Finding the gap: Using notifications data to connect individuals to hepatitis C care

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Background/ Approach:

As Australia approaches its 2030 hepatitis C (HCV) elimination target and cases become harder to find, it will become increasingly important to enhance health pathways to ensure all historical and new diagnoses are linked to care and initiate treatment post-diagnosis. Funded through an NHMRC Partnership Grant, Connect C aims to foster the sustainable use of HCV notifications data held by health departments to link those diagnosed with HCV to treatment. To achieve this, Connect C prioritises the building of linkages between health departments, community organisations, and healthcare and laboratory service stakeholders through in-person and online forums to inform community-accepted care models initiated from HCV notifications data.

Analysis/Argument:

Diverse perspectives emerging from stakeholder engagement have emphasised a need to facilitate data sharing from government and between services to mobilise a broad workforce in supporting person-centred care pathways. A coordinated system-wide approach to improve data visibility is required. Effective collaboration among stakeholders, including health authorities, and community organisations, is key to addressing barriers such as a lack of awareness of treatment options, stigma, poor access to healthcare and insufficient social support. Supporting better linkage of notifications data with other administrative health data can help identify and prioritise individuals not engaged in treatment.

Conclusions/Applications:
An approach using HCV notifications data, tailored treatment pathways and integrated peer support, can help streamline acceptable pathways to HCV treatment. Collaboration between health services and community organisations, including peer organisations, is key to mobilising sector resources to improve care pathways, enhancing retention in care, reducing the number of people living with HCV, improving health outcomes, and preventing transmission. This approach can help to accelerate progress towards HCV elimination by 2030, reducing HCV as a public health threat.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:
The Burnet Institute recognise the significant intellectual contribution that our partners, namely state and territory' Departments of Health, make to Connect C's research activities. Furthermore, we recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest through acknowledging these when sharing publicly the work of Connect C.