

# 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.

# It's time for action on hepatitis B!

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

## 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.<sup>3</sup>



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



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



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



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



More than half of people living with hepatitis B **speak a language other than English at home**.<sup>8</sup> 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**<sup>9</sup> to ensure all babies in Australia receive early protection.

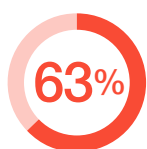


Rolling out a **nationwide universal offer of hepatitis B testing** for people over 25 who were born before routine vaccination and whose hepatitis B status has not been documented.

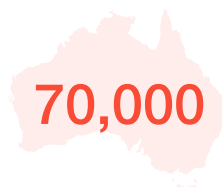


Establishing a **National Hepatitis B Monitoring and Care Facilitation Program** to connect the three-quarters of people living with hepatitis B currently not receiving guideline-based care to ongoing care and support.

# It's time for action on hepatitis C!



63% of people in Australia have **received hepatitis C cures** since 2016.<sup>10</sup>



However, there are still nearly **70,000 people living with hepatitis C** in Australia.<sup>11</sup>



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

## 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.<sup>13</sup>



Many people who were diagnosed in the past are **disengaged from care** and may have been lost to follow up<sup>14</sup>. 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.<sup>15</sup> 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.<sup>16</sup>



## 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](http://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. 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.