

2021-2022 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 2021-2022. This report gives a snapshot of our work and its impact, and describes the programs and services we provide for people living with or affected by hepatitis C and hepatitis B in NSW.

The Hepatitis NSW vision is *A world free of viral hepatitis*. In working towards this vision, we are funded by the NSW Ministry of Health. Our programs and activities, in turn, enables us to play a major part in working towards the NSW Government's commitment to the elimination of hepatitis C and hepatitis B in NSW by 2028.

Despite the challenges of the escalating coronavirus pandemic, HNSW had a successful and positive year. We met or exceeded our service goals and activity targets. As restrictions eased, we partnered with Local Health District and partner services' staff to reach and support people affected by viral hepatitis, offering outreach services, events, resources and community education sessions. We acknowledge the hard work and dedication of these staff as we sought to re-build momentum to test and treat people living with viral hepatitis.

The primary focus of our work, due to our funding conditions, remains working towards the elimination of hepatitis C. To better support people to confidently access testing and treatment, we recruited and trained more casual peer workers, building a team across NSW. Our hepatitis C health promotion campaign HEP CURED included peer worker promotion to support people who inject drugs into testing and treatment within familiar spaces. The campaign activities reached thousands using carefully designed messaging and on-site clinical services helping test hundreds and cure people living with hepatitis C.

We also continued our work to mobilise people affected by hepatitis B into testing, vaccination, monitoring and treatment. We have created partnerships, resources, and a website to support people living with hepatitis B. Our hepatitis B work is achieved with limited funding and resources, including member reserves.

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

Denise Jarratt
President

Steven Drew
Chief Executive Officer



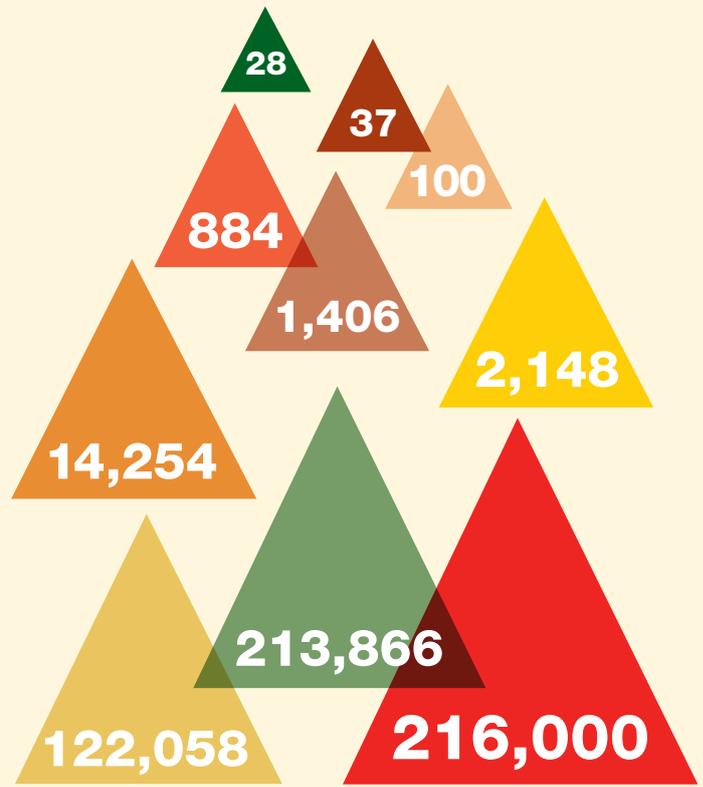
Hepatitis Infoline
1800 803 990
www.hep.org.au

