



Elaine's story: dog walks and letterbox drops

Recently I was reading the current *Hepatitis C Community News* (magazine of the Hepatitis C Council of SA) as I have been considering treatment for my hepatitis C.

One of the themes in the magazine struck me as a necessity – to be vocal about hepatitis C so as to reduce the stigma and encourage awareness and understanding for treatment and prevention, which in this case, is much, much better than cure!

The stigma around hepatitis C bothers me immensely, as I feel as though I'll be tarred and feathered, along with my children if I disclose my hepatitis C status. Still, I have an urge to help prevent the spread of this insidious disease. Delivering bookmarks to letterboxes seemed to be an inconspicuous way of informing my local community of the hepatitis C statistics.

If even one person is saved, forewarned or encouraged by greater knowledge then my time was worth it.

Armed with handfulls of bookmarks, my daughter and I took our dog for a walk in the neighbouring streets and discreetly slid the bookmarks into letterboxes.

We had fun trying not to be seen by anyone on the walk, and I noted how quickly I became judgemental and selective as the bookmarks ran low. I felt I needed to have more impact in my area to spread the knowledge and not the disease, so I requested many more bookmarks and we went for more enjoyable walks.

Elaine (SA)

- Abridged from *Hepatitis C Community News*, Edition 44. Also see our bookmarks promotion on page 46 of this *Hep Review*.