

2019-2020 HNSW SERVICES & ANNUAL REPORT

Working towards a world free of viral hepatitis



WELCOME BY DENISE AND STEVEN

Welcome to our Hepatitis NSW Services and Annual Report 2019/20. This report gives a snapshot of our work and its impact, as well as describing the programs and services we provide for people living with or affected by hepatitis C and hepatitis B in NSW.

The primary focus of our work, for which we are funded by the NSW Ministry of Health, remains working towards the elimination of hepatitis C in NSW by 2028.

Despite the challenges that beset all of us in March as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic, HNSW had a very successful and positive year. We met and exceeded many of our service goals and activity targets. This was achieved in the face of the many issues and challenges created by COVID-19. We moved rapidly to change the way services were delivered. Like many other organisations we worked from home, online, in virtual spaces and by phone. We were able to quickly design new ways of reaching and supporting people affected by viral

hepatitis. As always, this successful adaptation was possible through consultation with, and support of, our key partners.

In addition to our primary focus on Hepatitis C affected communities, we also work to mobilise people living with hepatitis B into testing, liver health monitoring and treatment. We have continued to support people from Aboriginal, Chinese-Australian and Korean-Australian communities in this regard. Our hepatitis B work is achieved with limited independent funding and resources so we are proud of what we have achieved. We continue to seek ways to fund these services to meet this important and identified need to achieve elimination by 2028 also.

Please take a few minutes to read about our achievements and some of the services we provide for our communities.

