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Chairperson's Report

This meeting tonight completes my first term as Chairperson of the Hepatitis C Council of South Australia. Through the last twelve months I have witnessed a committed team of staff and volunteers put a huge effort into working with the diverse issues which surround the hepatitis C affected community.



The Council has had a number of staff changes during the year, with the two full-time educators Vanessa Behne and William Donohue taking up other positions by the end of 2001 and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their work with the Council. It took some time to replace these staff members, but by March 2002 these positions were filled as well as the new position of Volunteer Coordinator which has been funded as a pilot project to the end of June 2003. I would like to welcome the new staff members and wish them well for the coming year.

During the year the Council staff and volunteers have provided a range of services for a variety of people throughout South Australia. They have operated the Hep C Info and Support Line, providing quality information and support to many people from the hepatitis C affected community as well as a range of health workers, community workers and others. They have produced and distributed a wide range of print resources on hepatitis C, including the Hep C Community News each quarter and kept the Council's website updated with current information on the issues. Information stalls have been operated during the year raising public awareness at a variety of events such as the Moon Festival, Passion in the Square for Youth Week, Feast Picnic in the Park, and SEXPO. The Council has also participated in a range of health expos for other groups in the community. Awareness Week was however not held in March 2002 as planned due to staff changeovers, and will now go ahead in November 2002.

The Council's Education Program provided hepatitis C education sessions to over 1,100 people throughout South Australia and many of these sessions also engaged the Council's Positive Speaker Program, which remains an integral part of the Council's education program aimed at challenging the stereotypes that exist around people living with hepatitis C.

The Council has also operated information and support groups for the hepatitis C affected community throughout the year with the assistance of many local health professionals. I would also like to thank these people for

their time and commitment to the issues and for supporting the work of the Council. A meditation group has also been held during the year for members of the hepatitis C affected community.

The challenges for the next year are to continue to deliver effective quality services and to continue to build partnerships with those working in the sector to support, educate and advocate for the growing numbers of people who are affected by the hepatitis C virus. Once again, thank you to all of the staff and volunteers at the Council and to all those who have supported the work of the Council during the year.

Sharon Drage
Chairperson

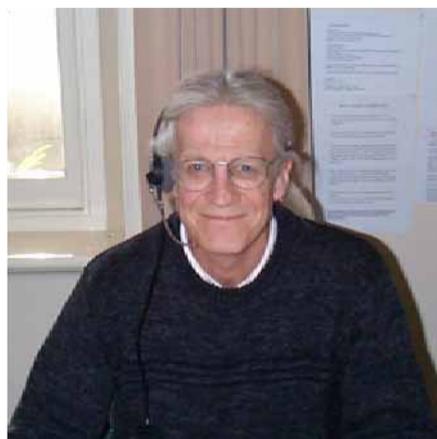
Council Activities 2001-2002

The Hepatitis C Council of SA Inc provides information and education services on hepatitis C and related issues to a broad range of people in South Australia. The Council also provides support groups, referral and broad advocacy for the hepatitis C affected community of South Australia.

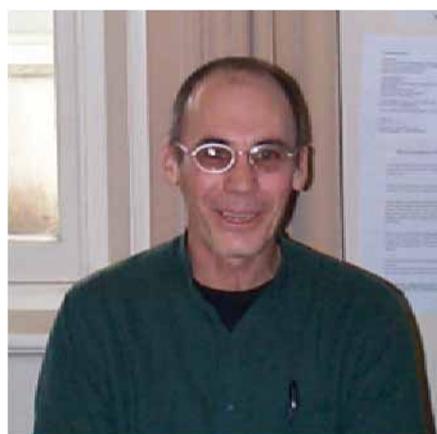
Information Services

Hep C Info and Support Line

The Council operates a telephone information service on hepatitis C and related issues, which includes a 1800 number for rural and remote callers in the state. This telephone service is operated by staff and volunteer peers. The Council also provides face-to-face information sessions for people from the hepatitis C affected community. The Council received 898 requests for information during the 01-02 financial year, 87 of these were individual face-to-face sessions operating out of the Council premises. 55% of calls were from positive people and 16% from a family member or friend – thus 71% of calls were from the Council's primary target group – those affected by hepatitis C. The remainder of calls were from health sector workers and other workplaces.



Fred
Info and Support Line Volunteer



Dean
Info and Support Line Volunteer

The geographic spread where location was recorded show that 79% of calls were from the metropolitan area and 15% from rural areas of South Australia.

The telephone information service continues to be the main contact for people affected by hepatitis C to access information and support. Consistent feedback from people affected by hepatitis C accessing information and support via the telephone services of the Council has been an expression of gratitude for being 'listened to' and having someone take the time so that concerns can be voiced and addressed by the correct information without the layers of judgement experienced by

many. Many callers also express their relief at being able to talk to someone else who is living positively with the virus. This level of support is crucial to

many people experiencing isolation and fear of discrimination around disclosing their HCV status.

