

WORTH THE CURE: THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY-LED REPORTING IN NATIONAL HEPATITIS EFFORTS

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Background:

The Hepatitis C Partnership for Control and Treatment (Hep C PACT) works in collaboration with governmental and civil society actors involved in hepatitis C (HCV) advocacy in countries, including Bangladesh, Cambodia, Malaysia, Mozambique, and Thailand. Many countries have national hepatitis plans, and community-led platforms that offer opportunities to identify barriers and incorporate recommendations may help countries align with HCV targets by 2030. Community engagement ensures the centering of marginalized and vulnerable populations in policies and can offer strategies for adapting point-of-care HCV testing and treatment. Two advocacy tools aid researchers, policy-makers, civil society, and affected communities with community-led reporting and advocacy for change. Mapcrowd is one community-driven, crowdsourced database that provides information on the availability and pricing of HCV diagnostics, treatments, plus hepatitis and harm reduction-related policies. Using this data, the Worth The Cure campaign tool provides a collective learning space and design toolkit for advocates to take action to address access barriers.

Methods:

MapCrowd data are free, publicly accessible, and sourced from 119 countries by 60 in-country contributors globally and supplemented by peer-reviewed publications. Data are limited based on where we have in-country contributors and networks.

Results:

Government-led reporting on HCV can lack nuance and details at subnational or micro-elimination levels. MapCrowd and Worth the Cure tools are part of effective community engagement platforms and used in the development and implementation of community-led advocacy that inform national HCV plans and future hepatitis elimination validation processes in the aforementioned countries.

Conclusion:

As countries develop national HCV plans, the involvement of communities, especially people who use and inject drugs, is fundamental to effective, inclusive, and sustainable achievement of 2030 targets. MapCrowd and Worth The Cure tools can be used by diverse stakeholders to monitor and assess the validity of achieving targets and indicators, thus improving transparency and accountability in HCV programs at country levels.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *See example below:*

The conference collaborators recognise the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in publications and presentations.

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