

THE IMPORTANCE OF A PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH IN ACHIEVING HEPATITIS C ELIMINATION; LEARNINGS FROM A NURSE-LED OUTREACH HEPATITIS C MODEL OF CARE.

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Background: Many people living with and at-risk of hepatitis C experience systemic barriers to engaging with healthcare in conventional primary and tertiary care settings. Achieving hepatitis C elimination is therefore contingent on increasing the availability of hepatitis C care, and embedding models of care into community health settings. However, expanding hepatitis C care into community health settings requires a highly person-centred approach, which prioritises the needs of people who are receiving care, and empowers them to become actively involved in their own treatment journeys.

Methods: The Tasmanian Eliminate Hepatitis C Australian Outreach Project has successfully implemented nurse-led, hepatitis C care across needle and syringe programs, alcohol and other drug services and mental health services. Importantly, the success of the model has depended on a highly person-centred approach, which is tailored to the needs and priorities of people who receive hepatitis C care through the project.

Outcome/Results: We will present two case studies which demonstrate the importance of a person-centred approach when implementing hepatitis C care in community settings, including: (1) a person living with hepatitis C experiencing severe mental illness, who required intensive follow-up and (2) a person living with hepatitis C experiencing homelessness who had multiple difficulties accessing hepatitis C treatment.

Conclusions/Applications: It is widely acknowledged that a person-centred approach is fundamental to the delivery of hepatitis C care. However, the energy and compassion required to retain people living with complex and competing priorities in hepatitis C care is often underestimated or overlooked. Our model of care provides critical insights into the provision of person-centred hepatitis C care in community health settings.

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