



A joint venture between The University of Melbourne and The Royal Melbourne Hospital



Australia a decade behind hepatitis B elimination targets, new report shows

Investment and innovation needed to end viral hepatitis in Australia

9 April 2025 - Data released in the latest [Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project: National Reports](#) shows that Australia is more than 10 years behind meeting national targets around chronic hepatitis B treatment and care uptake.

The Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project: National Report, Hepatitis B 2023, a collaboration between ASHM and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis at The Doherty Institute, shows substantial gaps across key measures compared to the 2022 targets set out in Australia's Third National Hepatitis B Strategy 2018–2022:

- 24.5% of people living with chronic hepatitis B (CHB) were engaged in care (treatment or monitoring), compared to a target of 50%
- 12.6% of people living with CHB engaged in treatment, compared to a target of 20%

At the current rate of progress, it is projected that these 2022 targets will not be met until 2047 (proportion in care) and 2036 (proportion in treatment).

Alongside the hepatitis B report, the Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project has also released the most recent available treatment data on hepatitis C. The report shows that there continues to be a gap in hepatitis C treatment uptake due to geographic remoteness, health access disparities, and systematic inequalities, including the ongoing impacts of colonisation.

Alexis Apostolellis, CEO of ASHM, says that the reports are important in highlighting where greater investment and resources are needed most.

"We are proud of Australia's hepatitis workforce for their continued dedication to proactively testing and treating viral hepatitis," said Apostolellis.

"However, the latest Viral Hepatitis Mapping Reports show that we need improved access, community-tailored education and interventions, and culturally appropriate care to reach those in greatest need," he said.

Jennifer MacLachlan, Senior Epidemiologist at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, says that services must reach everyone to curb potentially fatal complications of untreated chronic hepatitis, such as liver cancer.

"Failure to treat viral hepatitis is leading to an unacceptable burden of preventable liver cancer. This report provides key insights into where additional focus is needed, particularly in re-engaging those previously diagnosed but not receiving ongoing care," said MacLachlan.



Lucy Clynes, CEO of Hepatitis Australia, says action must be taken with innovation and equity in mind to meet the targets of the upcoming Fourth National Hepatitis B Strategy 2023-2030 and eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030.

“With the next national strategy targets setting higher goals and the number of people living with hepatitis B in Australia increasing, the job to eliminate is getting bigger. A thousand people per year in Australia die as a result of hepatitis B and hepatitis C. We have to unlock new, innovative ways to support people affected by these conditions,” said Clynes.

“With the 2030 elimination deadline fast approaching, we have the opportunity now to ensure no-one is left behind in Australia’s response to blood-borne viruses.”

The latest Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project: National Reports can be accessed on the ASHM website: www.ashm.org.au/resource/viral-hepatitis-mapping-project/

- ENDS -

Media Contact

Brooke Heinz

Marketing Communications Coordinator, ASHM

media@ashm.org.au

0422 650 425

Key points from the Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project: National Report, Hepatitis B 2023 (published 2025)

- There were substantial gaps nationally in hepatitis B treatment uptake (12.6%) and care uptake (24.5%) in 2023
- Of Australia's 31 primary health networks (PHNs), only one has met the current treatment uptake target, and no other PHN is even on track to meet the target until after 2030
- Almost half (44.7%) of people with chronic hepatitis B (CHB) had no evidence of care at any time during 2014–2023
- Hepatitis serology testing (required for diagnosis) declined in 2020 and has not yet returned to baseline levels
- There is evidence of substantial disparities in treatment and care uptake according to priority population.

Key points from the Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project: National Report, Hepatitis C 2023-2024 (published 2025)

- Between March 2016 – June 2024, a total of 108,459 people received hepatitis C treatment
- There were annual declines in the number of people treated each year from 2016 to 2022 of between 20-45%, but between 2022 and 2024 there was only a 3.2% decline nationally
- Estimated treatment uptake varied widely by PHN and continued to be generally lower in remote and very remote regions, and regions of higher estimated hepatitis C prevalence
- In a number of PHNs, most commonly in NSW, the monthly average number of people treated each year increased between 2022 and 2024.



About the Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project

The Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project aims to improve understanding of chronic hepatitis B (CHB) and C (CHC) in Australia by examining regional variations in prevalence and care uptake.

The latest Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project National Reports include data and analysis on chronic hepatitis C treatment uptake, chronic hepatitis B diagnosis, care and treatment, and - for the first time - estimates for Australia of the hepatitis B cascade of care according to priority population.

The Project is a joint initiative of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis at The Doherty Institute, and ASHM, and is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care.

Access the latest Viral Hepatitis Mapping Project National Reports:

www.ashm.org.au/resources/viral-hepatitis-mapping-project/

About ASHM

ASHM is a peak professional body representing healthcare professionals working in HIV, viral hepatitis, other blood-borne viruses (BBVs), sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and sexual and reproductive health.

www.ashm.org.au

About the WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis at The Doherty Institute

The WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis at The Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity performs a broad range of activities supporting national and global control of viral hepatitis, including epidemiological research and public health policy development.

www.doherty.edu.au/viralhepatitis

About Hepatitis Australia

Hepatitis Australia is the peak community organisation to progress national action on issues of importance to people affected by hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Its members are the eight state and territory community hepatitis organisations.



HepLink Australia

Anyone in Australia can contact HepLink to be linked to information, support or treatment for hepatitis B or hepatitis C. Call 1800 437 222 or visit www.heplink.au