

# Hepatitis B knowledge, healthcare engagement and stigma among people living with hepatitis B from the Chinese and Vietnamese communities in Australia: a cross-sectional research

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## Background

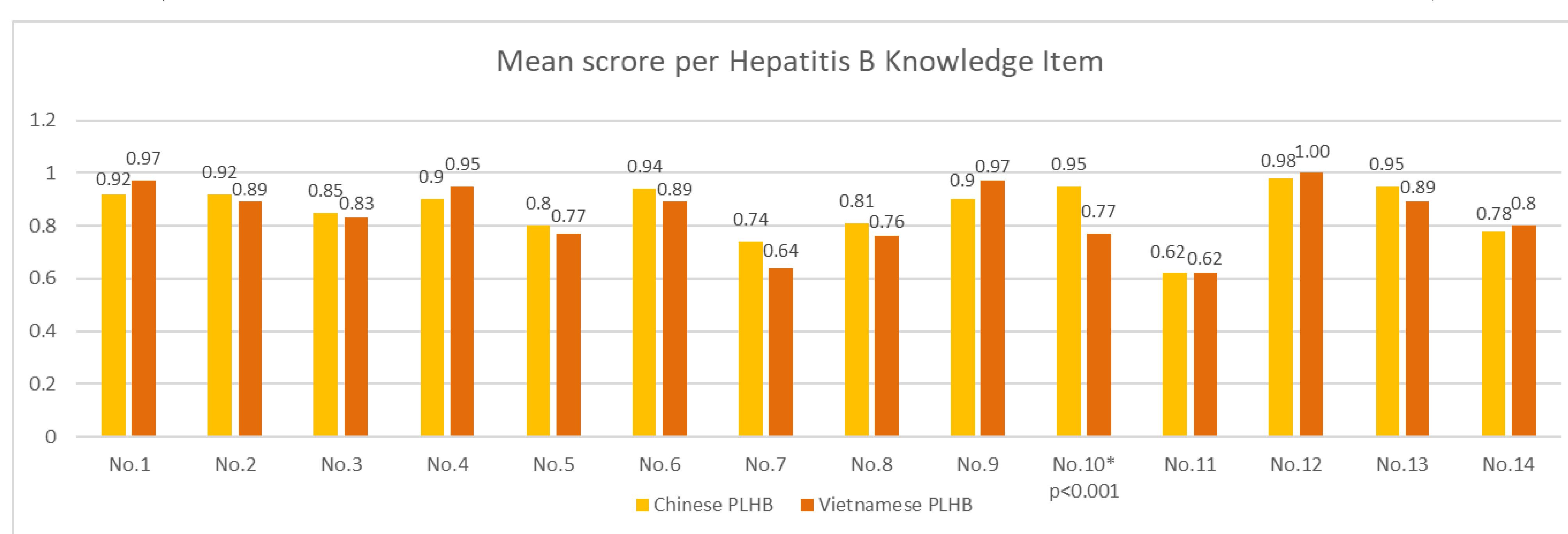
Over 70% of people living with hepatitis B (PLHB) in Australia were born overseas, mostly from Northeast and Southeast Asia. This research aimed to explore hepatitis B knowledge, attitudes, and health care engagement among Chinese and Vietnamese PLHB in Australia.

## Methods

A cross-sectional survey was conducted among PLHB of Chinese or Vietnamese ethnicity in Queensland. Recruitment was supported by the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ). Paper surveys were available in English, simplified/traditional Chinese, or Vietnamese. The survey included diagnosis history, 14 true/false knowledge items (scored 0–14), healthcare attitudes and engagement, and stigma experiences. T-tests and Chi-square tests were used for comparisons.

## Results

- A total of 105 participants were recruited (65 Chinese and 40 Vietnamese). Most were female (56.2%), heterosexual (59.0%), born overseas (98.1%), and had lived in Australia for over 10 years (68.6%) and were Australian citizens (62.9%).
- Chinese PLHB had a slightly higher total knowledge score ( $M=11.65$ ,  $SD=2.53$ ) than Vietnamese participants ( $M=10.58$ ,  $SD=3.15$ ),  $t(103)=1.92$ ,  $p=0.058$ . Mean item scores were high overall ( $M=0.87$  vs  $0.85$ ,  $t(103)=0.85$ ,  $p=0.40$ ), with a significant group difference on social contact transmission ( $p<0.001$ ).



No.	Items
1	A blood test is the only way to know if you have hepatitis B
2	There is a vaccination that can protect people from getting hepatitis B
3	There is effective hepatitis B medication to manage the virus
4	Hepatitis B can cause serious liver damage if it is not regularly monitored by a medical doctor
5	Hepatitis B cannot be transmitted by someone who looks and feels healthy (reversed score)
6	Chronic hepatitis B can cause liver damage and cancer
7	Hepatitis B cannot be spread by contaminated water
8	Hepatitis B cannot be spread by sharing food, drinks, utensils with someone who has hepatitis B
9	Hepatitis B can be spread from mother to baby during birth
10	Hepatitis B cannot be spread through social contact with someone with hepatitis B (e.g., shaking hands, hugging, kissing)
11	Hepatitis B cannot be prevented by maintaining good hygiene (e.g., washing hands frequently, general cleanliness)
12	People living with hep B must get a regular check up with a specialist/ doctor
13	The spread of hepatitis B can be stopped by not sharing personal items (e.g. toothbrush, razors, blades)
14	Hepatitis B cannot be cured

- More Chinese PLHB were diagnosed  $\geq 15$  years (78.1% vs. 64.5%), while recent diagnoses were more common among Vietnamese participants (35.5% vs. 1.6%),  $\chi^2(4)=25.85$ ,  $p<0.001$ . Most Chinese participants were diagnosed in China (82.8%), and most Vietnamese in Australia (75.0%),  $\chi^2(3)=66.55$ ,  $p<0.001$ .
- **Testing was commonly prompted** by advice from a doctor for Chinese PLHB (61.5%) and via routine checks for Vietnamese PLHB (52.5%).
- Vietnamese participants were more likely to have had **check-ups every 1–6 months** (75.0% vs. 47.7%),  $\chi^2(4)=10.50$ ,  $p=0.033$ .
- Chinese participants more commonly reported **Hepatitis B-related stigma** in the past year (21.3% vs. 2.6%),  $\chi^2(1)=6.73$ ,  $p=0.009$ .

## Conclusions

This study highlights generally high levels of hepatitis B knowledge and healthcare engagement among Chinese and Vietnamese PLHB in Australia. Group-specific differences highlight the value of targeted, culturally tailored health promotion for subgroups of PLHB from Asian backgrounds.

### Disclosure of Interest Statement

Nothing to disclose.