

BEYOND THE C: HEPATITIS C ELIMINATION IN YOUR PRACTICE

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Background/Approach:

Since the advent of highly effective and tolerable direct acting antiviral treatments in 2016, Australia has made great progress towards eliminating hepatitis C (HCV) as a public health threat by 2030. To achieve HCV elimination targets, innovative interventions that support provider knowledge and skills are required. In response, ASHM has developed a comprehensive, incentivised program to support eligible providers to develop the necessary skills to conduct HCV case finding within their own practice by increasing the identification of people for testing or requiring follow up. ASHM engaged an expert steering committee and General Practice Nurse Consultant to support practices nationally.

Analysis/Argument:

'Beyond the C' has recruited 15 sites since September 2019. The project sought to minimise reporting burden and identified need to provide incentives for practice enrolment, including alignment with the Australian Government's Quality Improvement Practice Incentives Program (PIP QI) and a discretionary auxiliary payment. The project embeds sustainable QI skills enhanced by facilitated collaboration between practices, ASHM and PHN's. Champions are identified in each practice who take ownership of project components, including data integrity, collection and extraction.

Outcome/Results:

Enrolled practices are located in New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia and include Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and General Practices. Practices have demonstrated enthusiasm in working with their data to improve the lives of people with HCV. Practices have identified that limitations of medical software and data extraction tools, allocating time for clinical auditing and integrity of data are barriers to case finding.

Conclusions/Applications:

An individualised approach to case finding is required for effective interventions. Differences between practice needs, skills and practice software functionality indicate the need for tailored support to ensure a sustainable model of quality improvement is built at practice level. Limitations identified highlight the need for continued advocacy to support Australia to meet elimination targets by 2030.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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