

# The power of partnerships in hepatitis C testing and treatment: Lessons from national Beyond the C Program

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**Background:** To achieve Australia's hepatitis C (HCV) elimination targets, innovative interventions in primary care are required to accelerate disease response. ASHM launched Beyond the C, a clinical auditing and case-finding program supporting practices to identify individuals affected patients who may benefit from HCV testing and treatment. Beyond the C provides a structured approach to increase testing and treatment in primary care, amidst declining rates.

**Analysis:** After a successful pilot project, ASHM conducted an evaluation of the processes and resources provided to participating practices. Collaboration with local implementation partners is integrated to unify the response to HCV elimination in Australia. To strengthen practices' outcomes, the program offers education in partnership with local health services, one-to-one practice support meetings with a Practice Nurse Advisor and resources to support practice processes and address knowledge gaps in HCV care. Quality improvement (QI) processes are incorporated to empower healthcare providers to facilitate engagement in HCV clinical auditing.

**Outcome:** Following the national launch in December 2022, 183 practices have submitted an expression of interest, and 60 formally commenced the project. Aggregated, de-identified data from current practices identified approximately 990 people that require HCV RNA testing or treatment. The Beyond the C website, a centralised hub for practice support resources, has been accessed 1,996 times. Eighty-five attendees participated in educational webinars in partnership with key sector stakeholders. The program ends in June 2024, remaining flexible and adaptive to practice needs. Additional findings will be presented at the conference.

**Conclusions:** This program highlights the importance of strengthening links with local health services and referral pathways to support HCV efforts in primary care. Partnerships are crucial in ensuring practices receive tailored guidance in their QI activities, particularly those with lower capacity and experience in HCV care. Beyond the C demonstrates the importance of collaboration in addressing complex healthcare challenges, ultimately advancing toward HCV elimination by 2030.

## Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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