

DEADLY LIVER MOB: AN ABORIGINAL-LED MODEL FOR INCREASING ACCESS TO HEPATITIS C, STI AND HIV SCREENING

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Background: Deadly Liver Mob (DLM) is an innovative, incentive-based program to promote testing and treatment of Aboriginal people for hepatitis C (HCV) and STIs. The program is run in NSP and/or sexual health services in nine NSW sites (across seven Local Health Districts). Clients receive education from an Aboriginal health worker about the liver, HCV and safer injecting and are offered screening for HCV, other blood borne viruses and STIs. Clients are offered incentives to participate in education, screening, return for results and any treatment required. Clients are also offered incentives for educating and referring their peers to the program. The aim of this study was to explore the decisions to participate and experiences of DLM clients in newly established sites as part of an NHMRC-funded implementation study.

Methods: Data collected by NSPs to monitor incentive payments was used to track participants attendance for education, screening (HCV, HIV and STI) and return for results.

Results: Overall, since the commencement of the NHMRC Partnership project to the census date (1 June 2016 to 31 March 2018), a total of 384 Aboriginal people have entered the DLM program and received HCV education across all the sites. Of these, 254 people (66%) have received screening and 166 people (43% of total; 65% of those screened) have returned for results. Approximately \$12,000 was provided in incentives for these steps of DLM.

Conclusion: DLM has successfully launched in an additional 7 sites in NSW and engaged a significant number of Aboriginal people in screening with high rates of return for results with a modest investment in incentive payments. Further data will examine the yield of positive screens and referral for HCV treatment over the remainder of the DLM project. An issues register and data from qualitative interviews with clients and staff will be used to develop a scale-up plan for use in new sites.

Disclosure of interest: None to declare