

PHAC Dr. Peter HCV Micro-elimination Project

Year 3 To-date & Moving Forward

Funding period: April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024

Context

Project Objective:

- To achieve the elimination of HCV among all DPC clients (Day Health & Residence) through education, capacity-building, and adherence support, and that those who receive services through the DPC (~400 individuals) and DPC health care workers have strengthened skills and capacity to prevent HCV.

Project Activities:

- Recruit Peer Collaborators and Peer Mentor; Provide capacity building training for staff and Peer Collaborators; Monthly HCV Advisory Committee; Ask Me About HCV Days led by Peer Collaborators; Education Days/Sessions for Clients

4 Successes and 4 Learning Experiences from the First 3 Years

Successes:

- Success #1: **DPC as a support program vs. a clinic.** We help clients feel confident in their testing and treatment journey, including post-treatment.
- Success #2: **Partnerships.** With BCCDC to pilot DBS testing; BC Hepatitis Network to support through the role of a Peer Mentor; STOP Outreach; Three Bridges CHC; John Ruedy Clinic; VIDC.
- Success #3: **Leadership and project driven by people with lived experience of HCV.** 4 Peer Collaborators; 1 Peer Mentor to provide support and guidance.
- Success #4: **Project reach.** 5 Education Days held, over 15 Dried Blood Spot (DBS) tests and Point of Care Testing (POCT) completed, over 300 clients reached, over 10 staff trained in hepatitis C.

Learning Experiences:

- Learning #1: **Original program design** of identifying who has HCV was challenging
- Learning #2: **Dual public health emergencies** (COVID-19 & drug toxicity crisis). An overwhelmed health care system and a de-prioritization of HCV.
- Learning #3: **Participation engagement and recruitment.** HCV conversations require trust and existing relationships. Peer Collaborators have community buy-in and relationships to support.
- Learning #4: **Remaining responsive to participants.** Pivoted the direction of the key activities to reflect what we were hearing from clients (e.g., advisory committee, peer-led testing, etc.)

On the Horizon

- Continue to hold advisory committee, education days, Ask Me About HCV sessions, and provide POCT and DBS testing.
- Education Days integrating other Day Health staff (counsellors; art, music, and recreational therapists; dietician). Our next Education Day is set for October 17, 2023.
- Peer Collaborators to be trained on POCT in October 2023 by Peer Mentor and Hep C Nurse.