Denise Jarratt
President

Steven Drew
Chief Executive Officer

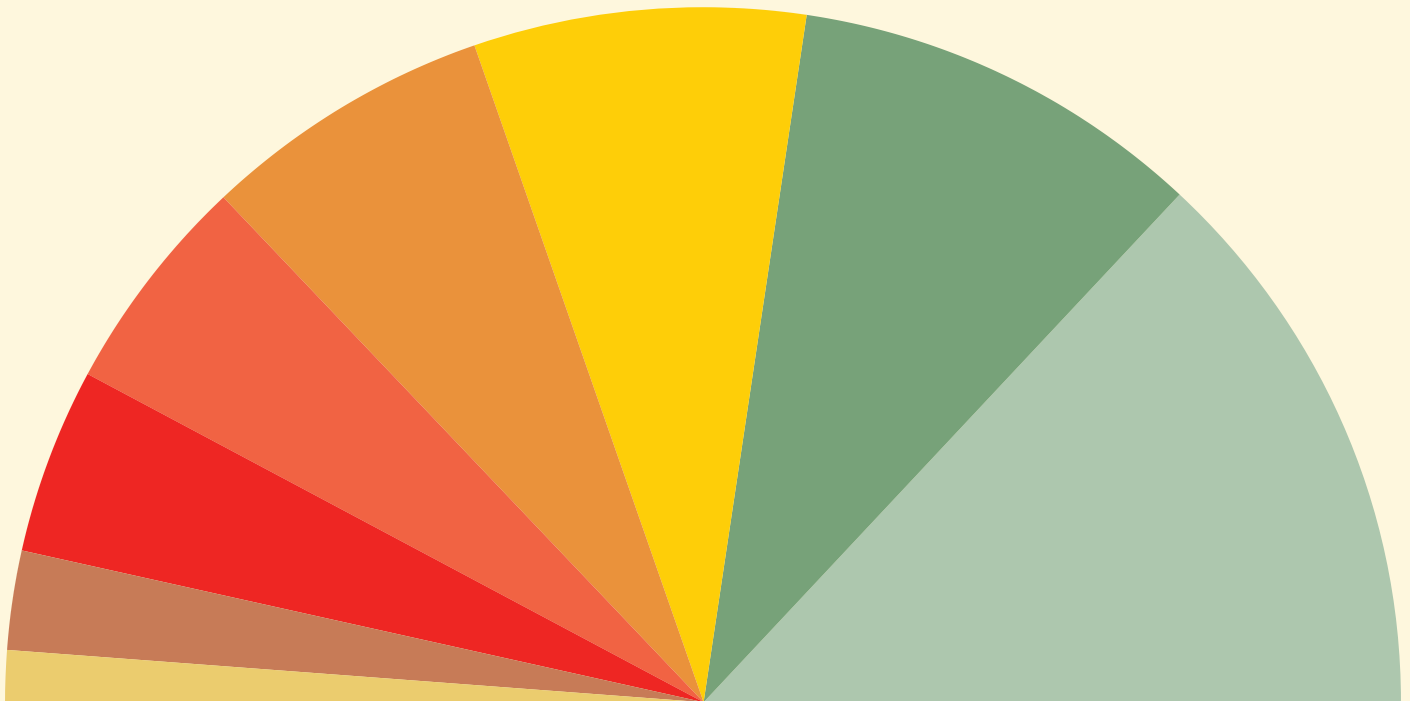


Hepatitis Infoline
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www.hep.org.au

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info@hep.org.au

Hepatitis NSW is proud to acknowledge Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and custodians of our lands and waters.

2019-20 HIGHLIGHTS



- 21 SKILLED AND TRAINED PEERS
- 300 ABORIGINAL PEOPLE CAME TO OUR KNOCKOUT STALL
- 1,050 HOURS OF PEER WORK WERE DELIVERED WITHIN ACTIVITIES
- 1,134 PEOPLE IN DIVERSE WORKFORCES INCREASED THEIR HEP C KNOWLEDGE
- LIVE HEP C FREE REACHED 1,748 PEOPLE FOR TESTING AND TREATMENT ACROSS NSW
- INFOLINE TOOK 2,195 CALLS, INCLUDING 1,607 CALLS FROM PRISON
- 3,508 VIEWS TO THE KOREAN HEPB.ORG SITE
- 133,376 RESOURCES DISTRIBUTED

2019-20 FINANCES

In 2019-2020 our income was \$2,399,301. The overwhelming majority of our income was spent on activities, resources and services for people living with or affected by viral hepatitis across NSW.

Through careful budget planning and management, we kept our total expenditure at \$2,352,155.

Hepatitis NSW achieved a small operating surplus of \$47,146. This enabled us to increase our equity (members' funds) to \$745,951 at year-end. Hepatitis NSW remains in a stable financial position with a healthy cash flow that will help ensure we remain solvent in years to come.

Our funding comes from a variety of sources. The NSW Ministry of Health provides our core annual grant of

\$2,148,300. Other funding comes from private and public bodies, as well as income generated through donations, membership fees, interest earned and cost sharing payments for some products and services.

We gratefully acknowledge and thank all our funders: the NSW Ministry of Health, Central and Eastern Sydney PHN, Sydney LHD, WentWest PHN, Department of Corrective Services and pharmaceutical company Abbvie who kindly provided an unrestricted education grant.

We sincerely thank our members and donors for their continued support.

Our Annual Financial Statements were audited by Portman Newton, Chartered Accountants. They contain a full breakdown of our income and expenditure and are available to download from our website www.hep.org.au and a copy can be obtained from our office: phone 02 9332 1853.

LIVE HEP C FREE TESTING AND TREATMENT ACCESS

Our health information and treatment access program, *Live Hep C Free* is run by people who have experience of living with hep C and treatment, called peers.

The program makes hep C testing and treatment as easy-to-access and on-the-spot as possible. *Live Hep C Free* does this by partnering hepatology nurses with our peers in opioid substitution services, alcohol and other drug services, homelessness services, residential rehabs, and other priority settings. We take healthcare to people and remove the barriers to hep C treatment.

Despite COVID restrictions, the service had strong outcomes with double the proportion of people testing than the previous year. However, fewer people were found to need hep C treatment. A spin off was that many people were referred on for further healthcare. Our 26 skilled and trained peer workers were placed across all local health districts (LHDs). During COVID restrictions we implemented initiatives to retain our peer workforce, such as DBS training, when opportunities for clinical outreach were limited.

OUR 23 SKILLED AND TRAINED PEER WORKERS WERE PLACED ACROSS ALL LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICTS (LHDS).

