

Why it is time for a hepB cure: a (weary and worn) local perspective

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With input from staff, Board and
Those sharing their lived experience

“Effective treatments” ???

(In Australia)

~ 225,000 living with chronic hepatitis B

Nearly half are not diagnosed

Nearly 90 % not in care

Less than 5% actually receiving treatment

THIS IS ONLY A THIRD OF THOSE WHO WOULD BENEFIT

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What does it mean to not receive timely treatment?

Meet “Ali”

- Young African man in early 30s
- From Melbourne’s (high prevalence) west
- Been diagnosed and referred multiple times to hospital
- Many barriers to getting to hospital (stigma, discrimination, lack of awareness by community and practitioners, forced into tertiary settings...)
- Eventually arrives by ambulance
- Too late. Vomiting. Died of cancer.

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“Effective vaccination” ???

Vaccination may be free for children – but what about:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (free only in some States)?
- Adults from high prevalence countries (free in no States)?

Current vaccination system relies on people being **AWARE** they have a chronic infection, AND being **CONFIDENT** to notify close contacts they are at risk, AND health care providers who **PROACTIVELY ENCOURAGE** vaccination, AND having the **HEALTH LITERACY** to ensure they, their families, & their babies are vaccinated

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What does it mean to slip through the vaccination crack?

Meet “Sara”

- Young woman of South East Asian background with hepatitis B
- Navigated the health system sufficiently so first child did not contract hepatitis B
- Not so “lucky” the second time
- Her son, now a toddler, has hepatitis B
- By his bed she wonders:

“Was there something more I should have done to prevent this, or did the nurse at the hospital give 2 injections just like I asked?”

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Anyway: “what do we want” ???

(The people we work with say):

We DON'T want to live with a chronic illness
We DON'T want years and years of monitoring and treatment
We DON'T want the stigma and discrimination
We want A CURE

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In weary conclusion -

It is broken (treatment isn't happening,
vaccination isn't working
over 300 people a year are dying)

We haven't fixed it
(and we're desperate)

WE WANT A CURE

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