

BE LIVER SMART PROJECT

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Introduction: Hepatitis Queensland (HQ), a community organisation, recognises the correlation between hepatitis C and liver cancer and understands the importance of preventing liver disease and the detection of early liver conditions and liver cancer in Queensland.

Methods: In February 2019, HQ launched a four week hepatitis C raising awareness campaign utilising a 90 second animation “What was your journey to becoming hepatitis C free” across fourteen identified Medical Centres in the Brisbane North region. In the Brisbane North region, only 16.2% of the estimated 8,743 people living with hepatitis C have been treated.

During the campaign period, contact was made with the participating medical centres to invite them to be involved in a pilot project to encourage more Queenslanders to be tested and treated for hepatitis C.

The “Be Liver Smart” project ran from April to June 2019 and was designed to support medical centres in a variety of opt in and opt out services provided by an HQ outreach community nurse and project staff. These services included:

- provision of a community nurse to assist medical centres in identifying patients living with hepatitis C and providing the appropriate referral pathway;
- supporting medical centres through provision of a Fibroscan;
- workforce development for practice staff including education for General Practitioners on treating hepatitis C;
- provision of a hepatitis C toolkit (adapted for local use from the EC partnership toolkit);
- education sessions for practice nurses to build knowledge and skills in the management of hepatitis C within primary care.

Results: Initial findings will include the number of Medical Centres that participated in the project, individual services delivered and any new Medical Centres recruited into the project.

Conclusion: The “Be Liver Smart” project is an example of an innovative approach to mobilising the workforce and dissolving traditional barriers delivered by a community organisation.