1,767 PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH ABOUT HEP C

1,748 ENGAGED BY LIVE HEP C FREE



- 777 HAD CONSULTS WITH A HEALTHCARE WORKER
- 559 HAVE BEEN TESTED FOR HEP C
- 59 ASSISTED IN ACCESSING HEP C TREATMENT
- 111 HAD ON-TREATMENT OR POST-TREATMENT SUPPORT
- 225 HAVE BEEN REFERRED FOR FURTHER HEALTHCARE



PHOTO BY | COMMUNITY MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE

HEPATITIS B PROGRAM CHINESE AND KOREAN COMMUNITY

Our Hepatitis B programs raise awareness of hep B, aiming to increase testing, vaccination and treatment across Sydney's Chinese and Korean communities. Our bilingual educators work with multicultural community organisations to deliver in-language workshops covering hep B transmission, prevention, vaccination, management, and treatment. Where possible we team with clinical staff to offer screening opportunities.

This important work was funded from private funds. We thank Western Sydney (WentWest) Primary Health Network (PHN), Central and South Eastern Sydney PHN, and South East Sydney and Western Sydney LHDs for local funding to continue delivering activities.

COVID reorientated our services to deliver events safely and/or online. The online sessions offered anonymity for participants with online community events attracting large numbers.

The website was updated with COVID19 and hep B information and FAQs in Korean and Mandarin. We started offering our Chatline in language, with strong visitor numbers. The campaign website hepb.org.au has been redesigned with English, Korean and Chinese Live Chat, lived experience stories and blog pages.

1,849 PEOPLE WERE REACHED THROUGH 17 EVENTS OR SESSIONS. 215 PEOPLE WERE SCREENED FOR HEPATITIS B.

RAP

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was launched in July 2019 and we are tracking well against the actions and deliverables with an increase in staff awareness through cultural competency training, and increases in purchasing from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers, partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations for service delivery, resource development, training and events.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES

Hepatitis NSW, ACON, Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP), NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA), HIV/AIDS Legal Centre (HALC) and Positive Life NSW join together in the Close the Gap 414 Working Group which aims to improve our capacity, address inequality in health outcomes for Aboriginal people and Close the Gap between First Nations Peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

We've worked together to reach hundreds of Aboriginal people, including over 100 education interactions at the annual Yabun festival. Yabun represents an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of BBVs, STIs, promote harm reduction, reduce stigma and encourage screening and treatment. We went up to the Aboriginal Rugby League "Knockout" event on the Central Coast and delivered information to 300 people over the October long weekend.

A booklet named Yarnin' about hep B, a companion to our acclaimed *Yarnin' about hep C* booklet, is under development for Aboriginal people, with the formation of a community and expert Advisory Group.



HEP CONNECT

The *Hep Connect* program works in partnership with hepatology nurses and offers telephone and personalised text messaging support to people who are starting DAA treatment, supporting them all the way to confirming cure (SVR12). Texts were the preferred form of communication. Our peer workers aim to establish trust, empower people, and increase harm reduction knowledge among people undergoing treatment, to help prevent reinfection.

658 TEXTS AND 51 CALLS WERE MADE TO 24 PEOPLE GOING THROUGH HEP C TREATMENT. 15 PEOPLE COMPLETED TREATMENT BY THE END OF THE YEAR, WITH 5 CONFIRMING SVR

SPEAKER SERVICE

Our speaker service connects the community and workforce with personal accounts of living with hepatitis C and B.

Our speakers challenge stereotypes and address the stigma associated with living with hepatitis B and C. Witnessing personal accounts of people's lived experience develops an understanding of how issues such as stigma and discrimination impact on access to support and services. This proves to be the most effective strategy in changing and improving attitudes, values and behaviours.

Our speakers are trained in public speaking and share their stories as part of our education sessions, and at community workshops and events. Staff and peers spoke at the annual HARP Forum in a panel session titled "Nothing about us without us". This year, as COVID restrictions changed how we work, our speakers delivered their sessions online or through video recordings.

