

KEEP YOUR FOOT ON THE PEDAL!

KOMBI CLINIC LEADS RE-ELIMINATION AT LOTUS GLEN CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

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Background:

Clearance of Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) in corrections is crucial to HCV Elimination. Partnership with strategic players is fundamental to achieving this goal. In 2017, HCV Elimination was demonstrated in Lotus Glen Correctional Centre in Far North Queensland. As is the nature of this virus, sustained efforts must be continued so we approached Lotus Glen with a simplified, rapid, and accessible testing plan.

Description of model of care/intervention:

Leading a collaborative partnership, Kombi Clinic conducted a HCV Point of Care Testing (PoCT) blitz in October 2021. With the advent of Cepheid's GeneXpert® PoCT for HCV RNA we moved four machines between differing prison units, allowing testing of 16 samples per hour with access to all.

Effectiveness:

Over five days interrupted by regular musters, lockdowns and codes, we were able to fingerstick test 423 men. This represented 44% of the prison population. 10.4% tested HCV RNA positive (n=44) and all were prescribed their DAA by the end of the fifth testing day. Of those testing HCV positive, 97% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, 77% were currently injecting and 25% had previously been treated.

Conclusion and next steps:

Fingerstick HCV PoCT blitz in corrections is a huge game changer, especially when treatment is commenced within days of diagnosis. This unique model is planned for roll out to four other Queensland correctional facilities in early 2022.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: GeneXpert machines and cartridges were provided free of charge by Gilead Sciences Pty. Ltd. via a pilot point-of-care testing program.