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April 2016: ASHM News, Sector News, Resources, Courses, Conferences, and Scholarships.

ASHM NEWS

Demand for training in prescribing new direct acting antiviral (DAA) therapies for chronic hepatitis C infection is very high

(Image: Dr David Baker performs a liver fibroscan on a training course participant)



New highly effective interferon-free hepatitis C medicines that are well tolerated have been made available through both the PBS General Schedule ('Section 85') and the Section 100 (s100) Highly Specialised Drugs (HSD) Program from 1 March 2016. Importantly, general practitioners and other primary health care practitioners can prescribe these DAAs provided this is done in consultation with a gastroenterologist, hepatologist or infectious diseases physician experienced in the treatment of hepatitis C.

ASHM has received numerous requests for training in the use of these new DAAs. Three comprehensive one-day training courses (which also include an eLearning component) have already been scheduled in NSW between March and June 2016 which will see over 100 doctors trained in this area. [Read More](#)

Treating Hepatitis C in General Practice

Dr David Baker, Medical Adviser to ASHM, has published a Therapy Update in Australian Doctor, which guides GPs through the steps in prescribing the new DAAs. [Read the article](#)

Anal cancer and its screening using digital ano-rectal examination (DARE) in men living with HIV who have sex with men

ASHM has commissioned a subcommittee to look at the role of screening for anal cancers in men living with HIV who have sex with men (MSM). The group will initially focus on the merits and issues around routine screening using DARE. [Read More](#)

Undiagnosed HIV: not in my practice?

A series of free workshops and webinars designed to provide support and updates for NSW / ACT GPs and practice staff on HIV is now available. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss case studies relevant to HIV testing, patient identification, communication and new treatments with a panel of HIV experts and a HIV-positive patient and their perspective. Interested participants gain QI&CPD points. Materials have been developed by the RACGP with educational funding from the NSW Ministry of Health. [Register online](#)

SECTOR NEWS

Feedback Request from Australian Prescriber (AP)

Australian Prescriber is a free, independent publication providing open access information about drugs and therapeutics, published by NPS MedicineWise. It covers topics for health professionals, students and consumers. AP is among a relatively small number of publically available sources of unbiased, evidence-based reviews of therapeutic issues. The publication has been undertaking some recent changes and the editorial panel is seeking feedback about topics that may be of interest.

Please contact the Australian Prescriber editorial office through their [online form](#)

Do we need Medical Leadership or Medical Engagement?

Paul Long, Visiting Fellow, Australian Institute of Health Innovation, outlines his recent work measuring medical engagement for the first time in Australia and New Zealand.

There is a significant debate about the need for clinical engagement, and the call for greater engagement is now appearing in strategy and policy documentation around Australia. The reason cited is that clinically led organisations perform better and deliver better quality care.

Paul Long and Professor Peter Spurgeon will be presenting the findings of their medical engagement research in Australia, New Zealand and the UK at two upcoming events:

- Melbourne: Friday 27 May 2016
- Sydney: Monday 30 May 2016

[Learn more or book a space](#)

Thank you Professor John de Wit

The Centre for Social Research in Health (CSRH) would like to thank Professor John de Wit for his dedication and contribution as a Director. We wish him all the best for his future exciting activities. ASHM CEO Levinia Crooks is an Adjunct Associate Professor at CSRH and expresses her enormous appreciation and gratitude for the opportunity to work with John on a variety of initiatives, including invaluable research studies.

Farewell drinks will be held at the White House, UNSW on 7 April between 4-6pm. [Please RSVP here](#) if you are unable to attend, you can send John a message [here](#)

Annie Madden Departs AIVL

Annie Madden, Executive Officer of the [Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League \(AIVL\)](#) has announced her resignation from her role at AIVL after 16 years leading the organisation. The board wishes to formally thank Annie for her extraordinary contribution to AIVL, the sector and most importantly, to people who use drugs during her time as Executive Officer.

Annie is not only highly regarded across Australia, she is also a leading figure internationally in relation to her work representing people who use drugs and her significant skills and knowledge in harm reduction, HIV, hepatitis C, drug policy and law reform. Annie is leaving AIVL with a strong, committed and talented team of dedicated peers who will continue working hard to build upon the vital work of AIVL now and into the future. Craig Cooper, currently CEO of Positive Life NSW, has accepted the appointment as the Interim EO.

ASHM would like to thank Annie and wish her all the very best for the future.

Lancet-Johns Hopkins Commission on Drug Policy and Health

A commission established by the UK's leading medical journal, the Lancet, and the leading US medical school, Johns Hopkins, has condemned the disastrous failings of current global drug policy and is calling on governments to begin experimenting with the legalisation and regulation of drug markets. [Read more](#)

RESOURCES

New Reference Tool Available – Decision Making in Viral Hepatitis Related Advanced Liver Disease

People living with chronic hepatitis B or chronic hepatitis C are at risk of liver disease progression and developing advanced liver disease. Detection of advanced liver disease is vital to prevent progression to hepatocellular carcinoma or end stage liver disease.