33 SPEAKER SESSIONS 28 SPEAKERS TRAINED

1,050 HOURS COMMUNITY PEER WORKER ENGAGEMENT

579 LIVE HEP C FREE

180 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

157 SPEAKER SERVICE

51 COMMUNITY MEDIA SPEAKERS

47 REGIONAL EDUCATION

21 METRO EDUCATION

12 HEP CONNECT

3 ABORIGINAL PROJECTS

HEPATITIS INFOLINE

Our *Hepatitis Infoline* offers confidential information, support, and referrals across NSW.

Infoline services are available via telephone, on-line Live Chat, website email and within NSW prisons through the free auto-dial telephone system. We took more calls than in the previous year with a larger proportion from people in custody.

Our callers discuss topics including transmission, prevention, testing and treatment, and access to support services such as legal assistance to address discrimination. People calling about hepatitis B discuss testing, prevention and vaccination. People calling from prisons can request a Hepatitis Information Pack (HIP) by mail, giving them information and resources about hepatitis C and B testing, treatment and prevention.

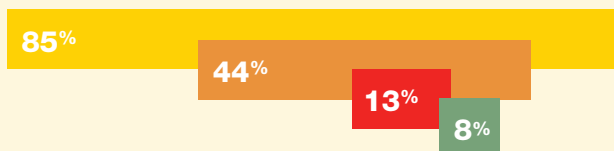
2,195 CALLS



2,195 HEPATITIS INFOLINE CALLS

1,134 HEPATITIS INFOLINE PACKS SENT TO PEOPLE IN PRISON

INFOLINE CALLER DEMOGRAPHICS



- CALLERS FROM PRISON
- ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE
- PEOPLE CALLING ABOUT HEP B
- CALLERS IDENTIFIED AS CALD (CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE)

297 ONLINE ENQUIRIES INCLUDING 181 EMAILS AND 116 LIVE CHATS

PEOPLE IN PRISON

There was an increase in callers and request for Hepatitis Information Packs to be sent to people in custody. The packs contain our men's and women's leaflets on hep C and the *Tx! Mag* carries prison-specific stories. 10,000 Postcard from Prison mindfulness activity packs were developed in partnership with Justice Health and Corrective Services for men and women to distribute through Health Survival Tips training. AbbVie supported the production and delivery of these packs.

1,134 HEPATITIS INFOLINE PACKS SENT TO PEOPLE IN PRISON

HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION

The education program delivers free training and workshops around viral hepatitis for a diverse workforce across NSW, with the aim of increasing access to testing and decreasing barriers such as stigma and discrimination in services including residential rehabs and AOD services, community health centres, pharmacies and correctional settings. The program includes a strong Health Promotion focus aiming to engage priority communities as well as building on a confident workforce. After COVID, the team is developing online modules for hep B and hep C with mini modules on topics of interest, such as liver health. The modules will be promoted as induction training for AOD workforce and will be equally engaging for community.

HSNW worked closely with Justice Health and Corrective Services delivering education and health promotion events in two workforce development sessions for Nurse Unit Managers, and delivered education sessions to 53 people in custodial settings. The Hepatitis in Prison Elimination (HiPE) program wrapped up, and a follow up event with 10 participants made available testing and treatment.

752 METRO PARTICIPANTS AND 218 REGIONAL PARTICIPANTS ATTENDED TRAINING



Tx! MAG

Tx! Mag is our easy-read magazine. The magazine helps get people living with hep C into treatment and clearing their hep C.

Combining comics, puzzles and basic information about viral hepatitis, it aims to connect with its readers on issues that relate to their lives. We run workshops with community members to develop the themes and storylines. Most of the readers said that Tx! content was relevant to their needs and 96% of readers surveyed said they'd take action leading to treatment.

One edition per year focuses on hep B testing, monitoring and treatment. This edition generally targets Aboriginal communities across NSW, and aims to help *Close the Gap* on viral hepatitis care and treatment.

