

HEPATITIS B NEEDS ASSESSMENT

FOR THE AFGHANI COMMUNITY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Enaam Oudih & Sumbo Ndi
PEACE (Personal Education and Community Empowerment)
Blood Borne Viruses and STIs Multicultural Services
Relationships Australia SA, Adelaide South Australia



Background/Approach

PEACE Multicultural Services a service of Relationships Australia SA, provides health promotion around blood borne viruses particularly HIV and viral hepatitis to CALD communities in South Australia. To our knowledge, there are few studies that explore the impact of, and perceptions towards, hepatitis B within Afghan communities living in Australia, and more specifically South Australia. A Needs Assessment was conducted to address this knowledge gap and provide insight into the understanding, knowledge, attitudes, cultural context and help-seeking behaviours of the South Australian Afghan community.

Analysis/Argument

As the numbers of refugees and migrants from this cultural group increase, it is imperative that we have greater insight into the cultural understandings, values, attitudes and knowledge around hepatitis B in the Afghan community, in order to respond appropriately. An informal qualitative research method was employed using participatory action research as a theoretical framework. Data was collected via consultations, one to one individual interviews and semi-structured focus group discussions with key stakeholders within the community. Discussions were designed to incorporate a holistic approach, addressing social health determinants, help seeking behaviours, health literacy, cultural practices and settlement issues.

The focus group involved a cross section of the community with a total of 52 participants from Hazara and Pashtu ethnic groups. Participants were 31 females and 21 males between the ages of 18 and 60 years old.

Conclusions/Applications

Understanding community perspectives of issues is important to create relevant and culturally appropriate health promotion and education strategies. This Needs Assessment provides an in-depth insight into the understanding of viral hepatitis B from the perspective of people of diverse Afghani backgrounds living in Australia. This has shaped the way we communicate hepatitis B to the community.

Perception and Impact Of Hepatitis B

4 KEY THEMES

Culturally divergent understandings and language used to describe hepatitis B and C



Lack of accurate hepatitis B knowledge regarding transmission, vaccination, treatment and outcomes



Estimated high prevalence rates and local community incidences of hepatitis B



Stigma as a product of contagion fear