

January 2008

NSW/ACT Hepatitis C Community Prescribers Information Sheet

HCV PILOT UPDATE

- Enrolments of patients in the pilot have increased to 252. Community prescribers are writing/ have written s100 scripts for 43 patients. 20 patients are currently on treatment and 23 patients have completed treatment.
- Please remember to fax the *Initial Enrolment Form* to the collaborating specialist **and** to ASHM.
- Include your *practice contact details* so that clinic staff can contact you to discuss your referral if need be.
- Please phone/fax ASHM if you are writing scripts for HCV antiviral therapy. Contact ASHM for extra *Initial Enrolment Forms*.

CLINIC CONTACT: We encourage community prescribers to contact their local Clinic CNC to discuss or facilitate any aspect of their referral.

CONTINUATION OF COMMUNITY PRESCRIBING UNDER PILOT ARRANGEMENTS

As previously advised, the Highly Specialised Drugs Working Party (HSDWP) has given approval for the extension of the NSW/ACT Hepatitis C Community Prescribing Pilot under the current arrangements until a decision has been made regarding the establishment of a national shared care model.

You can continue to write scripts for patients you are currently treating, refer new patients for assessment and write their maintenance scripts **until notified otherwise**.

Please continue to notify ASHM of pilot referrals and commencement of writing scripts for second and ongoing therapy as you have done previously.

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION FOR HCV PRESCRIBERS

The Highly Specialised Drugs Working Party recently decided that prescribing for maintenance therapy will be extended to accredited general practitioners and community-based non-specialist medical practitioners, and supported through the implementation of a shared care model by State and Territory health departments based on broad principles developed by the working party.

In order to maintain accreditation as a prescriber for second and maintenance hepatitis C therapy, HCV community prescribers will be required to undertake continuing medical education (CME) in the area of hepatitis C. Full details of the CME program for HCV prescribers will be mailed out shortly.

Current accredited prescribers who do not wish to engage in CME or who no longer wish to participate in a shared care model for the treatment of hepatitis C under the s100 HSD program will not be reaccredited in 2008. Early in 2008, you will be sent a form where you can indicate your preference to maintain your HCV prescribing rights (in which case the requirements for this will be advised) or to opt out of the program as a HCV community prescriber.

HCV COMMUNITY PRESCRIBER INITIATION OF HCV ANTIVIRAL THERAPY

NSW Health has submitted a proposal to HSDWP for **community prescriber initiation of antiviral therapy**. The HSDWP will consider this proposal and the most appropriate approach to implementing this in a future meeting. It is likely that only trained and accredited prescribers who have demonstrated experience treating (and writing scripts for) several patients under shared care arrangements (where the specialist initiated and the prescriber wrote subsequent scripts) will be able to initiate HCV antiviral therapy providing they engage in a mentoring/enhanced support relationship and engage in CME. Further information on this proposal will be forwarded in 2008.

HEPATITIS C TRAINING FOR PRACTICE NURSES IN 2008

In order to support community prescribers both in an ongoing model of shared care and a proposed initiation program, NSW Health has funded ASHM to deliver introductory training in hepatitis C for practice nurses. Full details of courses specifically tailored to practice nurses will be sent to you shortly.

ID Physician and Sexual Health Nurse join ASHM

Two new clinical members of staff have joined ASHM to work with the Education & Training and the Resources & Information Divisions.

Claudia Whyte is an Infectious Diseases Physician from Sydney who has worked in recent years at Westmead and Royal North Shore Hospitals and joins ASHM as a Clinical Advisor.

Sally Spruce is a Clinical Nurse Consultant working at Coffs Harbour Sexual Health Service, which also provides services to patients with Hepatitis C, who has joined ASHM as a Primary Care Liaison Officer.

Both Claudia and Sally are available to provide advice on clinical and service provision issues to Community Prescribers and other healthcare workers in the multi-disciplinary team. They are contactable via ASHM reception on (02) 8204 0700 or by email at primarycare@ashm.org.au.

JOURNAL ARTICLES AND OTHER INFORMATION RELATED TO HEPATITIS C

- **Cirrhosis A Management Guide** Medicine Today, Sept 2007, Volume 8, Number 9 (pages 22-30)

Dates for hepatitis C courses and events, 2008

30 January	Update in hepatitis C and STIs, Port Macquarie
16 February	1 day course in BBV and STIs, Tamworth
26 February	Update in viral hepatitis, Katoomba
27 February	Update in viral hepatitis for medical practitioners and practice nurses, Dubbo
29 February	1 day course in Hepatitis C for Opiate Dependency Pharmacotherapy Providers, Orange
26 March	Update in viral hepatitis, Hornsby
March (TBC)	1 day course in Hepatitis C for Opiate Dependency Pharmacotherapy Providers, Newcastle
9 April	Update in viral hepatitis, Penrith
April (TBC)	Update in viral hepatitis, North Sydney
30 April	Update in hepatitis C for community prescribers and their practice nurses, Canberra
May (TBC)	Update in viral hepatitis, Manly/Northern Beaches
14 May	Update in hepatitis C for community prescribers and their practice nurses, Sydney
June (TBC)	Update in viral hepatitis, Bowral
June (TBC)	Hepatitis C course for practice nurses, Sydney
June (TBC)	Advanced Course in hepatitis C, Coffs Harbour
15-16 Sept	Short Course in viral hepatitis, prior to ASHM Conference 2008, Perth
18-19 Oct	Short course in viral hepatitis, Brisbane
20-22 Oct	6th Australasian Viral Hepatitis Conference, Brisbane

Details of all courses and registration can be found on the ASHM website at: <http://www.ashm.org.au/courses>

ASHM Staff Contacts for HCV prescribers

For clinical matters please contact a Primary Care Liaison Officer:

Dr Damian Conway (Mon, Tues and Fri) 02 8204 0722
Dr Claudia Whyte (Wed and Thurs) 02 8204 0726
Sally Spruce (Wed and Fri) 02 8204 0700

For administrative matters please contact:

Sonja Hill (Mon- Wed, Fri) 02 8204 0724
Hiba Jebeile (Mon- Fri) 02 8204 0725

Locked Mail Bag 5057, Darlinghurst NSW 1300

Phone 02 8204 0700 Fax 02 9212 2671

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Web: www.ashm.org.au

