



Background

The MOTIVATE C study aims to determine whether financial incentives can increase initiation of antiviral therapy among people with hepatitis C (HCV) in primary care settings, in the context of navigated treatment.

While recruitment and engagement through stakeholder collaboration and peer-led outreach have worked well in metropolitan areas, engaging people in regional Australia has been more challenging.

Fragmented community networks, limited health infrastructure, and logistical barriers required alternative approaches.

Methods

We implemented a range of promotional strategies between May 2023 and May 2025, including:

- Partnering with needle and syringe programs (NSPs), alcohol and drug services, and prison re-integration programs
- Peer-to-peer promotion
- Community outreach
- A regional television advertising campaign, starting July 2024, to raise awareness of the project in areas where services have limited reach.

Here, we describe the development, implementation, and impact of the regional television advertising campaign as a key component of the broader outreach efforts.



QR code redirects to TV advertisement

Conclusions

In regional settings where conventional outreach faces structural and social barriers, mass media—particularly television—can serve as a powerful tool to raise awareness and drive treatment uptake.

The success of the MOTIVATE-C campaign highlights the value of tailored, broad-reach strategies in accelerating hepatitis C elimination efforts beyond metropolitan areas.

Regional Television Campaign

A targeted regional television advertising campaign was launched in July 2024 across the WIN Television Network, with a total investment of \$100,000. The campaign aired in key regional markets across Queensland, Northern NSW, Southern NSW, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia. A total of 4,305 advertisements were broadcast with a mix of 30-second commercials during daytime, and 15-second spots during peak viewing times to maximise frequency. The campaign had an audience reach of over 12.2 million.

Results

Between May 2023 and May 2025, 908 people registered interest in participating in MOTIVATE-C through the project web-portal. Of the 908 registered, 532 (59%) were assessed as eligible by a project navigator and enrolled. Of those enrolled, 442 have a known location of residence; 285 (64%) were from metropolitan areas and 157 (36%) were from regional areas.

Since July 2024, there have been 652 registrations (72% of the total registrations), 379 enrolments (71% of the total enrolments), and 121 regional enrolments (77% of the total regional enrolments). Of the regional enrolments, 88, reported that they became aware of MOTIVATE C via the television campaign. More than half (57%) were male, 56% were aged 45–64 and 31% were in NSW, 27% QLD, 19% in VIC and 10% in WA.

Many of the participants informed the navigators that they were unaware of newer hepatitis C treatments and continued to associate treatment with the side effects of the interferon-era. Some reported that stigma and concerns about confidentiality deterred them from seeing local GPs, opting instead to travel long distances or disengage from care altogether. Access to a telehealth prescriber appeared to be a key enabler of treatment uptake.

