

Preliminary learnings from the MOTIVATE C study evaluating the impact of financial incentives on treatment uptake for hepatitis C

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Abstract:

Despite the Australian Government providing subsidised and broad access to direct-acting antiviral (DAA) therapy for chronic HCV infection, uptake has not been sufficient to meet the global target of eliminating HCV as a public health threat by 2030. While incentives for testing and treatment in hepatitis C have been offered, their effectiveness remains uncertain.

The Methodical evaluation and Optimisation of Targeted Incentives for Accessing Treatment of Early-stage hepatitis C (MOTIVATE-C) study aims to evaluate the effect of financial incentives on the propensity of people with chronic HCV infection to initiate DAA therapy in primary care, in the context of a navigator-led patient support program and also, understand the relationship between the size of the incentive offered and the propensity to initiate therapy. We hypothesize that the offer of financial incentives could be effective for improving uptake of DAA therapies where other promotional strategies have not been.

To date, our strategy for participant recruitment in this project has concentrated on developing productive relationships with stakeholders and peer-to-peer promotion rather than active advertising. Informed by the priorities identified in ASHM's HCV mapping project, consultation and follow-up discussions have occurred with a broad range of relevant stakeholders, including various community services, organisations providing needle and syringe programs, alcohol and drug services and prison re-integration programs and at peer-based support organisations; through this we have been fortunate to enlist them as champions and advocates for this project, and promoting it to this hard-to-reach population.

In this presentation, findings and outcomes from our stakeholder engagements, using example case studies, will be discussed. Barriers and the need for additional support required will also be discussed. Through this project, we hope to offer policy-relevant recommendation(s) for the use of financial incentives as a pragmatic, efficient and cost-effective approach to achieving elimination of HCV from Australia.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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