

THE ONE PHONE CALL AT A TIME APPROACH TO ELIMINATING HEPATITIS C IN THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY.

annette fraser¹.

¹ HepatitisWA, Perth. Western Australia.

Background/Approach: According to the Kirby Institute's Monitoring hepatitis C treatment uptake in Australia the monthly uptake of the therapies first listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme in March 2016 has more than halved since peaking around this time.

To address this issue, HepatitisWA successfully applied for funding from the WA Department of Health (DoH) Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Program (SHBBVP) to implement the GP Project aimed at supporting GPs/NPs in managing their patients.

Analysis/Argument: The Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee decided to enable General Practitioners (GPs) and Nurse Practitioners (NPs) to prescribe hepatitis C treatments as a world first and see it as vital to ensure uptake is sufficient to maximize opportunity for Australia to eliminate hepatitis C. Whilst the number of GPs/NPs prescribing the therapies is increasing, it remains too low to achieve elimination by the 2030 target.

As GPs/NPs historically referred patients with a positive hepatitis C serology for specialist treatment many are inexperienced in the full screening and management of a patient with hepatitis C and are reluctant to prescribe treatments as they may not feel confident about their knowledge or ability to treat hepatitis C.

Outcome/Results: The DoH collates a list of all hepatitis C positive notifications and associated GP/NP who are notified to expect contact from HepatitisWA GP Project Liaison Nurse (GPLN).

Conclusions/Applications: The project involves the GPLN working with GPs/NPs and other clinical/practice staff to increase their skills, knowledge and confidence in managing and treating patients with hepatitis C. The aim is to increase the number of people in WA cured, and provide a sustainable workforce; competent in prescribing hepatitis C treatments, and ultimately augment progress in the goal of elimination of hepatitis C from the community.

Disclosure of Interest Statement Eliminate Hepatitis C Project is funded by the SHBBVP of the Western Australian DOH.
