

# Eliminating hepatitis C in the Australian bleeding disorders population: an evolving health promotion strategy

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## BACKGROUND

Approximately 1350 Australians with bleeding disorders acquired hepatitis C from infected clotting factor concentrate treatments before 1993, when blood supply testing and viral inactivation manufacturing processes had been introduced.

In 2014 Haemophilia Foundation Australia (HFA) estimated from unpublished data that more than a third still had chronic hepatitis C. With the risks of advancing liver disease, eliminating hepatitis C in this population is a priority.

## 2015 HFA WORLD HEPATITIS DAY CAMPAIGN

In 2014 HFA convened a Hep C Think Tank of haemophilia and hepatitis specialists. Targeted health promotion messages were developed around preparing for treatment with a liver health check. A group was identified for specific strategies: people with mild haemophilia and von Willebrand disease unaware of their hepatitis C status as they had few treatments prior to 1993 and did not know their risk of infection.

### Key messages:

- It's time for action!
- Know if you were exposed to hep C – get tested
- Get a liver check
- Ask about treatment



Campaign messages targeting partners and family, who facilitate health promotion in this community, were the most successful on social media.

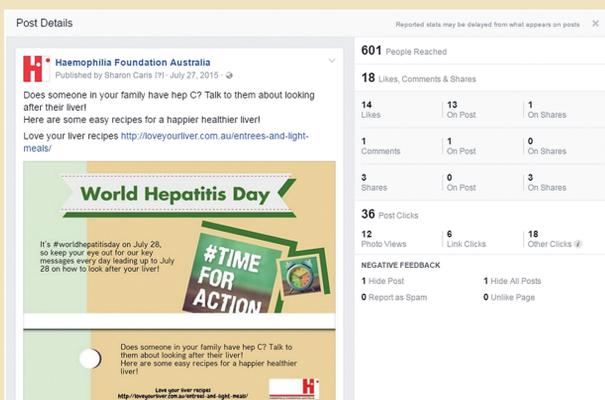
- Many people with bleeding disorders were exposed to hep C. Have you ever been tested?
- If you used factor before 1993 - even as a baby - you could be at risk.
- It's time for action! If you don't know whether you have hep C or not, get tested now!

Love your liver <http://loveyourliver.com.au/>

HFA news Hep C <http://www.haemophilia.org.au/news/id/565>



Know if you were exposed to hep C.



Social media campaign messages.

## 2016 WORLD HEPATITIS DAY CAMPAIGN



New direct acting antiviral treatments became available on the PBS from March 2016.

HFA:

- revised treatment messages in consultation with medical specialists
- consulted regularly with Haemophilia Treatment Centres about hep C treatment uptake and barriers.

An active group in the affected community engaged quickly with hepatitis clinics for treatment.

Target groups identified for health promotion messages:

- People who did not see their hepatitis C as a priority
- People with psychosocial, financial and access barriers.

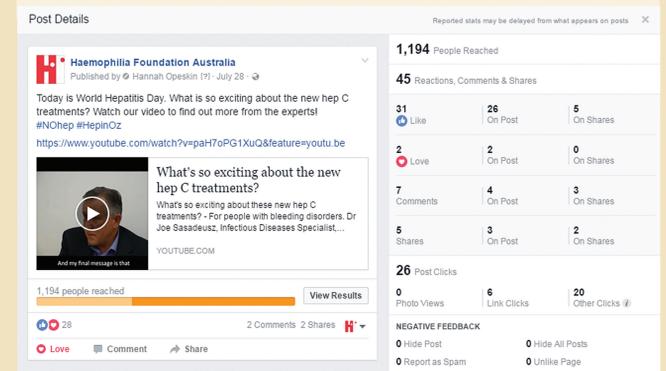
### Key messages:

- Can we eliminate hep C in the Australian bleeding disorders community?
- Change your future today! Talk to your hepatitis clinic about treatment that could cure your hep C
- Practical strategies:
  - Be proactive with your appointments
  - What's stopping you from treatment? Talk to your Haemophilia Centre about solutions

### Methods:

- Social media campaign
- Foundation newsletter articles
- 1 minute video – interview with leading hepatitis specialist who has patients with bleeding disorders

The video was very popular and community members shared their treatment experiences in the comments.



## THIRD WAVE CAMPAIGN

Aug-Sep 2016: Haemophilia Treatment Centres reported most people with bleeding disorders and hep C now have appointments or commenced treatment.

Target groups identified:

- People with psychosocial, financial and access barriers
- People with mild bleeding disorders unaware of their hep C risk and lost to follow-up.

HFA is:

- Developing targeted resources
- Working with the Australian Haemophilia Centre Directors' Organisation on information for GPs.

## CONCLUSION

Regular review of targeted strategies is crucial to the success of health promotion campaigns.

