

September 2008

## NSW/ACT Hepatitis C Community Prescribers Information Sheet

### HCV PRESCRIBER PROGRAM UPDATE

32 HCV prescribers have renewed their accreditation in 2008.

- 34 Patients have been enrolled in the program since 1 January 2008. Community prescribers are writing/ have written s100 scripts for 4 of these patients.
- 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

Following the cessation and evaluation of the HCV community prescribing pilot in 2007, an ongoing program of shared care was endorsed by the Highly Specialised Drugs Working Party. NSW Health has funded ASHM to roll out the HCV prescriber program (shared care) in NSW. The conditions of the shared care program are the same as the preceding pilot, i.e. that the prescriber must be linked to a specialist affiliated with a hepatitis C treatment clinic at a public hospital and the specialist **must** initiate treatment. HCV prescribers are authorised to write second and ongoing scripts which must be dispensed from a public hospital pharmacy. For purposes of monitoring the uptake of the program, prescribers are requested to notify ASHM when they refer a patient to a specialist for treatment assessment and when the prescriber writes a script.

### NEW CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION FOR HCV PRESCRIBERS

HCV CME requirements have been aligned to coincide with the RACGP Triennium commencing 1 January 2008. HCV Prescribers must accrue a total of 10 HCV CME points during the triennium with a minimum of 2 HCV CME points obtained in each calendar year of that triennium. ASHM's role is to advise and provide the prescribers with training/CME opportunities in HCV. Prescriber renewals listing and requesting details of CME completed will be sent out before the end of this year. Please make sure you will have accrued 2 CME points for 2008. The CME points table is attached again for your information.

**Some online suggested CME activities and links are listed on the next page.**

### VIRAL HEPATITIS CONFERENCE, BRISBANE 20-22 OCTOBER 2008

The deadline for the online registration for the 6<sup>th</sup> Australasian Viral Hepatitis Conference is 30 September 2008 but HCV prescribers will have until 3 October to register by contacting Sonja at ASHM.

The theme of the conference is **Hepatitis B & C at the Crossroads**. The conference will cover the key issues of regulations versus accepted practice, tensions around policy and practice in the harm reduction field and the need for a National Hepatitis B Strategy.

The latest updates to the program can be viewed online at [www.hepatitis.org.au/program](http://www.hepatitis.org.au/program)

A limited number of scholarships are available for HCV prescribers to attend. Please download the form from [www.ashm.org.au/uploads/File/ASHM-edu-scholarship-form.doc](http://www.ashm.org.au/uploads/File/ASHM-edu-scholarship-form.doc) and return as soon as possible.

### 16<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON HEPATITIS B AND C, MELBOURNE 22 NOVEMBER 2008

Plenary sessions include HCV controversies; HCV treatment; cases of hard to treat HCV; HBV controversies; HBV treatment, panel discussions; transplant controversies in hepatitis B and C; liver transplant in Australia. It also includes breakout sessions on topics such as neuro-psychiatric effects of HCV, early virological response, rural issues in HCV, substance abuse and HCV.

Early bird registration ceases on 31 October so please get your scholarship application in by 15 October. Please contact Sonja Hill for a registration form if you are interested in attending and download the scholarship form from [www.ashm.org.au/uploads/File/ASHM-edu-scholarship-form.doc](http://www.ashm.org.au/uploads/File/ASHM-edu-scholarship-form.doc).

## SUGGESTED ONLINE CME ACTIVITIES

1) A suggested online CME activity from *Clinical Care Options* is titled **Managing Depression in HCV-Infected Patients Treated With Peginterferon and Ribavirin** and can be located at

<http://clinicaloptions.com/Hepatitis/Treatment%20Updates/HCV%20and%20Depression%202008/Modules/Special%20Topic%20Report.aspx>

You will need to log in to complete this module, but it is free to join. It discusses: Depression and Interferon alfa Treatment for HCV; Pre-treatment Assessment of Psychiatric Adverse Events; Pharmacologic Treatment of Depression; Cognition, HCV Infection, and Treatment; Risk Factors, Diagnosis, and Management of Cognitive Impairment; Treatment Outcomes in Patients With Psychiatric Disorders and/or Drug Addiction; Clinical Management of HCV Therapy in Psychiatric Risk Patients.

2) New Advances in Hepatitis C (an independent conference coverage of the 2008 Annual Meeting of the European Association for the Study of the Liver)

<http://clinicaloptions.com/Hepatitis/Conference%20Coverage/Milan%202008/Tracks/Hepatitis%20C%20Update/HCV.aspx>

Topics covered include: Comparison of Combination Therapy With Peginterferon alfa-2b vs Peginterferon alfa-2a; Retreatment Among Patients With Previous Treatment Failure to Standard or Pegylated Interferon-Based Regimens; HALT-C: Low-Dose Maintenance Therapy in Patients Failing to Achieve SVR; Colchicine vs Peginterferon alfa-2b: The COPILOT Trial; Relationship Between Time to HCV RNA Suppression and Likelihood of SVR; 12 Weeks of Treatment in Genotype 2/3 HCV Patients With RVR; Prognostic Biomarkers Predictive of SVR; Cirrhosis Regression With HCV Treatment.

### Dates for ASHM courses and hepatitis C events, 2008

<b>18 Oct</b>	One Day Course in HIV Medicine for GP's, Sydney
<b>19 Oct</b>	Advanced issues in hepatitis C medicine, Brisbane
<b>20-22 Oct</b>	*6th Australasian Viral Hepatitis Conference, Brisbane
<b>25 Oct 8 Nov 22 Nov</b>	Short Course in HIV Medicine (part-time), Sydney
<b>5 Nov</b>	HIV GP Study Group, Sydney
<b>11 Nov</b>	The seX-Files: The truth is out there! (STI Update, incl. HIV), Wollongong
<b>15-16 Nov</b>	Short course in HCV medicine (for existing prescribers as an update or to accredit new prescribers), Sydney
<b>20 Nov</b>	STIs in Gay Men – SSWAHS, Darlington
<b>21-22 Nov</b>	Advanced Course in HIV Nursing, Sydney
<b>22 Nov</b>	*16th National Symposium on hepatitis B and C, Melbourne
<b>25 Nov</b>	STIs in Gay Men – SESIAHS, Sydney
<b>27 Nov</b>	AIDS Awareness Week - Update in HIV Medicine, Sydney
<b>28 Nov</b>	BBV STI Course for Practice Nurses, Tamworth
<b>3 Dec</b>	HIV Community Prescriber Case Discussions, Sydney

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

\*Scholarships (for HCV prescribers) are available to these - please contact Sonja Hill at ASHM

### **ASHM Staff Contacts for HCV prescribers**

**For clinical matters please contact a Primary Care Liaison Officer:**

Dr Damian Conway (Mon and Tues) 02 8204 0722

Sally Spruce 02 8204 0700

**For administrative matters please contact:**

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

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