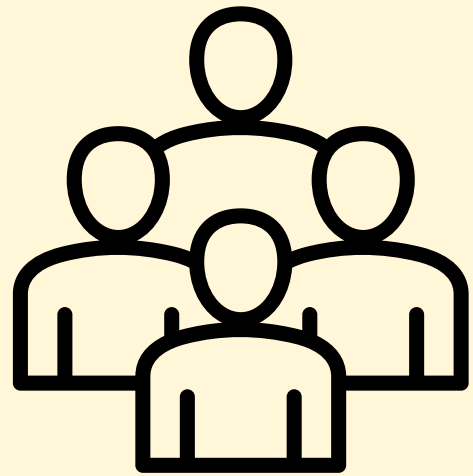


CAPITAL
PATHOLOGY

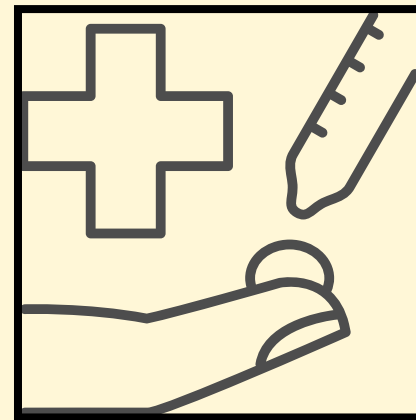


Capital
Chemist
O'Connor

2022-2024



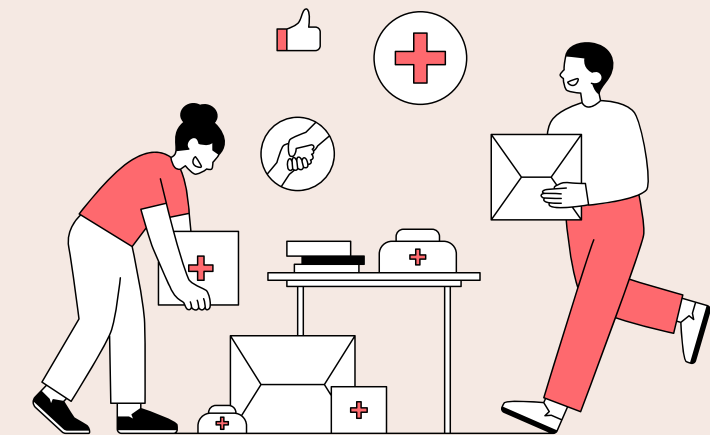
489 Participants



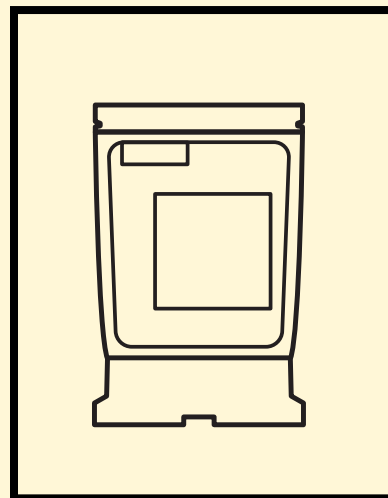
637 tests



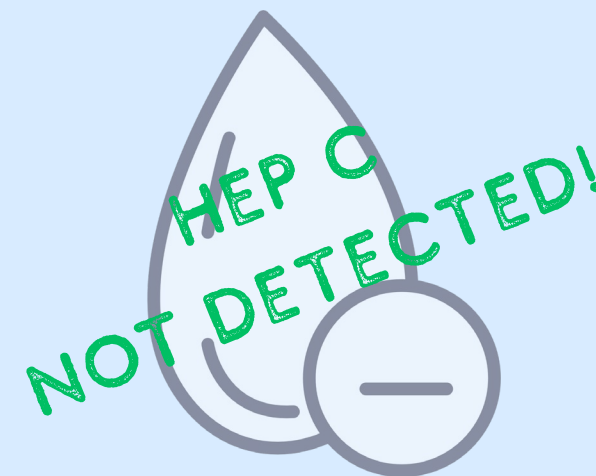
30 initiated treatment



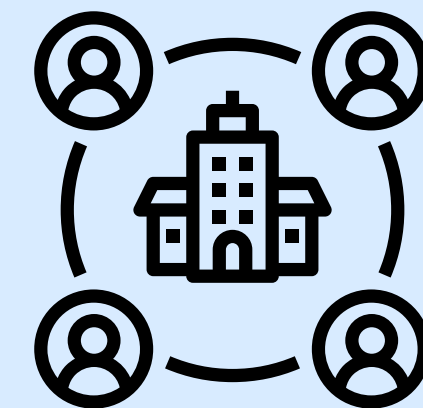
25 Outreach testing events



61 Positive tests



18 people cleared it!



**14 community-academic
organisations involved**

CASE STUDIES

- Same-day treatment for the person living with hep C

Andy* received a positive antibody test at his local GP and came in to do RNA prick test with us. He came back positive for an active infection after an hour of getting tested. Our doctor provided a script on -site and Andy started the treatment the same day. Andy attended all 3 workshops and cleared hep C after the completion of treatment!

- Same-day treatment for the person living with hep C

Tom* is a patient at Inter -Change Health Co -Op. Our visiting doctor Sam told him about the hepatitis C testing and treatment services at Hepatitis ACT. Tom went into a rehabilitation facility after this conversation and when he finished the rehab program, he visited hepatitis ACT for a prick test. He came back positive for hepatitis C and coincidentally it was the day where we have our usual GP clinic. Dr Sam checked tom's previous blood works and ordered the script for him!

**The names have been altered to preserve the participants' privacy.*

WHAT'S ON!

- High intensity testing campaign at Alexander Maconochie Centre in November
- Our new peer and support workers all set to offer finger prick tests (onsite and outreach)
- More frequent mobile testing outreach

THE GOAL!

To eliminate hepatitis C by 2030,

- Hep C testing, treatment, and support need to be readily available for those who need it the most. Overcoming barriers by offering finger prick tests to walk-ins, meet people where they are, and initiate treatment as soon as possible.
- Encouraging conversations around hep C and normalising the condition to reduce associated stigma and discrimination.
- Promoting harm reduction to reduce the number of re-infections in the community.

We aspire to establish a one stop shop for people to live free of hep C!

THANK YOU!

Supported by



ACT
Government

Partners:

