

'HEP C CAN BE CURED'

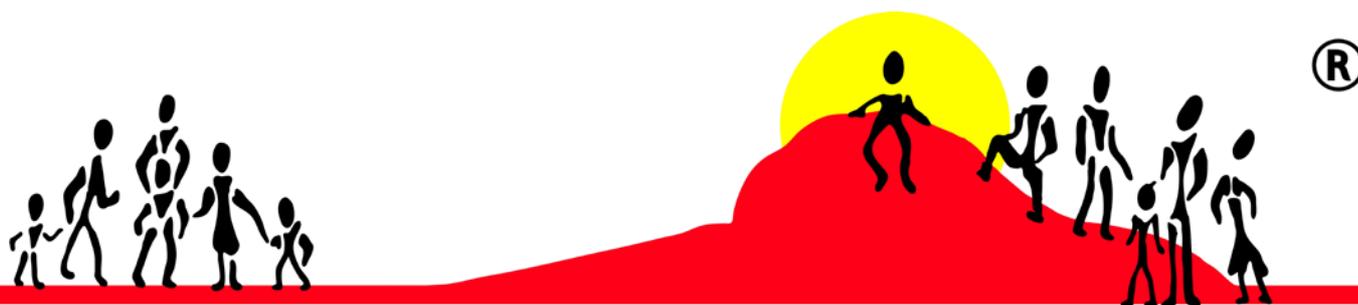
Digital Tool Kit

1. Overview of hep C and new treatments
2. Key Messages

What can you do to let more Aboriginal people living with hep C know about the new treatments?

3. Display and distribute information materials
4. Use your website – links and media release
5. Place an article in your newsletter or on your website
6. Use social media

If you have any queries on how the material in this digital tool kit can be used or would like access to images please contact Jonathan@33creative.com.au or if you would like more information about Hepatitis C please visit <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>



Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council
of New South Wales

OVERVIEW

The 'Hep C can be Cured' communications project has been initiated by the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) to increase the knowledge of new Hepatitis C treatments amongst NSW Aboriginal communities.

On 1 March the direct acting antiviral (DAA) hepatitis C treatments became available on the PBS. These drugs have very high cure rates (up to 95%), low side effects and treat most genotypes of Hepatitis C.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have up to five times higher rates of Hepatitis C notifications compared to non-Indigenous people (Kirby 2015).

As Hepatitis C transmission is associated with injecting drug use, people living with Hepatitis C may experience shame, stigma and discrimination making it challenging to access services and accurate information. Aboriginal Health Workers and others in this field also face barriers promoting services and programs due to stigma.

All Local Health Districts and many Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services have Hepatitis C testing, management and treatment programs.

The AH&MRC is developing a range of strategies to increase Aboriginal people's awareness that new treatments are available. One of the strategies is to share positive stories about Aboriginal people accessing treatment through their Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service and elsewhere.

This digital kit is designed to provide key stakeholders with information, messaging and tools to use to help the AH&MRC 'spread the word' to Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal people living with Hepatitis C that new treatments are now available that have very high cure rates.

Hepatitis Awareness Week 25 July to 29 July 2016 is an ideal time to share the materials and information in this digital toolkit.

KEY MESSAGES

The broad messages of the 'Hep C can be Cured' campaign are:

- Get tested for hep C if you have ever been at risk
- New treatments, called Direct Acting Antivirals (DAAs) are available that can cure hep C. DAAs have low side effects and are free.
- Talk to your doctor, your Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) or call the Hepatitis Infoline 1800 803 990 for more information about new treatments



DISPLAY AND DISTRIBUTE INFORMATION MATERIALS

There are a number of information resources you can use to help inform Aboriginal people about the new Hepatitis C treatments. Sharing these resources across social media, or placing an article on your website or in your newsletter is a valuable way of raising awareness.

INFORMATION REOURCES

1. Illustrated electronic Postcards
2. Case Studies

GENERAL REOURCES

1. Hepatitis C information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Hepatitis NSW) <https://www.hep.org.au/hep-c-treatment/>
2. Video of the new Hepatitis C treatments (Hepatitis Australia) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMJxgEO9Nul>
3. Hepatitis C new treatments factsheet (Hepatitis Australia) <http://www.hepatitisaustralia.com/hepatitis-c-facts/>

USE YOUR WEBSITE

Providing a link on your website to our information resources for Aboriginal people can help share information on the new treatments. You can also provide a link to the AH&MRC's website: <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

The following section of this digital kit contains an article on the new Hepatitis C treatments you might like to upload to your website in your 'News' section.



PLACE AN ARTICLE IN YOUR WEBSITE



Caption: AH&MRC CEO Sandra Bailey says new hep C treatments are good news for Aboriginal people.



Caption: Dr Marlene Kong says the success rate for the new hep C treatments is very high.



