

3 SHORT FILMS, 3 LANGUAGES: ARE YOU LIVING WITH HEPATITIS C? A CURE IS AVAILABLE

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Background:

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities represent 27.6%-44% of the NSW population. Hepatitis C prevalence in these communities mirrors their country of birth, having an increased risk of exposure.

Current NSW policies and strategies are modelled on sharing-injecting-equipment as the primordial mode of transmission (MOT), with minor consideration on global prevalence data. Therefore, low testing rates and late presentations are common among CALD populations.

Argument:

By cross-referencing WHO global prevalence data with Australian migration trends, we identified three key priority groups: the Arabic-speaking, Chinese-speaking and Vietnamese communities living in NSW.

Systematic data review established invasive medical procedures and unsterile injection-based therapies are common MOT and account for undiagnosed HCV infections in older populations, as well as predominant sources of new infections overseas.

People from CALD communities who are at risk of, or are living with hepatitis C need culturally appropriate and carefully adapted messaging to assist them to engage in testing, treatment and care for hepatitis C.

Outcomes:

Through extensive community consultation we identified barriers in viral hepatitis communication campaigns. We developed three short films that enabled active participation and meaningful involvement of the affected communities. Utilising a bottom-up approach, each community redeveloped messages directly in their language, with particular focus on the differential MOT.

Applications:

The multilingual short films feature the personal lived experiences of community members who have been cured from hepatitis C. In their stories, they reflect on their journey from the shock they experienced when first diagnosed, the stigma and discrimination associated with hepatitis C, undertaking treatment and finally living free of hepatitis C. The films also feature educational information on hepatitis C, encouraging community members to get tested.

The films were promoted through multimedia platforms including websites and social media, reaching over 51.300 views.

Disclosure of Interest

The Diversity Programs and Strategy Hub is a publicly funded service, hosted by the Sydney Local Health District.