43,500 COPIES DISTRIBUTED

RESOURCES ABOUT HEP B AND C

We take pride in developing innovative resources that are responsive to peoples' needs. We produce many resources, all developed in partnership with affected communities and relevant health specialists.

Over 207,000 resources were distributed during the year.

These include "easy read" resources such as our infographics. These contain key messages in a visual format (rather than text) and are very helpful for people with lower literacy skills.

This year we launched Hepatitis B, Mothers and Babies, a well-received booklet for women diagnosed with hepatitis B during pregnancy.

You can order free resources from our website.

207,000 RESOURCES DISTRIBUTED

Tx! MAG

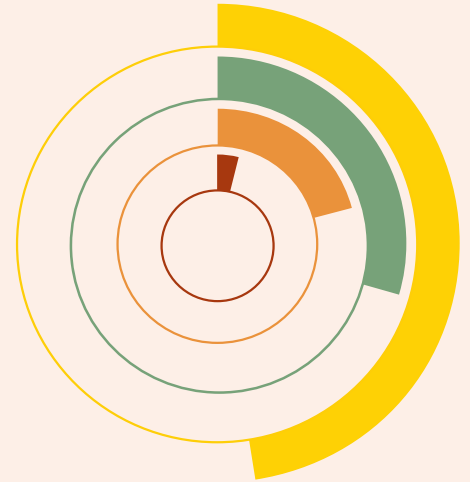
WHO READS TX! MAG?

73%
LIVED
EXPERIENCE
OF PRISON

45%
LIVED
EXPERIENCE
OF HEP B OR C

32%
ABORIGINAL OR
TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER

3%
CULTURALLY &
LINGUISTICALLY
DIVERSE



WHAT ARE OUR READERS SAYING?



95% THINK THE MAGAZINE IS USEFUL TO THEM



98% NOW KNOW MORE ABOUT HEP TREATMENT SINCE READING TX! MAG



THE CHAMPION E-NEWSLETTER

The Champion is our monthly newsletter sent to our members and other subscribers. Over 40,000 copies are sent out annually. It provides news on viral hepatitis and Hepatitis NSW's work. Each edition also promotes our various services and links people to our website and to other significant events within the NSW viral hepatitis community. The Champion also helps recruit community members to social and clinical research studies.

89% OF READERS SAID THEY FOUND THE CHAMPION USEFUL

WEBSITE HEP.ORG.AU

Check out www.hep.org.au for resources and information. Our website is the best place 24/7 to find out about our education, support and advocacy projects.

VOLUNTEERS

Hepatitis NSW engaged more than 55 volunteers this year. Volunteers carried out a range of tasks and services, working as Board Members, as regular mail-out workers, providing legal expertise, helping staff at events, and providing administrative support. The extent of our work would not be possible without the ongoing support of our team of volunteers; they enhance the support and increase the reach of programs and services that we provide to our stakeholders and communities.

1,704 VOLUNTEERING HOURS

NSW HEPATITIS C COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2019-2020

We continue to work in partnership with NUAA and the Ministry of Health in the development and delivery of a state-wide hepatitis C public awareness campaign. The campaign aims to focus on and reach people who inject drugs, and is delivered in key settings, such as NSPs, to promote access to hep C testing and cures. For the first time, we have introduced peer worker promotion at campaign sites, to create a bridge into testing and treatment. We thank our project partner, NUAA, and all the people who have been involved with ongoing activations across NSW.

301,899 WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

CHECK OUT HEP.ORG.AU FOR:

HEP INFO & NEWS 	SERVICES DIRECTORY
INDUSTRY & COMMUNITY EVENT CALENDAR 	LIVE CHAT ONLINE SUPPORT
IN-LANGUAGE HEP PAGES 	DOWNLOADABLE FACTSHEETS & INFOGRAPHICS
READ & ORDER RESOURCES 	TX! MAG

Pages in response to COVID-19 and hep B and hep C were developed and proved popular.

WE REPORT PUBLICLY ON OUR WORK PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS HERE: WWW.HEP.ORG.AU/ABOUT-US/HOW-WE-ARE-PERFORMING