NEW TREATMENTS OFFER ABORIGINAL PEOPLE LIVING WITH HEP C HOPE OF CURE

Aboriginal people living with hep C have something to celebrate this Hepatitis Awareness Week. New treatments, called Direct Acting Antivirals (DAAs), released onto the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) offer a cure for up to 95% of people.

"The new drugs have been on the PBS since 1 March this year, which means they are available and affordable to everyone," Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Program head at the UNSW Australia's Kirby Institute, Dr Marlene Kong said.

"There are only minor side effects. Your local GP can prescribe them and for most people, the treatment is a daily medication for only three months. This means that if you have hep C, there's a good chance that you could be cured in three months."

The new DAAs are considered a breakthrough in treating hep C and are available to anyone over 18 years and living in Australia who has a Medicare Card. There are no restrictions around current or previous injecting drug use or presence of liver damage.

For Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) CEO Sandra Bailey, the new treatments are much needed good news for Aboriginal communities.

"New treatments are free, have high cure rates and low side effects. The more Aboriginal people who are treated with these new DAAs for hep C, will mean healthier families and communities," said Ms Bailey. "I am pleased to say that a number of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services are working in partnership with specialist liver clinics to ensure access for our communities, including people living in rural and regional areas."

The new hepatitis C treatments have worked for a 53-year-old Wiradjuri woman who has had the virus since 1994, and accessed the new treatment through her Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service. Cathy is now free of the hepatitis C virus and its symptoms.

"After the full course I have no viral load in my system and now all indications are that I'm cured," Cathy said.

While the new treatments offer a hep C cure, for Dr Kong programs are also needed to prevent those at high risk of contracting hep C.

"In Australia we have a number of interventions that have been effective in reducing the rates of hepatitis C among those most at risk. But we need to ensure that these interventions, such as Needle and Syringe Program and the Opioid Treatment Program are appropriately targeted to Indigenous people at risk," Dr Kong said. "Service providers need to be aware of the culturally specific needs of Indigenous people who use drugs."



“We also can’t ignore the reality that factors like stigma and shame play a part in the rising hepatitis C infections in Indigenous populations,” said Dr Kong. “We know that these factors deter people from seeking treatment.”

Hepatitis C is diagnosed by a blood test. Dr Kong advises anyone who thinks they might be at risk, such as people who have shared injecting equipment, to take the test.

“Left untreated, hep C can lead to serious liver disease and even liver cancer. Earlier treatment can reduce the negative health impacts as well as prevent onward transmission,” Dr Kong said.

“My message to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who inject drugs or who think they may have contracted hep C in other ways, is to immediately see your health provider, get the information you need and get tested for hep C. The success rate of the new DAAs is fantastic.

“I encourage people who inject drugs to seek out needle and syringe and opioid treatment programs that you can access. It’s also important to remember that anyone with hep C should not share needles.”

Dr Kong is an Aboriginal doctor from the Worimi people of Port Stephens. Before taking up the role of program head at the Kirby Institute, she was a practicing GP at many locations across Australia.

The Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC) is the peak representative body and voice of Aboriginal communities on health in NSW. The AH&MRC represents its members, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs), which deliver culturally appropriate comprehensive primary health care to their communities. For more information about the AH&MRC visit www.ahmrc.org.au.

For more information on the new hep C treatments you can talk to your doctor, your Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service or call the Hepatitis Infoline 1800 803 990. You can also find out more by visiting the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council website <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php> or Hepatitis NSW <https://www.hep.org.au/hep-c-treatment/>

Hepatitis Awareness Week is from the 25th – 29th July 2016, with World Hepatitis Day on the 28 July 2016.