PO Box 432
Darlinghurst, NSW 1300
info@hep.org.au

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

2021-22 HIGHLIGHTS

-  28 SKILLED AND TRAINED PEERS
-  37 SPEAKER SESSIONS INCLUDING 14 HEP B SESSIONS
-  100 ABORIGINAL PEOPLE CAME TO OUR YABUN STALL
-  LIVE HEP C FREE REACHED 884 PEOPLE FOR TESTING AND TREATMENT ACROSS NSW
-  1,406 HOURS OF PEER WORK WERE DELIVERED WITHIN ACTIVITIES
-  INFOLINE TOOK 2,148 CALLS, INCLUDING 1,319 CALLS FROM PRISON
-  14,254 VIEWS ON KOREAN AND CHINESE HEPB.ORG SITE
-  122,058 RESOURCES DISTRIBUTED
-  213,866 VIEWS ON HEP.ORG SITE
-  216,000 VIEWS OF YOUTUBE VIDEO GET TESTED GET CURED



4,675 PRIORITY POPULATIONS REACHED

-  1,319 PEOPLE IN CUSTODY
-  884 PEOPLE AFFECTED BY HEPATITIS C
-  884 PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS
-  601 ABORIGINAL PEOPLE
-  563 PEOPLE AFFECTED BY HEPATITIS B
-  424 PEOPLE TESTED FOR HEP C



2021-22 FINANCES

In 2021-2022 our income was \$2,398,226. The 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 \$2,369,204.

Hepatitis NSW achieved a small operating surplus of \$29,022. This enabled us to increase our equity (members' funds) to \$809,856 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 \$2,089,400. 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 funding bodies and partners: the NSW Ministry of Health, Department of Communities and Justice, Hepatitis Australia, Sydney LHD, South Eastern Sydney LHD, Western Sydney LHD, Central Coast LHD, WentWest PHN, Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network and Department of Corrective Services.

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 is available to download from our website www.hep.org.au or a copy can be obtained from our office by email request to admin@hep.org.au

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 peer workers.

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

The service had strong outcomes with 80 service visits within the traditional model, including 20 sessions using the HEP CURED campaign, 424 people tested for hep C, yet fewer people were found to need hep C treatment. During COVID restrictions, when opportunities for clinical outreach were limited, we implemented initiatives to retain our peer workforce, including training on how to use our campaign messaging and merchandise to engage people, peer work skills, Dried Blood Spot (DBS) testing, and an update from the Kirby institute on hep C elimination progress. The peers were ready to support people into testing as treatment.

OUR 28 SKILLED AS WELL AS TRAINED PEER WORKERS WERE PLACED ACROSS MOST LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICTS (LHDS). 884 PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH ABOUT HEP C

884 ENGAGED
PEOPLE BY LIVE
HEP C FREE



- 998 HOURS OF PEER ENGAGEMENTS
- 424 DBS OR BLOOD TESTS
- 329 SAW THE NURSE
- 97 REFERRED FOR FURTHER HEALTHCARE
- 19 ACCESSED TREATMENT
- 16 DISCUSSED REINFECTION OR RETREATMENT WITH A NURSE

1,406 COMMUNITY
HOURS PEER WORKER
ENGAGEMENT

998 LIVE HEP C
FREE

160 COMMUNICATIONS
STRATEGY

151 SPEAKER
SERVICE

40 HEPATITIS
INFOLINE

34 ABORIGINAL
PROJECTS

17 HEPATITIS B

6 COMMUNITY MEDIA
SPEAKERS

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. Personal accounts of people's lived experience develop service providers' understanding of how stigma and discrimination impact on access to support and services. This is 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 education sessions, and at community workshops and events. During COVID restrictions, our speakers delivered sessions online, in videos and shared their stories in blogs on the website. We have a collection of recorded speaker sessions and YouTube videos which we promoted to increase access.

37 SPEAKER SESSIONS 17 SPEAKERS MAINTAINED 13 HEPATITIS B SESSIONS 44,404 YOUTUBE VIEWS FOR HEESOOK'S STORY (KOREAN)

HEPATITIS B PROGRAM CHINESE AND KOREAN COMMUNITY

Our Hepatitis B programs aim to raise awareness of hep B, particularly for Chinese and Korean communities. Our bilingual educators work with multicultural community organisations to deliver in-language workshops covering transmission, prevention, vaccination, management, and treatment.

