



## China Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment - Background

- Funded through Coalition to Eradicate Viral Hepatitis in Asia Pacific (CEVHAP)
- Aim - To reduce the burden of infection on people infected with viral hepatitis by documenting the personal impact of the infection, and the issues arising for them in their response to the infection.
- Chief Investigators
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  - La Trobe China Health Program – Vivien Lin and Chaojie (George) Liu
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## China Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment – Context

- Viral hepatitis
  - Up to 10% of people over the age of 20 with viral hepatitis
  - 20 million people chronically infected with hepatitis B
  - 300,000 people dying as a result
  - 55% of the world's deaths from liver cancer occur in China
- Vaccination Program
  - 1992 – recommendation for infant vaccination (parents to pay)
  - 2002 – integrated into EPI and within 24 hours of birth (admin fee required)
  - 2005 – Administration fee stopped
  - 24 million chronic hepatitis B infections and 4.3 million future deaths prevented

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## China Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment - Background



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## China Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment – Context

- Systematic discrimination
  - 1981 – Technical School Student Admissions Medical Test Standards and Implementing Regulations promulgated by the State Labour Bureau and the Ministry of Health – no hiring of a person with hepatitis B
  - Confusion with different hepatitis viruses
  - People with hepatitis B not employed in service occupations in public places, and in the pharmaceutical, health products, water supply, and education sectors.
  - 1994 - Medical tests required for civil servants
  - 2004 – regulations started addressing discrimination
  - 2007 - "employers shall not refuse to hire a person based on their carrying the pathogen of a contagious disease."

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## China Chronic Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment - Methods

- Two processes
  - Interviews with key stakeholders
  - Interviews with people with hepatitis B or hepatitis C

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## China Chronic Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment - Findings

Age range	Number of people
20-25 years	9
25-30 years	13
30-35 years	11
35-40 years	4
40-45 years	3
45-50 years	3
50-55years	2
55-60 years	2
Over 60 years	1

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## China Chronic Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment - Findings

- Testing
- Being diagnosed
- Treatment

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## China Chronic Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment - Testing

- Occurs through:
  - School - *When I was 6 years old, when I was in kindergarten, every student was asked to do the body check, and at that time I got to know that I was carrying the hepatitis B virus (Guangzhou 10)*
  - University - *In University ... they need to do a body check, that year the teacher passed me a form that said you need to check your HBV DNA level. (Shanghai 20)*
  - Workplaces - *In 2002, six months into the job, there was a complimentary health check from the company (Beijing 42)*
  - Hospital – *My daughter was diagnosed first ... the doctor said your child has hepatitis B it might be advisable for the parents to have a check up as well.*

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## China Chronic Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment – Being Diagnosed

- Informed about their infection by
  - Parents - *As I was still a little child, so my mother didn't tell me bluntly what I had, she just reminded me not to get too tired. (Shanghai 27)*
  - Health staff - *The doctor told her ...it is a report, it's not even that they treat it like it is a disease, is not like you are sick. (Guangzhou 2)*
  - Teachers - *The teacher went to paste the results onto the blackboard on the front of the class ... and then you go and check the board whether you are short sighted, whether you are this or that (Shanghai 27)*

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## China Chronic Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment – Being Diagnosed

- *There were two things in China that is related to hepatitis B carriers, one is little 3 positive, the second thing is the big 3 positive, in the blood tests ... most people believe that if you've got these 3 (small) positive is so much better against the other 3 positives (Guangzhou 1)*
- Big Three (大三阳) - surface antigen, e-antigen and core antibody positive - the first two stages of the infection, or the Immune Tolerance or Clearance stages
- Small three (小三阳) - surface antigen positive, anti HBe and anti-HBc positive, representing stages 3 and 4 or in the Immune Control and Immune Escape phases
- None of the clinicians noted the use of DNA or ALT as an inclusion factor in defining either stage.
- Carrier when a person is surface antigen positive or has a chronic infection, and their ALT are normal, or as one noted is in the first stage of the natural history model or the Immune Tolerant stages.

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## China Chronic Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment - Treatment

- *It placed huge financial pressure on me as my whole family had the same disease. ... The hepatitis specialist, who wasn't aware of my situation, thought about prescribing a ... medicine imported from overseas with a name of Adefovir. I told the doctor that it's a bit expensive, and I would just go with the cheapest medicine called Deldine, which is made in Tianjin, as I am financially challenged. My wife has to take medication, I have to take medication, my daughter has to take medication, all three of us have to take medication. (Guangzhou 7)*
- *I went to the hospital for a check-up in July last year, and at that time my ALT level was 70. I went to the hospital for the check-up and the doctor prescribed a medicine called Entecavir, I was told it was an anti-virus medication which should be taken for a long period. Somehow I didn't pay much attention to that comment, so I took it for 3 months and stopped for 4 months ...Because in the past I only needed to take medication for a few months each year to lower ALT level, and that's it.*

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## China Chronic Viral Hepatitis Needs Assessment – Conclusion

- Individual stories can provide collective knowledge – these need to be recognised and acted upon.
- Overwhelming numbers hiding individual stories
- 10% are infected, and yet the information is poor
- The largest single population group in Australia affected by hepatitis B are born in China

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## Thank you

- Vicki Ang from CEVHAP, my intrepid travelling buddy, administration genius and translator
- The people with viral hepatitis