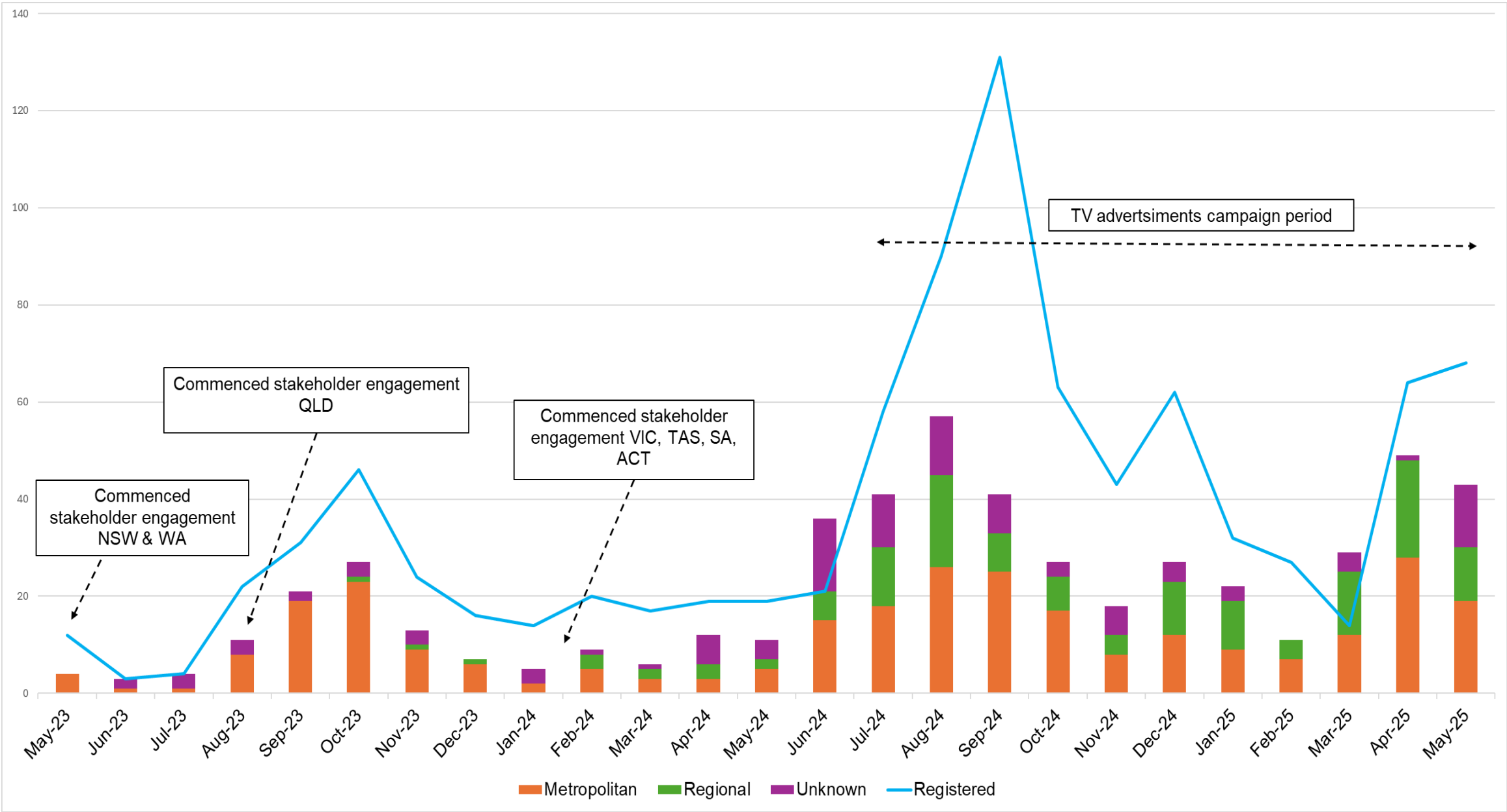


Figure 1. Monthly registrations and enrolments from May 2023 to May 2025. This graph shows recruitment trends over the two-year study period, highlighting fluctuations in participant interest and enrolment across metropolitan and regional areas

