



## 'It's like I don't wanna be straight with reality': Alcohol in the lives of people who inject drugs living with hepatitis C

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## Background



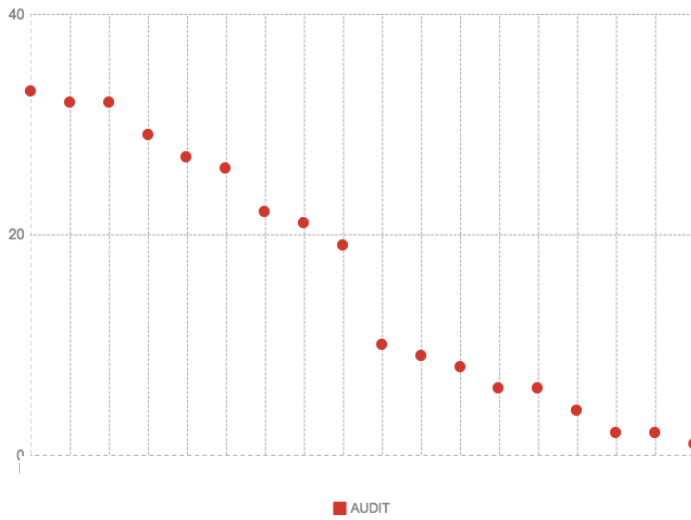
- Alcohol accelerates hepatitis C
- Large minority of people who inject drugs also drinking to excess
- Increased risk taking when intoxicated
- HCV mortality, morbidity to persist
- New era of hepatitis C treatment
- Ambitious hepatitis C elimination targets
  - Globally and here in Victoria

## The study

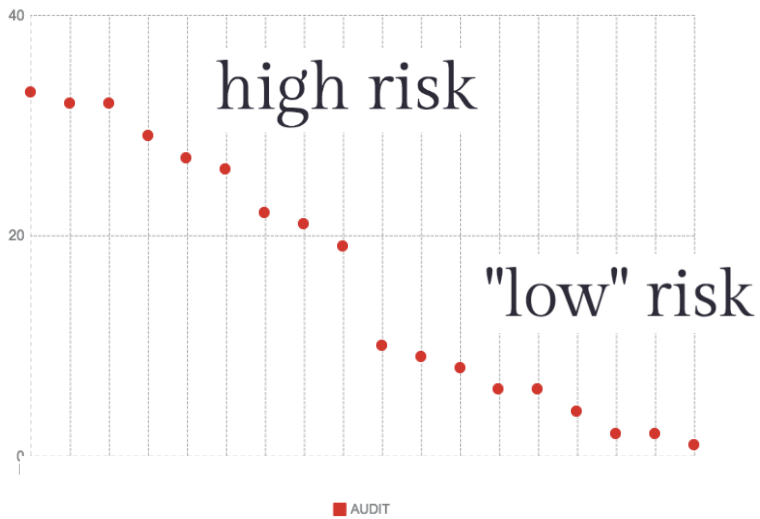


- N=18 qualitative interviews with HCV positive people who inject drugs recruited from Networks 2
  - most of whom are now part of the SuperMIX cohort Australia largest prospective cohort of PWID
- Main aim to understand the impact of alcohol on living with hepatitis C
- 45% female
- Age range: 24—48 years
- Interview transcripts were analysed thematically
- AUDIT scores calculated

