

## **Hepatitis B cure: indicative findings of key informant perspectives on preparing for hepatitis B cure implementation**

### **Authors:**

Wallace J<sup>1,2,3</sup>, Howell J<sup>1</sup>, Stoope M<sup>1</sup>, Lewin SR<sup>4</sup>, Revill P<sup>4,5</sup>, Power J<sup>2</sup>, Treloar C<sup>3</sup>, Cowie B<sup>6</sup>, Hajarizadeh B<sup>7</sup>, Richmond J<sup>1</sup>, Hellard M<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Burnet Institute, <sup>2</sup> ARCHS, La Trobe University, <sup>3</sup> CSHR, UNSW, <sup>4</sup> Department of Infectious Diseases, The University of Melbourne at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, <sup>5</sup> ICE-HBV, <sup>6</sup> WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis, The Doherty Institute, <sup>7</sup> Kirby Institute, UNSW, <sup>8</sup> Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory

**Background:** An effective and durable hepatitis B cure will revolutionise the public health response to hepatitis B, radically change the lives of people with hepatitis B, and make the elimination of viral hepatitis as a public health threat a reality. Scientific activity and academic literature describing hepatitis B cure research predominately focuses on its scientific and clinical development. This study sought to explore effective implementation of this cure.

**Methods:** Forty-five qualitative interviews were conducted with global key informants including clinicians, basic scientists, people with hepatitis B, government-based program and policy officers and researchers to document knowledge, understanding and expectations of the cure, the trajectory of hepatitis B cure research and its implications for public health.

**Results:** Interview data identified barriers and enablers to implementing a hepatitis B cure. Data showed a variety of expectations of cure outcomes at virological, public health, clinical, individual and social levels with differing interpretations of cure science based on professional expertise. The formulation of the cure will inform implementation including how and who accesses the cure, with equity and resources identified as key issues. Global political, cultural, resource and social factors will affect the capacity of any cure to achieve elimination goals. While health structures are available to deliver the hepatitis B cure, many require reorientation to address the needs of people with hepatitis B, and resources to deal with current global and national level cascade of care health care challenges.

**Conclusion:** Current hepatitis B policy and program settings at global and local levels are inadequate for the purposes of hepatitis B cure implementation. While resources are being used to develop a hepatitis B cure, key gaps remain in understanding how this cure could be implemented effectively. Viral hepatitis elimination at a global level will require both effective prevention interventions and biomedical treatment options.

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