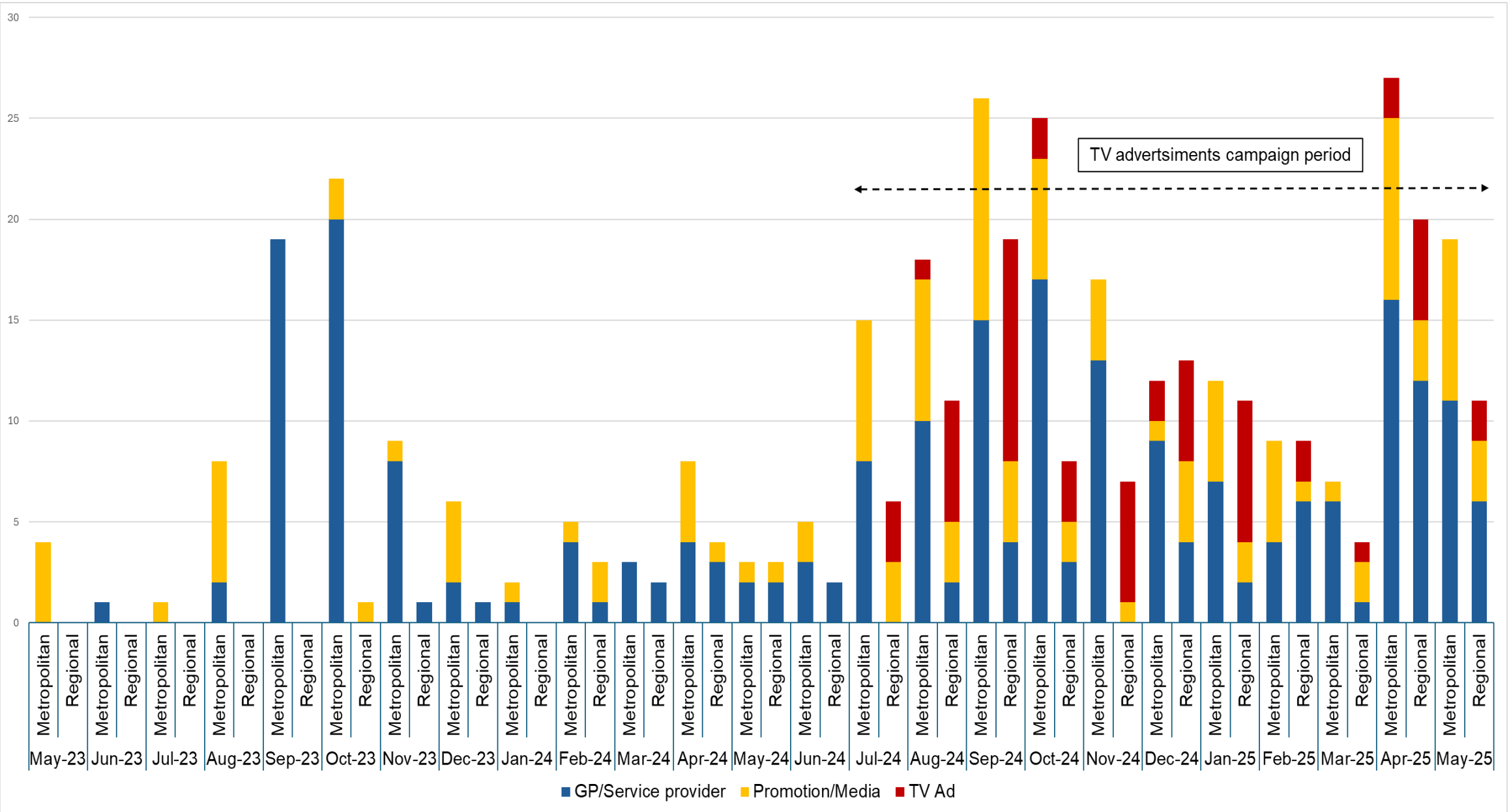


Figure 2. Enrolments in the metropolitan and regional areas by recruitment approach

Key Findings & Insights

- A sustained increase in registrations and enrolments has been observed since the regional television campaign commenced.
- Some participants report becoming aware of the project through the television campaign. It is possible that the television campaign also impacted enrolment indirectly by increasing awareness among peers and regional service providers.
- Difficulty identifying key stakeholders and structural barriers limited engagement in regional areas, highlighting the need for innovative outreach approaches.
- Regional media may be a cost efficient and under-utilised tool for reaching hard-to-access populations.

Lessons & Implications

- Enhanced stakeholder mapping is critical to improving regional engagement.
- Regional television advertising shows promise and should be considered for future HCV elimination strategies.
- Further assessment of cost-effectiveness and sustained impact is needed.
- Combining financial incentives with targeted messaging may offer a scalable public health model.

Acknowledgements

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We also acknowledge our advertising partner, RUBIS, for their significant contribution to our promotional strategies.

Special thanks to the WIN Network team for broadcasting our television commercial — the first to promote a hepatitis C clinical trial in regional Australia — and for supporting this novel approach to community engagement in hepatitis C research.