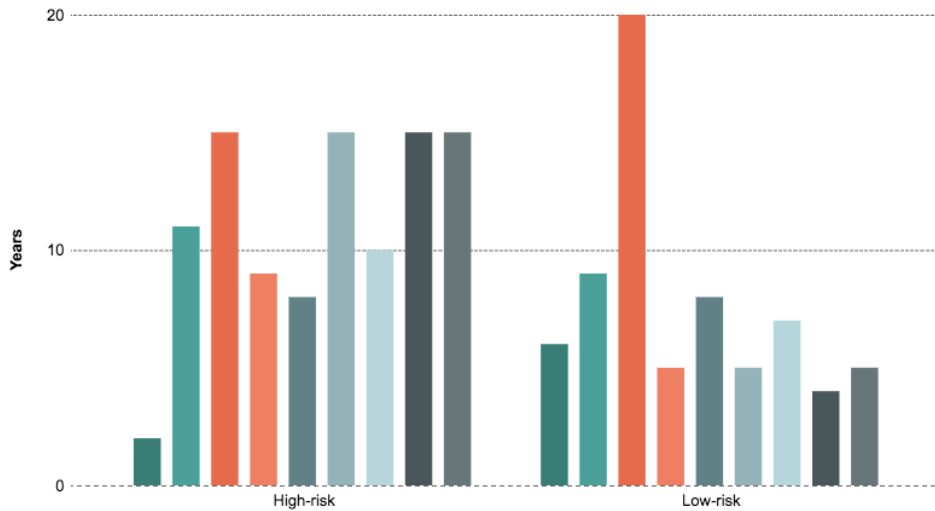
### Sub-groups based on AUDIT score N=18



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## Number of years infected with HCV



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## Various models regarding behaviour change



- Stages of change (or transtheoretical model; TTM)
- Information-Motivation-Behavioural Skill (IMB)
- Health Action Process approach
- Fogg Behaviour Model
- Theories:
  - reasoned action
  - social learning, etc.
- ADKAR (Awareness; Desire; Knowledge; Ability; Reinforcement)

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## ADKAR individual change management



**Awareness**..... of need to change

**Desire**..... for change

**Knowledge**..... of how to change

**Ability**..... to develop new skills and behaviour

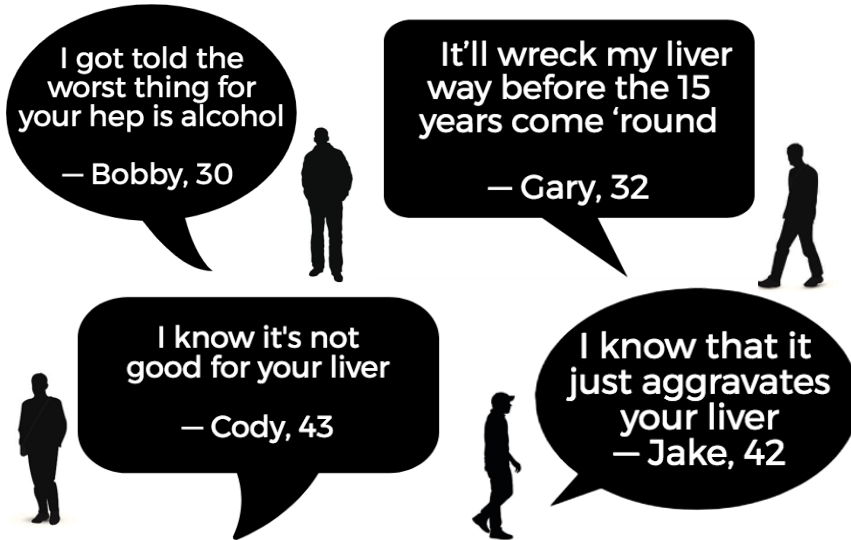
**Reinforcement**.....to keep changes in place

