

#TimeForAction

What action needs to be taken?



HALF A MILLION AUSTRALIANS ARE LIVING WITH THE BURDEN OF VIRAL HEPATITIS B AND C

MORE THAN 1,000 AUSTRALIANS DIE EVERY YEAR DUE TO SERIOUS HEPATITIS-RELATED LIVER DISEASE

SIMPLE ACTIONS COULD SAVE THOUSANDS OF LIVES

TIME FOR ACTION TO END STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION

- Stigma and discrimination continue to prevent people living with chronic hepatitis B and C from accessing vital health services. Government funding for anti-discrimination campaigns is vital to create a culture of non-discrimination, which encourages good prevention practices, increased testing, greater use of liver check-ups and access to treatment.
- Governments, communities and healthcare providers have a role to play in ensuring that hepatitis is regarded as a treatable liver health condition.

“Discrimination in the health care setting prevents people like me from accessing treatment, care and support”

survey respondent

TIME FOR ACTION TO EXPAND HEPATITIS PREVENTION PROGRAMS

- Needle and syringe programs provide a cost-effective way to prevent transmission. Governments need to ensure that prevention programs, including those in correctional settings, are increased and fully funded.
- While childhood hepatitis B vaccination rates are good, governments need to support consistent access to free hepatitis B vaccination for all adolescents and adults at risk.

“If someone had helped me years ago, perhaps my life would not have been wasted in illness”

survey respondent

TIME FOR ACTION TO INCREASE HEPATITIS TESTING

- Doctors need to offer hepatitis B tests to anyone born overseas in a country where hepatitis B is prevalent (or who have parents from these countries) or who are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.
- Doctors should offer hepatitis C testing to anyone potentially exposed to the virus.

“More GPs are needed with a greater knowledge of chronic hepatitis who can provide regular surveillance rather than having to go to a specialist service”

survey respondent

For more information, visit www.hepatitisaustralia.com or call the National Infoline: 1800 437 222 / 1800 HEP ABC

TIME FOR ACTION TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO REGULAR LIVER CHECK-UPS

- Everyone living with chronic hepatitis B or C should have regular liver check-ups, which are easy to carry out, don't hurt and are the simplest way to monitor liver health and ensure treatment starts before it is too late.
- Governments need to ensure that liver scans are available to all people living with chronic hepatitis B and C.

"We need access to specialists without long waiting times. I was referred to a specialist in March and can't get an appointment until November. That causes more stress and worry"

survey respondent

TIME FOR ACTION TO INCREASE HEPATITIS TREATMENT RATES

- Less than 5% of people living with chronic hepatitis B – and only 1% of people living with chronic hepatitis C – receive treatment each year.
- Hepatitis B medicines can now be collected from any pharmacy or healthcare provider. It is vital that communities and healthcare providers are aware of, and benefit from, this change.
- New interferon-free therapies are becoming available for hepatitis C, making it possible to cure hepatitis C without the terrible side-effects of the older treatments. It is vital that all Australians have affordable access to the new medicines at the earliest opportunity.

"My physical, mental and emotional health is badly affected by living with this illness. I obsess about whether I will see my grandchildren grow up and what my current life expectancy is. I feel very alone, frightened and ill"

survey respondent

WITHOUT A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN PREVENTION, TESTING, LIVER CHECK-UPS AND TREATMENT RATES, MANY MORE AUSTRALIAN LIVES WILL BE LOST TO SERIOUS LIVER DISEASE. ALREADY LIVER CANCER IS THE FASTEST INCREASING CANCER IN AUSTRALIA.

It's #TimeForAction

WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

hepatitis
australia

**National Infoline: 1800 437 222
1800 HEP ABC**



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