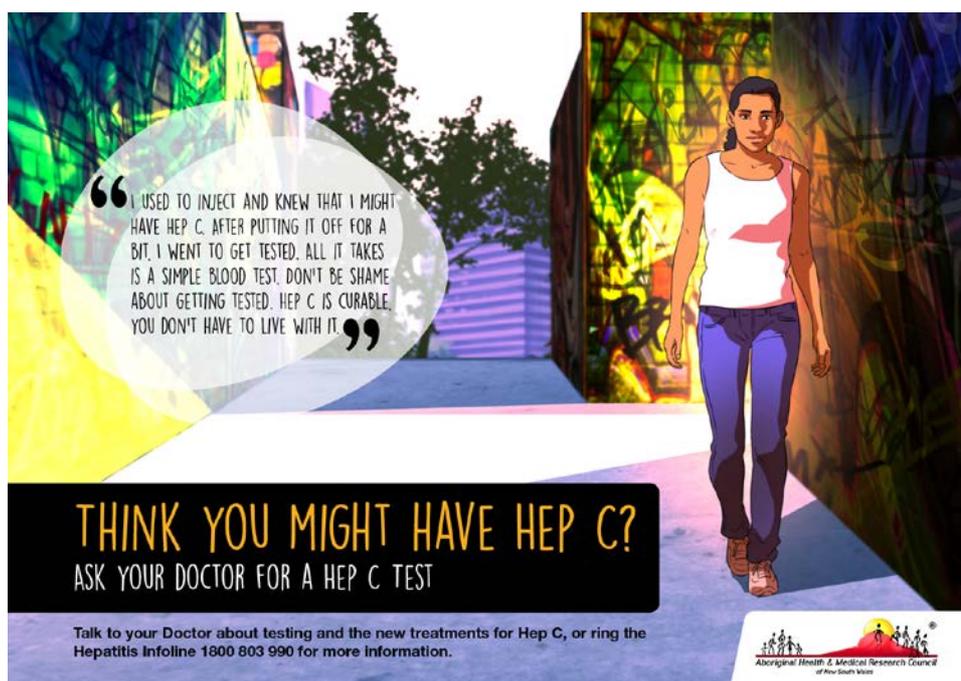


SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook posts

Does your service have a Facebook page? Consider posting these messages over the week:

Aboriginal people living with hep C have something to celebrate during Hepatitis Awareness Week (25th – 29th July). Hep C can be cured! Find out more <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>



To download high and low resolution postcards go to:

<http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

Kerri is into her fifth week of the new hep C treatments and side effects have been minimal. Read Kerri's story here: <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

Living with hep C had a big impact on Toby's mental health, and he is happy to now be receiving treatment. Read Toby's story here:

<http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>



“New hep C treatments are free, have high cure rates and very low side effects. The more Aboriginal people who are treated, will mean healthier families and communities,” says Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) CEO Sandra Bailey. Find out more:

<http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

Cathy is a Wiradjuri woman who has had hep C since 1994. Cathy is now cured from hep C. Read Cathy’s story: <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

ARE YOU LIVING WITH HEP C?
HEP C CAN BE CURED

Talk to your Doctor about testing and the new treatments for Hep C, or ring the Hepatitis Infoline 1800 803 990 for more information.

“ I LIVED WITH HEP C FOR YEARS AND FELT TIRED ALL THE TIME. MY DOC TOLD ME TO TRY THE NEW TREATMENTS. THERE WERE HARDLY ANY SIDE EFFECTS FROM THE TREATMENT, ALL I HAD TO DO WAS TAKE TABLETS FOR 12 WEEKS. THE NEW TREATMENTS WILL CURE MOST PEOPLE. DON'T LET HEP C RUIN YOUR HEALTH, GET TREATED AND GET CURED. ”

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To download high and low resolution postcards go to:

<http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

New hep C treatments offer up to a 95% cure rate for Aboriginal people living with the virus. For more information on the new hep C treatments you can talk to your doctor, your AMS or call the Hepatitis Infoline 1800 803 990. You can also find out more by visiting the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council website <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/> Or watch this short video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMJxgEO9Nul>



Don't be shame. If you think have hep C, talk to doctor and get tested. New hep C treatments can cure up to 95% of people. Find out more: <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php> or <https://www.hep.org.au/hep-c-treatment/>



HAVE YOU EVER INJECTED DRUGS?
USE STERILE EQUIPMENT EVERY TIME.

“HEPATITIS C IS TRANSMITTED BY BLOOD, SO IF YOU'VE EVER INJECTED DRUGS, BEEN IN PRISON, OR HAVE A TATTOO, YOU COULD HAVE CONTRACTED HEP C. FOR THOSE LIVING WITH HEP C, THERE ARE NEW TREATMENTS AVAILABLE THAT CAN CURE MOST PEOPLE.”

Talk to your Doctor about testing and the new treatments for Hep C, or ring the Hepatitis Infoline 1800 803 990 for more information.



To download high and low resolution postcards go to: <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

Twitter posts

New treatments can cure #Aboriginal people living with hep C #livehepfree <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

Don't be shame. Get tested for #hep C if you're at risk #livehepfree <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

Want to know more about the new hep C treatments? #Aboriginal #livehepfree <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMJxgEO9Nul>

For info on new hep C treatments talk to your doctor or visit your #Aboriginal Medical Service#livehepfree. <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>

New #hepC treatments cure Wiradjuri woman. #Aboriginal #livehepfree Read more: <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php>



MORE INFORMATION

If you have any queries on how the material in this digital tool kit can be used or would like access to hi resolution images, please contact Jonathan@33Creative.com.au

If you want to know more about the new treatments or the 'Hep C can be Cured' campaign visit the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council website <http://www.ahmrc.org.au/hepc.php> or [Hepatitis NSW website www.hep.gov.au](http://www.hepatitisnsw.gov.au)

