

Harnessing targeted messaging to advance hepatitis C elimination among people with historic risk factors

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Background

Recent estimates indicate 93% people living with hepatitis C virus (HCV) in Australia no longer inject drugs or contracted HCV in other ways. These groups have not been the focus of national elimination activities.

To address this, the pilot campaign *New You* was developed to reach men aged 45-65 who are not currently engaged in high-risk activities associated with HCV. The campaign used digital advertising to promote awareness that HCV is easily cured and that testing can be arranged through a GP or via HepLink (free national hepatitis support service). *New You* was implemented from November 11 - December 12 2025 across five locations.

Methods

Campaign development included data mapping and focus groups (n= 15) to determine strategy and audience. To determine reach and impact, evaluation methods included social media and website analytics, target audience survey (n= 25) and service delivery data. Governance and oversight were provided by an expert Steering Committee.

Results

The campaign was delivered 7,455,776 times across YouTube and digital advertising, generating 4,097 website click-throughs. On social media, 1,770 people engaged by clicking through to the website. YouTube advertising received 919,807 views, with 33% watching to completion. The website recorded 6,606 visitors.

Survey participants reported strong agreement that the campaign grabs attention (86%), encourages people to get a blood test (57%) and feel more confident about testing and treatment (71%).

Further work is required to understand service delivery engagement. Limitations of analysis are associated with established understandings of longitudinal engagement with services following exposure to and engagement with health messaging.

Conclusions

The campaign aimed to engage people with historic risk factors for HCV. *New You* effectively identified resonating messages, and advertising had efficient digital reach and moderate engagement. Service delivery data will be analysed and presented at the conference.

Disclosure of Interest Statement

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For hepatitis C, the make-up of the population of people living with hepatitis C has changed significantly since the introduction of Direct-Acting Antiviral cures in 2016. People who inject drugs remain the priority population at greatest risk of transmission, ongoing support for peer and community leadership will be critical to both achieving and sustaining elimination beyond 2030.