

## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP DELIVERING INNOVATION IN ELIMINATION: AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL HEPATITIS C FINDING 50,000 PROJECT

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### Background:

Australia's progress to hepatitis C elimination is precarious, with some notable achievements while stalling in other areas. The uptake of direct-acting antiviral cures in 2016 was initially high but not sustained, and unmet needs and the current epidemic shape call for new approaches to engage people who are unreached by business-as-usual approaches.

In 2020 community, decision-makers, researchers and clinicians partnered to ramp-up action. Hepatitis Australia as a community peak coordinated the establishment of the *National Hepatitis C Finding 50,000 Project* with support from the Australian Health Minister and Health Department.

### Description of Model of Care/Intervention:

The innovative, cross-sectoral project aims to find, test and treat 50,000 people with hepatitis C across geographically and demographically dispersed communities. With five pillars of activity and many partners, the Project drives progress through:

- National hepatitis C Campaigns
- National point-of-care testing program
- Expanding case finding in primary care
- National hepatitis infoline
- A systems level working group

### Effectiveness:

The project is delivering on its objectives. The campaigns were evaluated as successful and designed with input from over 600 community members. The point-of-care testing program has rolled out >7,000 test, and case finding aims to engage 150 primary care practices. The hepatitis infoline received over 4,000 occasions of service, incorporating Australia's first national community hepatitis service delivery dataset. There has been increased engagement, testing and treatment.

### Conclusion:

This project highlights community's critical role in conceptualising, leading, coordinating and delivering innovation in the national response. Elimination by 2030 requires agility and partnership. The project demonstrates the response's capacity for activities that work synergistically through new technologies, existing infrastructure and a shared commitment to affected communities.

### Disclosure of Interest Statement:

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, partners include Hepatitis Australia, AIVL, NACCHO, Kirby Institute, ASHM, Burnet Institute, and over 200 collaborators nationally.