## High-risk drinkers: Demographics

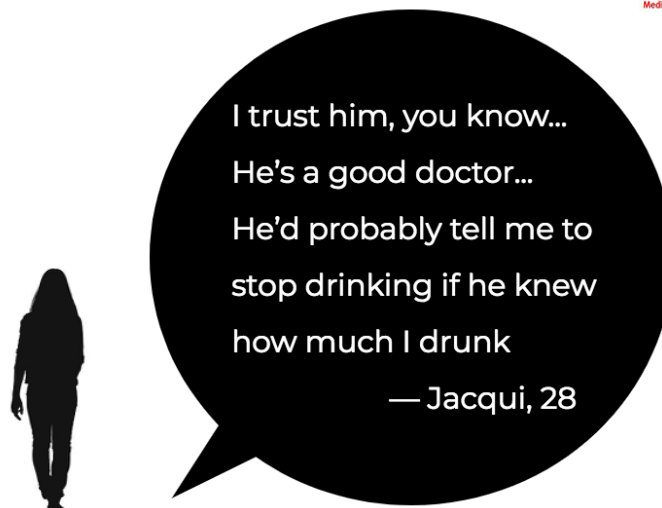


Name	Gender	Age	Years w/ HCV	AUDIT score
Gary	M	32	2	33
Libby	F	30	11	32
Jacqui	F	28	15	32
Chloe	F	24	9	29
Cody	M	43	8	27
Jake	M	42	15	26
Hien	M	45	10	22
Bazza	M	35	15	21
Bobby	M	30	15	19

## Awareness: high-risk drinkers



## Awareness: high-risk drinkers



## Desire: high-risk drinkers



I think it's yeah  
another little  
escape route.  
— Jacqui, 28



## Desire: high-risk drinkers



I've had  
enough

— Hien, 45

I want my  
life back

— Bazza, 35

Just fed up  
with it all

— Jacqui, 28



I want to quit  
'cause my liver's  
got pretty bad

— Libby, 30

So I can live a bit  
longer if I can

— Cody, 43

I want more  
in my life

— Chloe, 24

## Knowledge: high-risk drinkers



just gonna  
try and cut it down  
like, drink right  
down at home  
- Jacqui, 28

I'll go to AA and  
do it that way...  
there are  
a few things around  
- Cody, 43

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## Ability: high-risk drinkers



I'd start using more to  
cover the sickness  
- Jake, 42

it made it  
a hell of a lot easier  
- Cody, 43

I don't know really this  
feeling of suffering from  
alcohol related withdrawals  
- Bobby, 30

I've gone from one  
addiction to another  
- Libby, 30

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## Reinforcement: high-risk drinkers



they don't give a fuck  
whether I drink or not  
as long as I can fuckin'  
pay for half of the heroin  
— Jake, 42

I stopped for a little bit  
for about a month  
and then  
chaos happened...  
and I just went back to it  
— Chloe, 24

I tried to cut down.  
I was doing alright  
for a while,  
then I stuffed up  
and now I'm  
trying to get back  
on that path again  
— Bazza, 35

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## Low-risk drinkers: Demographics



Name	Gender	Age	Years w/ HCV	AUDIT
Sarah	F	44	6	10
Sharon	F	28	9	9
Sonny	M	36	20	8
Dee	F	27	5	6
Aiden	M	30	8	6
Marty	M	48	5	4
Katlyn	F	31	7	2
Bree	F	35	4	2
Rick	M	34	5	1

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## Awareness: low-risk drinkers



Well,  
it's just  
common  
knowledge

- Sarah, 44

## Desire: low-risk drinkers



## Knowledge: low-risk drinkers



a lot of what i've learnt about  
how to look after yourself  
is probably through reading...  
and a little bit of talking I suppose  
with you guys, doctors, and at SHARPS  
- Rick, 34



## Ability: low-risk drinkers



It just  
happened, yeah.  
I didn't plan it,  
I didn't mean it  
- Sonny, 36

it didn't  
bother me at all,  
I was glad  
it was gone  
- Sharon, 28

I can  
pull myself up  
anytime  
- Sarah, 44



## Reinforcement: low-risk drinkers



... different circumstances altogether.  
Different type of people,  
different work environment  
— Marty, 48

... my dad drank and drove and died.  
My mum is going to end up dying  
— Sharon, 28



got enough issues,  
don't need that as well you know  
— Sarah, 44

it's fuckin' an eye opener,  
having him go through it  
— Aiden, 30



## Low-risk drinkers: Potential crossovers to high risk group



## Potential sites for brief interventions



- Boarding houses
- Rehab and detox facilities
- In the field
- Jails and prisons (incl. youth detention centres)
- Mental health services/clinics
- OST pharmacies
- Needle and Syringe Programs (NSPs)



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# Q&A