



NATIONAL AUSTRALIAN HEPATITIS C POINT-OF-CARE TESTING PROGRAM SUMMARY FOR CORRECTIONAL CENTRES

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HCVPOCT

National Australian Hepatitis C Point-of-Care Testing Program

BACKGROUND

The Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney and the International Centre for Point-of-Care testing at Flinders University have been funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health to establish a National Australian Hepatitis C Point-of-Care Testing Program, consisting of a network of sites to scale up point-of-care HCV testing in settings providing services to people at high risk of acquiring HCV infection.

The national program will establish an observational cohort to evaluate whether scale-up of finger-stick point-of-care HCV testing increases diagnosis and treatment uptake for HCV infection. Unlike traditional HCV testing that requires several visits, this program will allow participants to obtain results within an hour, complete other assessments, and potentially start treatment the same day.





WHAT IS BEING OFFERED IN THE PROGRAM?



GeneXpert machine
– 4 modules



Laptop for connectivity to the
GeneXpert machine



- HCV RNA GeneXpert cartridges
- HCV Ab point-of-care tests
- HIV-1/2 Ag/Ab and HBsAg point-of-care tests (for HCV RNA positive participants)



Connectivity solutions for results to be
interfaced with electronic health records



Operator training and training
resource package



- Ongoing support from the Program for set-up and quality assurance testing
- Helpdesk for ongoing technical and troubleshooting support
- Support with reporting of testing data to the health department



WHAT IS NOT BEING OFFERED IN THE PROGRAM?

Support for staff to undertake the point-of-care testing is **NOT** being provided.



WHERE WILL THE PROGRAM BE LOCATED?

The program will run 15 correctional centres nationwide, as well as a further 65 community sites for 2-3 years. We are consulting with key stakeholders in each state and territory, to work out the best locations. The sites will be selected to ensure an equitable distribution across regions and healthcare settings.

WHO CAN DO HCV POINT-OF-CARE TESTING?

Nurses and doctors can be trained to conduct HCV point-of-care testing on the GeneXpert. Training will mostly be provided remotely using web-based videoconference and/or teleconference systems. It will take approximately 2 hours. A series of step-by-step reference posters will also be provided. Following training, all trainees will need to complete a written and a practical test to make sure they understand all the necessary processes to reliably undertake HCV point-of-care testing on the GeneXpert.





WHAT WILL IDEAL CORRECTIONAL CENTRES NEED TO HAVE?

Suitable correctional centres need to have:

- A significant prevalence (>30%) of prisoners with a lifetime history of injecting drug use;
- At least 20 new receptions or transfers who should be tested per week;
- Prison health service providing HCV testing with an anticipated chronic HCV prevalence >10%;
- A well-established HCV treatment service;
- A suitable 'clinic' space available to undertake POC HCV testing, including:
 - adequate space for storage of the machine (16 x 30 x 30cm), cartridges, and laptop,
 - appropriate infectious waste disposal;
- Healthcare professional(s) who will be trained to do the HCV point-of-care testing on the GeneXpert. Up to 4 operators can be trained per site;
- Electronic health record system;
- Willingness to establish systems to support point-of-care testing using the GeneXpert platform.



WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

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