

Overview

Uptake of direct-acting antiviral (DAA) therapies is currently insufficient to meet the target of eliminating hepatitis C virus (HCV) by 2030.

Motivate C is investigating if the offer of financial incentives could be effective for improving uptake of DAAs.

Our target is adults who have previously tested positive for HCV but who have not been treated.

ASHM's HCV mapping project and consultation with community stakeholders informed our promotion strategy.

Initial attempts to create community awareness through direct advertising and media launches had limited reach.

Cultivating productive relationships with stakeholders was more effective in driving participant recruitment. Stakeholders include:

- State health departments
- Community health services
- Needle and syringe programs
- Prison reintegration programs
- Peer-based support organisations
- Alcohol and drug services

Much of our attention is focused on understanding the roles of individual stakeholders in the community and maximising referrals between stakeholders.

As a national project, it has been a challenge to understand each state's unique health systems and networks, establish relationships with key stakeholders and incorporate the promotion of Motivate C within their existing care models.

Promotion Strategies

Media Launches

- Coordinated media releases from study partners on launch date.
- However, these releases did not have broad reach or contribute to community awareness of Motivate C.

Convenience Advertising

- Posters in public toilets as a discrete, confidential method of generating awareness.
- Weak impact due to limited reach.
- Insufficient budget or time to emulate convenience advertising of similar projects.

Digital marketing

- Maintaining online presence with digital articles and stakeholder newsletters
- Motivate C social media accounts on Instagram and Facebook

Business cards, flyers and stickers

- Pivoted strategy away from convenience advertising based on cost and limited reach.
- Compared to posters, these resources are more cost-effective, less intrusive and easier to distribute to individuals at scale.
- Used as a resource in outreach settings, included in:
 - Fitpacks and prison exit packs
 - Sharps disposal bins
 - Needle and syringe programs
 - GP clinics and pharmacies
- Limited reach in regional areas due to geographic constraints of physical distribution

TV advertising

- Our latest strategy aims to target and engage regional people. We are trying an alternative approach of TV advertising in regional areas, which may reach a wider audience.
- Potential audience of 12 million viewers in QLD, North NSW, South NSW, VIC, TAS, WA for a period of >4 months.



Poster in community setting



Posters used for convenience advertising



Sticker on NSP Fitpack

Stakeholder Engagement

Recruitment is driven by productive relationships and direct consultation with stakeholders (including health departments and non-government organisations) together with the mentioned promotion strategies.

Stakeholder engagement case study: Government Health Department

Boorloo (Perth) Public Health Unit

Strategy

- Consulted with the Head of Department of Boorloo PHU and information on the Motivate C project is now included in Public Health Notification letters sent to GPs about their patients who have tested positive for HCV.
- Following is the Motivate C project blurb



Outcomes

- Initiated conversations about the project wherein GPs informed their HCV-positive patients of Motivate C.
- Led to the adoption of this strategy i.e., inclusion of the project blurb in notification letters in other states and in results reports from private pathology companies (e.g. Douglass Hanly Moir Pathology).

Learnings

- It is valuable to engage with the Public Health personnel at health departments and be incorporated in the official communications to GPs. This builds credibility of the project and fosters buy-in from the GPs and participants.

Stakeholder engagement case study: Non-Government Organisation

Queensland Injectors Health Network (QuIHN) is a Queensland-wide organisation which offers health services to people who use drugs and alcohol.

Strategy

- Continuous consultation with QuIHN staff – including NSP staff and nurse practitioners (NP) – based on their feedback and experiences with Motivate C, project procedures were improved.

Outcomes

- QLD represents 64% of all enrolled participants to date, most of whom discovered Motivate C through QuIHN.

Learnings

- Initially, there was a large demand on QuIHN's NPs to provide immediate HCV testing/treatment to Motivate C participants. Modified our communications with participants in consultation with the NPs to reduce the pressure placed on QuIHN staff.
- Consulting with QuIHN has influenced how we engage with similar health services e.g. Albury Community Health, Harm Reduction Victoria, NUAA and Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre.

Participant Feedback

"Since I have started treatment, I have been feeling so much better and less fatigued. I have been able to work for the first time in seventeen years."

"I was excited to start treatment and grateful that I found out about Hep C medication through Motivate C. I did not know there was an easy cure available".

Stakeholder Feedback

"I appreciate how Motivate C has benefitted my patients. These longstanding patients have been with me for years and have been reluctant to initiate treatment. I have been able to reengage with them because of the project. The patients now are on treatment and report feeling so much better. I want the team to know that all the participants have expressed how wonderful the navigators are."



QR code redirects to TV advertisement

Conclusion

Creating awareness of Motivate C among people living with untreated HCV has proven difficult, especially in regional areas. Most enrolment has occurred thanks to the promotion of Motivate C by various government and non-government stakeholders. Dissemination of low-cost business cards, stickers, flyers etc. have also been effective. However, identifying and activating all relevant stakeholders across Australia continues to be a challenge.

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