We usually team with clinical staff to offer screening opportunities, however this was not possible due to COVID restrictions. During lockdown, a writing competition was promoted for lived experience stories, and the book *Write to be Heard Hepatitis B* stories from the Chinese and Korean communities was published. We reorientated our services to deliver education sessions safely online which also offered anonymity, but surprisingly, after reopening, even more people attended our face-to-face sessions.

The website was updated with COVID19, vaccination and hep B and hep C information in Korean and Chinese, and in-language Live Chat kept people linked with our services. Video storytelling from hep B lived experience speakers and in-language information were popular during lockdowns and were promoted via our blogs, social media and hep B pages.

563 PEOPLE WERE REACHED THROUGH 17 EVENTS OR SESSIONS. AN SBS RADIO CHINESE PODCAST HAD 864 LISTENERS.

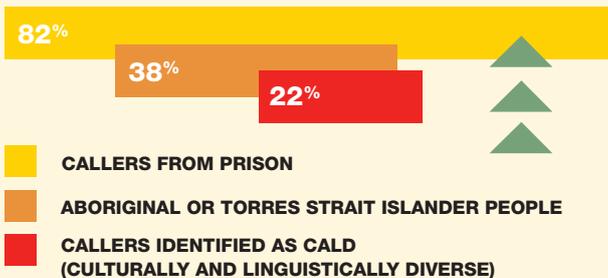


2,146 HEPATITIS INFOLINE SERVICES

1,605 CALLS TO THE HEPATITIS INFOLINE

976 HEPATITIS INFOLINE PACKS SENT TO PEOPLE IN PRISON

INFOLINE CALLER DEMOGRAPHICS



HEP B AND VACCINATION ENQUIRIES IN 25% OF CALLS

541 ONLINE ENQUIRIES INCLUDING 343 EMAILS AND 198 LIVE CHATS

HEPATITIS INFOLINE

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

Services are available via phone, online Live Chat, website email and within NSW prisons through the free auto-dial phone system. We took a large proportion of calls from people in custody, and from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We engaged in more conversations about hepatitis B and vaccination than in previous years, as the COVID vaccination messages rolled out. Our callers discussed topics including transmission, prevention, testing and treatment, hepatitis B vaccination, and COVID vaccination and viral hepatitis.

2,146 CALLS, LIVE CHATS OR EMAILS

PEOPLE IN PRISON

We had an increased proportion of calls from people in custody. People can request a Hepatitis Information Pack (HIP) by mail, giving them information and resources about hepatitis C and B testing, treatment, prevention, and request forms to see the prison's health service. The packs contain Tx! Mag with prison-specific stories and information on how to access testing and treatment, including DBS in custody. Our customised campaign with messaging on beanies, water bottles, posters and playing cards helps keep the conversations in prison up to date. Feedback survey forms show people took action to test or treat as a result of the resources and support they received.

976 HEPATITIS INFORMATION PACKS SENT TO PEOPLE IN CUSTODY



314,437 WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

WWW.HEP.ORG.AU

<p>HEP INFO & NEWS</p>	<p>SERVICES DIRECTORY</p>
<p>INDUSTRY & COMMUNITY EVENT CALENDAR</p>	<p>LIVE CHAT ONLINE SUPPORT</p>
<p>IN-LANGUAGE HEP PAGES</p> <p>COME VISIT OUR NEW KOREAN LANGUAGE SITE >> 한국어 웹사이트</p>	<p>DOWNLOADABLE FACTSHEETS & INFOGRAPHICS</p>
<p>READ & ORDER RESOURCES</p>	<p>TX! MAG</p>

See www.hep.org.au for free resources and information.

213,866 VISITS

**YOU CAN SEE OUR PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS HERE:
WWW.HEP.ORG.AU/ABOUT US/HOW-WE-ARE-PERFORMING**

HEP CONNECT

Hep Connect provides support to people undertaking hep C treatment.

