

Thinking Beyond the Bars

Treatment, education and support for women in prison

Phone: (07) 3846 0020
 InfoLine: 1800 648 491
 Website: www.hepqld.asn.au
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/hepqld
 PO Box 3490, South Brisbane QLD 4101



Welcome



Hepatitis Queensland would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land upon which we meet and acknowledge elders past and present



For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
 or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

What is Beyond the Bars?



- 2 year project aimed at creating a comprehensive treatment & support program for women in prison
- 50% of staff to be educated
- 50% prisoners to be educated
- Support program facilitated by HQ (Positive Living)
- Treatment clinics initiated weekly (visiting liver clinic nurse and specialist)



For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
 or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Background to the project



- Women in prison high incidence of hepatitis C (70%)
- No treatment access or treatment programs in place for women
- Challenges of short sentence duration & long liver clinic wait lists



For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
 or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Education for staff



- 8 education sessions for staff conducted early 2014 (over 100 staff in 2 hour sessions. Further 20 in full ABC)
- Payslip notifications
- Clinical training provided to medical by specialist staff
- Regular stakeholder meetings



"If prisoners ask questions about treatment I know where they can get help" – Custodial Officer

For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
 or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Education for prisoners



- PAC flyers
- Awareness Days (151 prisoners): Secure, Protection and Residential units
- Positive Living Program



Challenges: associations rules; corrections language; officer vs medical interest

"Excellent course, should be more of it in the system. Thank you for your time. Amazing program. Excellent work by the facilitators, well done. Giving me a better understanding of how to look after by body in the future" - Inmate BWCC

For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
 or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Positive Living Program



- Program for hepatitis C positive women
- 8 week program each Friday afternoon (to be run 3 times)
- Health, goals, support, self management and treatment
- Using art, story, vision boards, smart goals, journaling



For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Positive Living weekly program



- Week 1:** Introduction to viral hepatitis and setting goals for health
- Week 2:** Hepatitis C testing, treatment and symptom management
- Week 3:** Hepatitis treatment and personal stories
- Week 4:** Treatment support and peer education
- Week 5:** Hepatitis C and healthy living
- Week 6:** Alcohol, drugs, and your liver
- Week 7:** Discrimination, relationships and managing stress
- Week 8:** Positive Living, looking back, looking forward



For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Positive Living Program



Emotional/social impact

"You made me feel important and no longer ashamed"

"I just want to say that having proper testing for hepatitis C was so important to me as I hadn't been tested recently. Knowing that I had cleared the virus changed things and helped me not put myself at risk anymore"

"It was so therapeutic to me ... very grateful and realise now people are willing to help even when you feel alone"

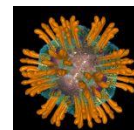


For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Treatment program



- Treatment started May 2014 (41 assessments)
- Six women started treatment (2 dropped out)
- All had 4 week RVR's
- 4 women in 'work-up' phase
- Now extending program to men's prison



For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Working in Corrections environment



- Flexible on resources and structure
- Respect internal structures; utilise appropriate line of authority



For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Challenges



- Mental health / trauma (S4/DU)
- Movement; dosing ; transfer or release
- Overcrowding
- Gender differences
 - Men's prisons saw **buddy systems**
 - High incidence **PTSD/BPD**
 - High experience **DV**
 - Family**- child separation/ grief/child arrest /death/ parental IDU

For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Lessons so far



- Wider support and education programs enhance the treatment experience
- Respecting the internal structures and processes of corrections is key to success
- While sometimes difficult, treatment for female prisoners is both necessary and possible

For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491

Questions



For more information www.hepqld.asn.au
or Hepatitis Queensland info line 1800 648 491