The new 'Decision Making in Viral Hepatitis Related Advanced Liver Disease' resource is a two-page quick reference tool to assist primary care providers in the detection of advanced liver disease so that patients can be managed and/or referred appropriately. The resource provides an overview of the causes of advanced liver disease and the differences between compensated and decompensated cirrhosis. The management of these conditions and related complications are provided.

The evaluation of a patient's cirrhotic status (i.e. non-cirrhotic or cirrhotic) is also a PBS requirement for the initiation of HCV direct acting antiviral therapy from March 1, 2016.

Download the resource from the [ASHM website](#)
Printed copies are also available and can be ordered [here](#).

Australian STI Management Guidelines: For Use in Primary Care – Annual Website Update Now Live

These Guidelines are an online resource designed to provide Primary Care Practitioners with concise information to support the prevention, testing, diagnosis, management and treatment for sexually transmissible infections. The website is conveniently indexed by STI or condition; by syndrome; and by population group and/or situation. The Guidelines were developed by the [Australasian Sexual Health Alliance](#), which is a committee of ASHM, and are supported by RACGP, AChSHM, ASID, APNA, FPAA, AIDA and ACNP to ensure they reflect best practice and are appropriate for use in primary care. This initiative was implemented with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health. For more information, [visit the website](#)

CONFERENCES

International Liver Congress 2016

13-17 April 2016
BARCELONA, SPAIN

Specialists share recent data, present studies and findings, and discuss the hottest topics on liver disease. [Website](#)

ASID Annual Scientific Meeting 2016

20-23 April 2016

LAUNCESTON, TASMANIA

The ASM is the leading Australasian meeting for adult and paediatric infectious disease and clinical microbiology specialists. [Website](#)

Asia Pacific AIDS & Co-infections Conference

17-19 May 2016

HONG KONG

ASHM Members can receive a 25% if they use the code: **oERDGE39** when registering. [Website](#)

Australasian Viral Hepatitis Conference

29 September-01 October 2016

GOLD COAST, QLD

The conference is held biennially and is the leading multidisciplinary Viral Hepatitis conference in Australasia. [Website](#)

Australasian Sexual Health Conference

14-16 November 2016

ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The conference encourages all disciplines involved in sexual health medicine and sexual health promotion to come together and share experiences, new research and discuss national and local responses to sexual health in Australasia. [Website](#)

Australasian HIV & AIDS Conference

16-18 November 2016

ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The annual conference is run by ASHM as a platform for the dissemination and presentation of new and innovative research findings across the Australasian HIV sector. [Website](#)

SCHOLARSHIPS

Asia Pacific AIDS & Co-infections Conference

17-19 May | HONG KONG

Interested parties should register their interest by emailing: regionalnetwork@ashm.org.au

[More details about the conference are available on the website](#)

HIV Drug Therapy Update

23-26 October | Glasgow, Scotland

Scholarships include:

- Flights
- Accommodation
- Conference registration

Applications from ASHM members are viewed favourably. Successful scholarship recipients are requested to write one or more blog posts at ashm.info from the event. [Details and eligibility are available here](#)

COURSES

01 April 2016

Fundamentals of HIV & Sexual Health: Expanding the Scope of PHCNs (1 Day)

SYDNEY, NSW

[Info & Register](#)

04 April 2016

Hepatitis B Introductory Course (Public Training Evening)

BURWOOD, NSW

[Info & Register](#)

05 April 2016

Chronic Hepatitis C: Curing Hepatitis C in 2016 (Public Training Evening)

WAMBERAL, NSW

[Info & Register](#)

05 April 2016

Hepatitis C Nursing: Workshop for Primary Health Care Nurses (Public Training Evening)

SURRY HILLS, NSW

[Info & Register](#)

7 April 2016

Viral Hepatitis Capacity Strengthening Program

KALGOORLIE, WA

[Email to Register](#)

13 April 2016

HIV/STI Testing: Breaking down the barriers to testing (Public Training Evening)

BERALA, NSW

[Info & Register](#)

20-21 April 2016

2-day workshop for ACCHS staff in South Australia

ADELAIDE, SA

[Info & Register](#)

27 April 2016

New Era of Hepatitis C Treatment (in partnership with HNE PHN)

ARMIDALE, NSW

[Email to Register](#)

30 April-1 May 2016

HIV s100 Prescriber Course

SYDNEY, NSW

[Info & Register](#)



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and Sexual Health Workforce

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