



The Management of Hepatitis C in General Practice

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[My clinic]

- Inner city practice in Sydney
- Low socio-economic population
- Many people with HIV and/or hepatitis C
- Many homeless people
- Many people with drug problems
- Many people with mental health problems
- Many people with chronic illness

[Facts & Figures - Transmission]

- In Australia
 - 225,000 people with hepatitis C
 - Total population 20,000,000
- 16,000 new cases each year
- Injecting drug use is most common mode of transmission
- Perinatal transmission rare

[Facts & Figures - Prognosis]

- Majority of acute infections progress to chronic infection
- Majority of acute infections progress to chronic infection
- Risk of cirrhosis: 7% at 20 years, 20% at 40 years
- Hepatitis C related mortality: 1% at 20 years, 4% at 40 years
- Risk of hepatoma

[Facts & Figures - Treatment]

- Treatment usually with combination pegylated interferon and ribavirin
- 80% remission if genotype 2 or 3
- 35% remission if genotype 1
- Duration of therapy: 6-12 months
- End stage liver disease due to hepatitis C is most common reason for liver transplantation in Australia

[Facts & Figures - Prevention]

- Offer Hepatitis A and B vaccination to all patients with Hepatitis C
- Harm minimisation approach
- Education of public about risk
- Education about how to reduce transmission
- Needle syringe exchange programs

[Ten Lessons for GPs]



Lesson One

Hepatitis C is a primary care condition
Much of the care can be provided
through general practice



Lesson Two

GPs play a key role in hepatitis C prevention through education of our patients



Lesson Three

If you want to find out what's going on
in at risk communities,
ask a GP



Lesson Four

Informed consent is important for all investigations



Lesson Five

Do not let professional boundaries get in the way of delivering the best care for your community



Lesson Six

Continuity of care may be the single most important factor influencing adherence to therapies and ongoing management



Lesson Seven

People with hepatitis C can be strong advocates in the health consumer movement and can work with their doctors to lobby for improved access to care



Lesson Eight

“Could it be Hepatitis C?”



Lesson Nine

General Practice based psychological
services work



Lesson Ten

Learn from your patients, and become
a better doctor

