

A Nurse + a Fibroscan + a Banh Mi = A recipe for engaging GPs.

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Background

Traditionally the care of people living with viral hepatitis has been managed by tertiary care or private specialists. The burden of chronic hepatitis B (CHB) persists in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and there is little data on hepatitis C (HCV) prevalence in these communities. Engaging general practice (GPs) is crucial to meet elimination targets but more importantly reducing morbidity and mortality. The Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland's Love Health Program is funded by Queensland Health to work with GPs to assist in promoting and facilitating hepatitis care.

Argument

We aim to raise awareness and support GPs to screen for, vaccinate, manage, monitor and treat those living with CHB and HCV. The Program Nurse attends GPs providing lunchtime education sessions- highlighting current trends in epidemiology, promoting care in practice, and offering assistance in routine management and monitoring including a free Fibroscan service to assist them in their clinical decision making. GPs are also given a resource pack with latest ASHM decision-making tools, education opportunities and referral pathways for blood borne viruses and sexually transmitted infections.

Results

Between March 2017 and December 2025, the nurse visited 245 practices and spoke with over 690 GPs and nurses in Southeast Queensland, receiving referrals and completing for 4890 Fibroscans from 208 individual GPs from 105 Practices for people from 66 countries of birth speaking 74 languages at home, majority of whom were Chinese and Vietnamese

Conclusion

As tertiary care capacity declines, supporting GPs is crucial to increasing patient engagement in care and reducing the risks of developing adverse outcomes. An experienced nurse who provides education, practical tools, and support to GPs in managing patients with CHB/HCV is not only cost effective, but also promotes confidence in clinical practice, potential reduced referrals to hospitals for routine monitoring, and most importantly, improves patient access to appropriate timely care.

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