

Improving access to health care: A nurse and health worker led model of HCV testing at Community Corrections

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF OUR TRADITIONAL OWNERS

We acknowledge Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders as this country's First Nations people. We recognise First Nation people and communities as traditional and cultural custodians of the lands on which we work to provide safe and quality health services. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



Artwork produced for Cairns and
Hinterland Hospital and Health
Service by Jedess Hudson

Background

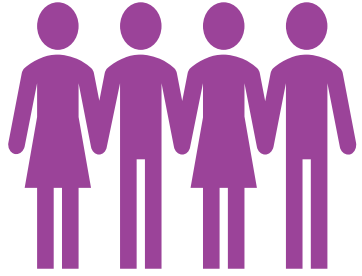
- In 2021 an MOU was signed between QLD Health and QLD Corrective Services to provide hepatitis C testing clinics at community corrections offices.
- In 2022 a local agreement was established between Cairns District Community Corrections and Cairns and Hinterland HHS for a weekly testing clinic.
- The Cairns Sexual Health Service hepatitis outreach team (Nurse and Health Worker) delivered hepatitis C education for Community Corrections staff and consulted with the Cairns District manager to access space for the weekly clinic.

Methods

- A nurse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker led clinic was established for 4 hours weekly for 12 months.
- The clinic delivered rapid point of care (POC) HCV RNA testing (Genexpert) utilising \$20 cash incentives.
- Services were conducted at the Cairns District office, with additional clinics at Innisfail and Mareeba during the 12 months.
- From August 2022 to August 2023, 277 clients were seen with 96.0% (266/277) receiving a POC HCV RNA test.



Results



266 received
a POC HCV
RNA test

75% male

Median age 35 yrs



68% Aboriginal and/or
Torres Strait Islander



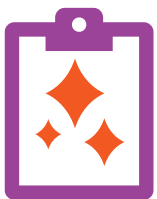
46% had a history
of HCV testing

45% had never tested
for HCV before

9% unsure of testing history



7 positives
2.6% total positivity



83% new clients
to SHS



53% Hx imprisonment



39% Hx IDU



18% unstable housing



Queensland
Government

Treatment uptake & cascade of care

HCV RNA Positive	N	N = 7
Treatment Initiated	7	4 (57%)
SVR completed and cured	4	4 (100%)
Spontaneously cleared	1	1
Lost to follow-up	2	2

Key messages

- There was very good engagement with a nurse and Health Worker led clinic at Community Corrections which enabled access to HCV POC testing for at-risk clients
- The incentive was well received and PCR positivity was low, potentially reflecting good treatment access within the prison system and community.

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