

World Hepatitis Day

hepatitis
australia

Nearly 300,000 people in Australia live with viral hepatitis and nearly 1000 people in Australia die every year because of hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

It's time for action

Australia's next National Hepatitis B Strategy and National Hepatitis C Strategy outline Australia's commitment to eliminating these viruses as public health threats by 2030.

The national strategies specify national targets for elimination:

Hepatitis B

Reduce new hepatitis B infections

- ✓ Less than 1 in 1,000 children under 5 years old have chronic hepatitis B
- ✓ Less than 1 in 100 babies born to people with hepatitis B contract hepatitis B

Reduce deaths from hepatitis B by 30%

- ✓ Less than 1 death per 100,000 Australians per year

Hepatitis C

Reduce new hepatitis C infections by 90%

- ✓ Fewer than 5 new cases per 100,000 Australians each year
- ✓ Fewer than 2 new cases each year for every 100 people who inject drugs

Reduce deaths from hepatitis C by 65%

- ✓ Less than 1 death per 100,000 Australians per year.

At current rates of progress, Australia will not achieve any of its viral hepatitis elimination targets. With 2030 fast approaching, the **TIME FOR ACTION** is now!

Australia can lead the world in hepatitis elimination.

This resource has been reviewed by leading research institutes, the WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis at the Doherty Institute and The Kirby Institute.

It's time for action on hepatitis B!

Nearly 220,000 people in Australia are living with chronic hepatitis B.¹
In 2023, 460 people died as a result of hepatitis B.²

Deaths from hepatitis B are avoidable

There is a vaccine and effective treatments to manage hepatitis B.



Nearly **1 in 20 babies** born to mothers with hepatitis B **aren't receiving the birthdose** vaccine in time.³



One in three people living with chronic hepatitis B have **not been diagnosed**.⁴



Three quarters of all people living with chronic hepatitis B did **not receive guideline-based care** in the last year.⁵



Almost half of all people with chronic hepatitis B have **not received care at any time** in the last 10 years.⁶



Less than half of people **eligible for hepatitis B treatment** are receiving it.⁷



More than half of people living with hepatitis B **speak a language other than English at home**.⁸ Many need access to support that is culturally sensitive and available in their preferred language.



The people living with chronic hepatitis B who are not receiving guidelines-based care risk developing severe liver disease and liver cancer in the future.



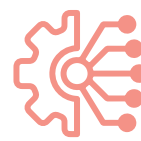
Australia must TAKE ACTION to eliminate hepatitis B by:



Strengthening **monitoring of the hepatitis B 'birthdose' vaccine**⁹ to ensure all babies in Australia receive early protection.

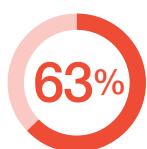


Rolling out a **nationwide universal offer of hepatitis B testing** for people over 25 who were born before routine vaccination and whose hepatitis B status has not been documented.

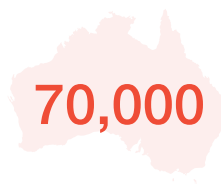


Establishing a **National Hepatitis B Monitoring and Care Facilitation Program** to connect the three-quarters of people living with hepatitis B currently not receiving guideline-based care to ongoing care and support.

It's time for action on hepatitis C!



63% of people in Australia have **received hepatitis C cures** since 2016.¹⁰



However, there are still nearly **70,000 people living with hepatitis C** in Australia¹¹



In 2023, an estimated **530 people died** as a result of hepatitis C.¹²

Deaths from hepatitis C are avoidable



Nearly one in five people living with chronic hepatitis C have **never been diagnosed**. Additionally, one in ten people living with hepatitis C have only been partially diagnosed because they have not received confirmatory testing to know if their hepatitis C is chronic.¹³



Many people who were diagnosed in the past are **disengaged from care** and may have been lost to follow up¹⁴. Many will need to be found again.



Prisons are now the primary sites of transmission nationally and help sustain the hepatitis C epidemic in Australia. In December 2024 the prison population nationally was 44,000.¹⁵ Almost half report injecting drug use and 8% are estimated to be living with hepatitis C. Nationally in 2023 people in prisons accounted for 42% of all people treated for hepatitis C. People in prison are being needlessly infected (and reinfected following cure) because the current responses are not sufficient to prevent transmission.¹⁶



Australia must TAKE ACTION to eliminate hepatitis C by:



Reducing transmission, meeting human rights obligations, and closing the growing gap in hepatitis C outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by **implementing needle and syringe programs in Australian prisons**.