Comments made about this service from written evaluations included:

'Every contact with the Hep C Council has been excellent, caring, helpful and informative'

'After being given misinformation by my GP, I was given the correct information in plain English, which helped me a great deal'

'The person I spoke to on the phone was so informative and I received heaps of information the very next day; it really helped to allay my fears'

'The conversation I had on the phone was great, the information I received in the mail was excellent and a person contacted me who had been on therapy. Excellent support – Thanks'

There were 459 referrals recorded for the year, including 60 to the Adelaide Counselling team; 45 to a Hep C friendly GP; 71 to a specialist, 37 to the Adelaide Dental Clinic and 115 to other Council services.

Production and Distribution of Print Resources

The Council produces a wide range of written information on hepatitis C and related issues which is distributed to individuals and organisations throughout South Australia. The Council also distributes hepatitis C information resources produced by other national, state and local organisations.

The Council produced and distributed over 19,500 pamphlets, 950 basic information packs, 1,148 treatment information packs; 4,070 Fact Sheets and 332 transcripts of guest speaker talks. In addition, the Council also distributed over 14,300 copies of resources produced by national groups such as the Australian Hepatitis Council, the Australian Intravenous League, The Australian National Committee on Aids, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Over 10,000 posters and postcards were also produced and distributed. This year a poster and business card (*see picture, right*) for the Hep C Info & Support Line were developed to promote the Council's telephone services. Other resources developed during the year included the Hep C and Sex pamphlet and the Disclosure



resource. Treatment Information packs continue to be in high demand from hospitals offering hepatitis C pharmaceutical treatments.

Apart from requests for written resources directly from members of the hepatitis C affected communities, requests for information on hepatitis C also came from 181 agencies throughout South Australia, 49 of which were located in rural areas.

Requests from agencies for written resources % Totals

Community Health Centres	30
Hospitals	26
GPs and Medical Centres	10
Prisons	9
Drug & Alcohol Services	8
Youth Services	5
Other	12

Newsletter

Council volunteers and staff also produced quarterly editions of the Council Newsletter **Hep C Community News**. Over 1,500 copies of the newsletter were distributed to individuals and organisations throughout South Australia during the year.

www.hepccouncilsa.asn.au

The Council's website has local information on hepatitis C and Council services as well as links to other relevant sources of hepatitis C information. During the year, there were 27,548 'hits' to this website.

Community Awareness

The Council operated information stalls during the year to raise public awareness at events such as The Moon Festival; Passion in the Square for Youth Week; FEAST Picnic in the Park (*below, left*); SEXPO (*below, right*); The SA Drug Summit; as well as participating in a range of health expos for other groups in the community.

The Council decided to postpone the 2002 Hepatitis C Awareness Week to November 2002.



Education Services

The Council has two full-time educator positions, one for the metro area and one for rural SA.

This year, the educators presented 79 education sessions – 45 in the metropolitan area and 34 in rural and remote areas of South Australia. Over 1,100 people participated in education sessions during the year. The Council's education services primarily target health and community workers and government agency staff who work with people affected or 'at risk' of hepatitis C. The Council however also provides education sessions for groups of people with hepatitis C or 'at risk' such as those in contact with Correctional Service facilities and youth.

Positive Speaker Program

The Council actively promotes this program as an integral part of its education services and this year there were 43 positive speaker engagements. Positive speakers have been involved in the Council's education services such as newly diagnosed sessions, information and support group events. DASC has also continued to utilise positive speaker services in their regular training for the Clean Needle Program. During the year, speakers have presented to a wide range of other groups including an intensive education program for staff and youth at Magill Training Centre, as well as one-off sessions for hospitals, government agencies such as Centrelink, various health students and youth services. In addition a speaker from this program was invited to present at the National Symposium on Hepatitis B&C and at the Third Australasian Conference on Hepatitis C during the year. Participant feedback from positive speaker engagements has been excellent and the program continues to be a significant education tool in challenging attitudes towards people affected by hepatitis C.

Training for more people from the hepatitis C affected community interested in becoming positive speakers was planned in May for July 2002.

Support Group Program

The Council held two monthly information and support groups throughout the year; the Adelaide Information Evening for members of the hepatitis C affected community and interested health professionals and the Women's Coffee Morning, specifically for women with hep C. Each groups has a guest speaker and a question and answer segment. Topics varied for the groups between the medical, complementary and psycho-social aspects of hepatitis C.

A weekly evening meditation group began in May and continues to attract regular participants.

Volunteer Program

Volunteers contributed over 2,000 hours of work throughout the year in a range of direct and indirect service delivery roles including peer telephone information and support; production and distribution of resources; staffing information stalls; participation in community consultations and acting as community representatives on local committees.

