

How Can We Integrate Hepatitis B Testing and Care into Existing Health Services in Australia?

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Background/Approach:

Chronic hepatitis B (CHB) affects over 220,000 people in Australia, yet diagnosis and treatment rates remain suboptimal, particularly among priority populations. Traditional models of care, which rely on specialist services, create barriers to access. At the World Hepatitis Summit in Lisbon 2024, horizontal integration of hepatitis B care into other health system was widely discussed, and there was evidence of its effectiveness to increase diagnosis, linkage to care, and long-term management by leveraging existing health program infrastructures.

This Spotlight session will present the rationale for integration of CHB care into established health programs outside the viral hepatitis space, successful examples of what's been done overseas (insights gleaned from a 2024 study tour to study international approaches to CHB testing and management), and discuss ideas for new settings in which more integration could occur and key considerations.

Analysis/Argument: In Australia, CHB testing and management remain largely siloed within specialist or sexual health clinics, limiting engagement with broader at-risk populations. There is an opportunity to integrate CHB screening and care into maternal and child health services, diabetes management, and cancer screening programs. These settings offer regular touchpoints with priority populations and provide an opportunity for opportunistic testing and early intervention. Key considerations include workforce training, funding models, data-sharing protocols, and ensuring culturally safe service delivery.

Outcome/Results: This Spotlight session will provide a couple of case studies of successful integration efforts overseas (e.g. hepatitis testing in emergency department opt out settings in the UK; routine CHB screening embedded into maternal and child health services in Taiwan). The session will then open up to participants to brainstorm different "out of the box" opportunities for integration that have potential to be implemented in Australia, and key considerations.

Conclusions/Applications: Embedding hepatitis B care into broader healthcare services offers a scalable and sustainable model to improve diagnosis, linkage to care, and long-term management. Drawing from international examples, Australia can enhance its approach to hepatitis B elimination by leveraging existing health infrastructure and fostering cross-sector collaboration. This spotlight session will explore new possibilities of integration implementation in Australia, and use it as a launchpad to further investigate the ideas generated.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: No conflicts recorded

Note: If accepted into the program you will be requested to include a disclosure of interest slide into your presentation or include such statements in your poster.