Identifying ways to engage the 84% of people living with hepatitis C who no longer inject drugs or who contracted hepatitis C in other ways, and are less likely to be engaged in services where hepatitis C is core business placing them at risk of developing serious liver disease and liver cancer.



Strengthening **community-led action for people who inject drugs** – the population group at greatest risk of hepatitis C transmission – ensuring they remain a priority in sustained elimination efforts.



HepLink is Australia's national hepatitis information and referral service

HepLink Australia is a national, free and confidential viral hepatitis support, linkage and referral service. HepLink connects anyone, anywhere in Australia to essential viral hepatitis care, and supports a successful viral hepatitis journey free from confusion, frustration and stigma.

HepLink is funded by the Australian Government.

Since 2022, HepLink has provided:

4,647

clients with **support to access services** through provision of location, eligibility, access and cost information

4,302

occasions of **peer/lived experience** support

8,739

supportive brief interventions. This includes support with service access barriers, psychosocial support and brief harm reduction interventions.

Nearly 25,000

instances of **general information or advice** in relation to viral hepatitis to people across Australia.

HepLink Australia is a partnership between Hepatitis Australia and the 8 state and territory community hepatitis organisations. HepLink connects clients and health professionals to local services and networks and contributes to the uptake of new Commonwealth hepatitis B and hepatitis C programs across Australia.

Services provided include tele-support line, information, supportive brief interventions, peer support, referral and linkage, individual advocacy, workforce support and targeted outreach that responds to the unique needs of local communities across Australia.

Call 1800 437 222 or visit www.HepLink.au

1 MacLachlan JH, Mondel A, Purcell I, Cowie BC. [Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project: Hepatitis B National Report 2023](#). Darlinghurst, NSW, Australia: ASHM; 2025. 2 Nguyen A, Romero N, MacLachlan JH, Cowie BC. [Surveillance for Hepatitis B Indicators: Tracking Australia's progress towards hepatitis B elimination – National Report 2023](#). Melbourne: WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis, The Doherty Institute; 2025. 3 Deng, H.M.-A. et al. (2023) [Uptake of perinatal immunoprophylaxis for infants born to women with a record of hepatitis B in Victoria \(2009–2017\)](#). Vaccine, 41(10), pp. 1726–1734. 4 MacLachlan JH, Mondel A, Purcell I, Cowie BC. [Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project: Hepatitis B National Report 2023](#). Darlinghurst, NSW, Australia: ASHM; 2025. 5 Ibid 6 Ibid 7 Nguyen A, Romero N, MacLachlan JH, Cowie BC. [Surveillance for Hepatitis B Indicators: Tracking Australia's progress towards hepatitis B elimination – National Report 2023](#). Melbourne: WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis, The Doherty Institute; 2025. 8 MacLachlan JH, Romero N, Purcell I, Cowie BC. [Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project: Hepatitis B National Report 2022](#). Darlinghurst, NSW, Australia: ASHM; 2024. 9 Monovalent paediatric hepatitis B vaccine, ideally delivered within 24 hours of birth 10 King, J., Kwon J., McManus, H., Gray, R., & McGregor, S., 2024, [HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmissible infections in Australia: Annual surveillance report 2024](#). The Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney, Sydney, Australia. 11 Ibid 12 Ibid 13 Ibid 14 Coding Ahead. Medical Definitions Handbook. <https://www.codingahead.com/snomed/399307001/lost-to-follow-up/> Accessed on 15 April 2025; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/follow-up> Accessed on 15 April 2025. 15 [Corrective Services, Australia, December Quarter 2024 | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#) 16 Winter RJ, Sheehan Y, Papaluca TJ, Macdonald G, Rowland J, Colman A, Stoové M*, Lloyd AR*, Thompson AJ*, on behalf of the National Prisons Hepatitis Network. [Consensus Statement on the Management of Hepatitis C in Australia's Prisons](#). National Prisons Hepatitis Network (NPHN), May 2022.

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In South Australia, your local hepatitis organisation is Hepatitis SA.
Call our Helpline on 1800 437 222 (Mon to Fri 9 am to 5 pm),
message us (sms or WeChat) on 0403 648 348, or visit hepsa.asn.au

HepatitisSA