Hepatitis NSW has partnered with Perx Health to deliver the service through the interactive Perx Health app for people managing Hep C treatment. Perx provides reminders for medications or appointments, daily support and rewards people as they take steps on their journey to cure.

48 CLIENTS WERE SUPPORTED TO COMPLETE TREATMENT

THE CHAMPION E-NEWSLETTER

The Champion is our monthly newsletter sent to our members and subscribers. It provides news on viral hepatitis and our work, promotes our services and events, and links people to our website. The Champion also helps recruit community members to get involved in peer work, public speaking opportunities or research studies.

35,535 COPIES DISTRIBUTED

Tx! MAG

Tx! Mag is our easy-read magazine. It helps get people living with hep C into testing, treatment and cure. Combining comics, puzzles and information, it aims to connect with readers on issues that relate to their lives. We run workshops with communities to develop the themes and storylines. One edition per year focuses on hep B among Aboriginal communities and aims to help Close the Gap on hepatitis B testing, monitoring, care and treatment.

39,690 COPIES DISTRIBUTED

RESOURCES ABOUT HEP B AND C

We develop innovative resources responsive to peoples' needs. Our resources are developed in partnership with affected communities and health specialists. These include "easy read" resources with illustrations, that are helpful for people with lower literacy skills, and resources to support clinical work. In-language resources for people with hepatitis C and B are available. You can view and place your order on our website.

122,058 RESOURCES DISTRIBUTED

RAP

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was launched in July 2019. We are tracking adequately against the actions and deliverables with an increase in staff awareness through Aboriginal cultural competency training, a group visit to the Unsettled exhibition at the Australian Museum, and we continue our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations for service delivery, resource development, training, events and purchasing of supplies and services.



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, homelessness, 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. The team developed online modules with 48 people completing the hep C and 46 completing the hep B modules, from different occupations and settings.

270 PEOPLE IN CUSTODIAL SETTINGS OFFERED EDUCATION SESSIONS AND TESTING

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. Together we attended Yabun Festival on 26 January, with 100 people visiting the stall, talking with our staff, and taking resources home. This year was challenging again as the COVID pandemic created barriers for working with communities, and the staff in services were seconded to support Aboriginal communities' vaccination and health care in response to COVID. As restrictions eased we got out to events and education sessions, with a focus on youth.





HEP CURED MOBILE MURAL, CAMPERDOWN

NSW HEPATITIS C COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2021-2022

We continue to work in partnership with NUAA and the Ministry of Health in the development and delivery of state-wide hepatitis C public awareness campaigns. The campaign aims to focus on and reach people who inject drugs, to promote access to hep C testing and cure. Two campaigns were delivered in 85 key settings across the state, such as NSPs. The HEP CURED campaign was implemented July to November 2021 with peer workers supporting activations. We followed this with the Mobile Mural component in March 2022 with peer worker promotion at 18 activation sites, to create a bridge into testing and treatment. Hepatitis NSW peer workers talked with people who inject drugs about hep C testing and treatment, using the messaging from the campaign. The peer workers distributed 14,650 merchandise items to help engage people, and get the campaign messages out. They encouraged people to consider testing and treatment, then take the next step to see the clinical staff. The campaign website can be viewed at hepc.org.au.

We thank our partners, NUAA, the Ministry of Health, staff at Local Health Districts, the peer workers and all the people who have been involved with campaign activations across NSW.

DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

A digital marketing campaign, funded by Social Sector Support Fund, was developed to promote awareness of hep C cures and drive traffic to our website (doubled to 1,900 a day), online directory and Hepatitis Infoline (up 10%) resulting in increased referrals into local treatment services. The campaign used Google display ads, Facebook and YouTube video ads, and appeared on people's devices 5,565,165 times, generating 508,520 interactions. The video production skills of staff were increased and our YouTube went from 50 to 16,000 views a day.

60,509 ENGAGEMENTS ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA - FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM AND TWITTER

418,900 VIEWS AND 11,200 HOURS OF YOUTUBE WATCHED