The employment of a part-time Volunteer Coordinator in March 2002 has greatly assisted the Council to expand its capacity to offer opportunities for members of the hepatitis C affected community to increase their knowledge about hepatitis C, increase their work skills and break down the sense of isolation experienced by many in the community. Planning for training 12 peer



workers on the Hep C Info & Support Line occurred late in the year to be held in August 2002 to expand this valuable contribution to Council services.



Above: John
Volunteer



Above: Some of the volunteers enjoying a well-earned lunch break!



Above: Simon
Volunteer

Right: Volunteer
feast



Advocacy

Council staff and community members participate on a number of committees at the local, state and national level and have advocated for the needs of the hepatitis C affected community in a number of consultative processes and projects during the year. Consultations at the national level have included the Mid Term Review of the National Hepatitis C Strategy; the development of a national research agenda; development of a multiculturally appropriate hep C resource; a resource manual for indigenous health care workers; and the development of the Australian Hepatitis Council Anti-Discrimination Strategy. The Council also has representatives on the HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases Advisory Committee and on the SA Hepatitis C Strategy Advisory Group. Council staff also support the development of services and initiatives at the local level and have been on advisory committees for the C Clearly Project; Streetlink's H.I.P.P. Project; the Vietnamese Mobile CNP Project and the development of a hep C video resource for prisons. The Council also facilitates a bi-monthly network for interested service providers at the local level to share information, support the work of the sector and provide a platform for raising issues of concern that have an impact on the hepatitis C affected community. The Council participated in the local ABC Stateline Program to represent the interests of the hepatitis C affected community on two issues related to hepatitis C during the year – addressing barriers to accessing treatments and the SA Medical Practice Bill.

Acknowledgements

The Hepatitis C Council of South Australia Inc would like to acknowledge the following organisations for their support during the year:

- The Drug and Alcohol Services Council
- The AIDS Council of SA Inc
- The Adelaide Diocesan AIDS Council
- The Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Council
- Nunkuwarrin Yunti
- The Adelaide Counselling Team
- The PEACE Project
- COPE
- Clinic 275
- C Clearly Project
- The Care and Prevention Team
- PLWHA
- Viral Hepatitis Clinic – Flinders Medical Centre
- Viral Hepatitis Centre - Royal Adelaide Hospital
- SA College of Natural and Traditional Medicine
- Haemophilia Foundation
- Streetlink
- SAVIVE
- Prisoner Health Services Staff – Department for Correctional Services
- Partners of Prisoners
- Parkes Community Centre
- Vietnamese Community in Australia – SA Chapter Inc
- Australian Hepatitis Council and State Hep C Councils
- The HIV, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases Program - Department of Human Services
- Department of Health and Aged Care – HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C Section
- Schering Plough

Treasurer's Report

The Hepatitis C Council of South Australia Inc received grant income of \$398,117 during this financial year. From the Department of Human Services \$304,300 recurrent funding and two one off grants – \$9,800 for the Rural Project and \$25,017 for 12 month pilot project for the Volunteer Program. The Council also received \$59,000 from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care for the Rural Project. The Commonwealth monies for the Rural Project and the State monies for the Volunteer Program are for funding periods beyond the 01-02 financial year. Grants in advance of \$5,000 and \$16,217 were also carried forward from the previous financial year.

The grant income of \$356,261 shown in the Income and Expenditure Statement is the net result of 12 months funding allocated for this financial year – \$310,300 recurrent funding; \$59,000 – 12 months for the Rural Project and \$8,698 – 4 months for the Volunteer Program – a total of \$377,639 together with end of year adjustments for unexpended funds carried forward from recurrent funds of \$11,500 for Awareness Week activities postponed to the following year; employment advertising for Manager position, printing of quarterly newsletter, positive speaker training and peer telephone training that occurred in July 02 and \$9,878.27 from the Rural Program to be expended by August 02.

Interest received was \$2,937 and there was income of \$2,030 for payment to positive speakers. \$1,600 was received for membership, \$891 in sponsorship to assist in costs for staff to attend the 3rd Australasian Conference on Hepatitis C and \$300 in donations. Total income for the year \$380,865.

Total expenditure for the year was \$379,928. The main expenditure was \$234,143 for salaries and on-costs. Administration costs totalled \$138,104. This included rent and on-costs for the Council premises totalling \$38,255. An amount of \$7,472 was expended on conferences, meetings and training for Council representatives to attend the 9th National Symposium on Hepatitis B&C, the Australian Hepatitis Council Educators' Workshop and the Third Australasian Conference on Hepatitis C. Program expenditure for Support groups; C Talk Program and Volunteers totalled \$5,671.

Total expenditure for the Rural Project at the end of June 02 totalled \$39,955.83. The expenditure for this Project was \$32,287.84 on wages and on-costs; \$3,168.19 on travel and accommodation and \$3,509.80 on administration and program costs.

For the 2001 - 2002 financial year, the Council had a net surplus of \$937.

The accounts for the 2001-2002 financial year were audited by Peter Hall & Co Chartered Accountants.

B. Horwood, Treasurer