

A Partnership Approach to enabling access to Hep C Treatment without visiting the Hospital in a remote setting

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Background

National data reports the Northern Territory (NT) as having the highest prevalence of chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection in Australia at 1.54% and the lowest treatment uptake rate.

Table B.9: CHC prevalence and treatment uptake in NT, by SA3, end of 2020

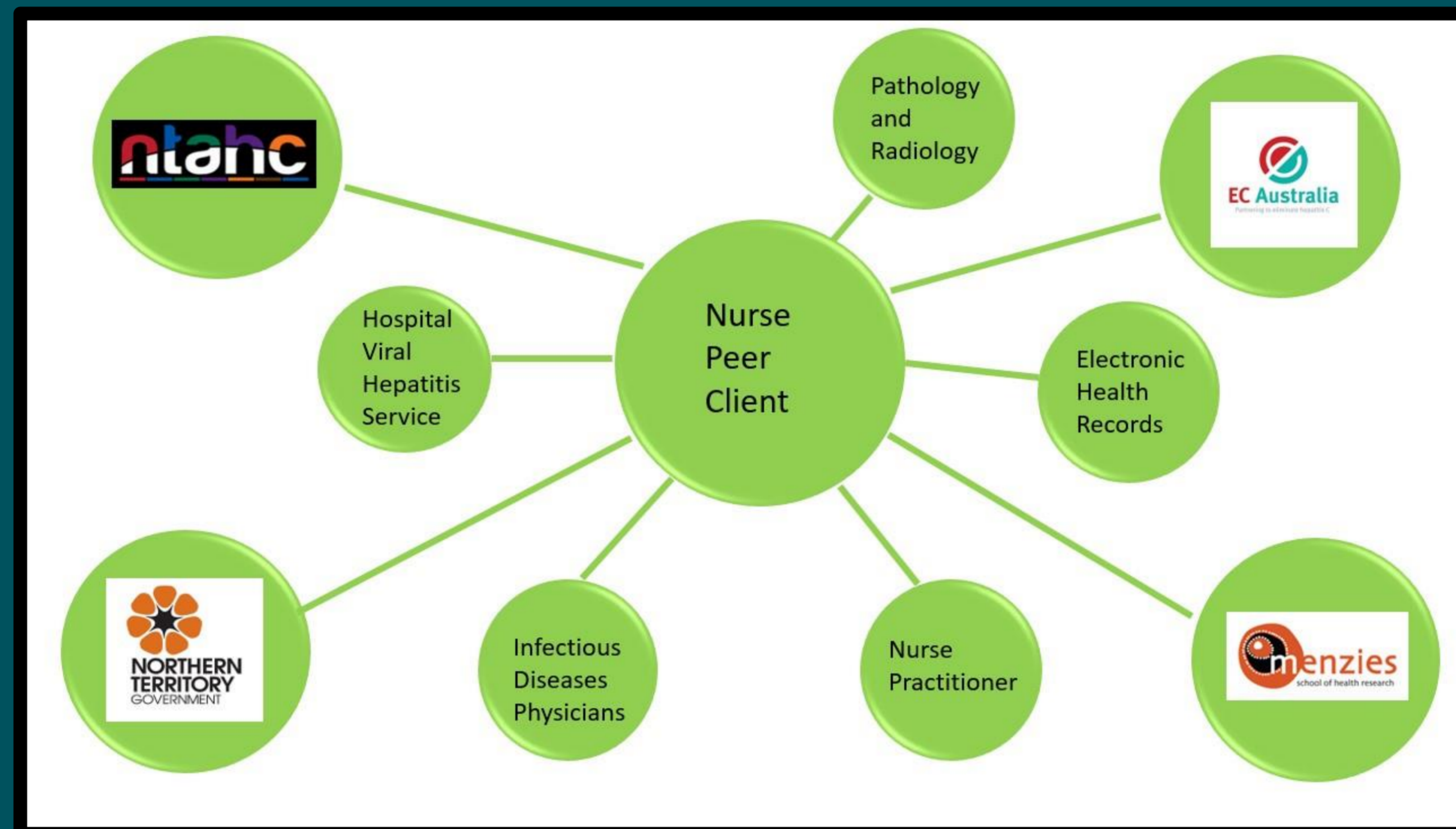
PHN and SA3	Total population, 2016	People living with CHC, 2016	CHC prevalence, 2016 (%)	People treated, 2016-2020	Treatment uptake, end 2020 (%)
Northern Territory PHN	237,919	3,663	1.54%	790	21.6%
Alice Springs	42,018	653	1.55%	117	17.9%
Barkly	3,904	#	#	#	#
Daly - Tiwi - West Arnhem	29,286	185	0.63%	16	8.6%
Darwin City	26,919	955*	3.55%	148	15.5%
Darwin Suburbs	55,742	915	1.64%	221	24.1%
East Arnhem	6,322	#	#	#	#
Katherine	18,871	237	1.25%	33	13.9%
Litchfield	19,769	302	1.53%	95	31.4%
Palmerston	35,087	310	0.88%	143	46.1%

The NT has a population of 250,000 people living across 1.35 million km². Majority of the population live in the greater Darwin region with the remainder dispersed over remote and very remote areas. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people account for 30% of the population.



Therefore, finding and engaging clients with HCV into care is critical, but logistically challenging. In response, an innovative nurse-peer partnership (NPP) model of care is being offered in an outreach setting across Greater Darwin region to increase HCV case finding and engagement in treatment.

The Partnership Approach



Methods

An established nurse led monthly outreach clinic has been increased in frequency to a weekly NPP model of care. With a strong client focus on relationship building, the NPP offers a holistic approach by offering both clinical and peer support. This is complemented by incentivised screening and treatment opportunities. The weekly outreach clinic is held within a harm reduction setting, offering a streamlined one-stop shop for HCV testing and treatment. A case management approach is applied to individual clients with HCV, whilst broader population-wide approaches are used to raise awareness about HCV.



Outcomes

Strengths of the NPP model include the ability to offer a clinical service within a safe, non-judgemental space, where the complex needs of clients can be met holistically. The mutually respectful relationship between nurse and peer and reciprocal learning has led to the removal of barriers to care and the provision of an environment where clients feel valued and safe, ultimately engaging a cohort of clients who traditionally would not have accessed care in the hospital environment.



"This is the first time I have felt like I was listened to, and had my body respected when the nurse took the bloods".

Client testimonial



"I'm so proud of myself for finally doing this and getting through it, I wish I met you guys' years ago".

Client testimonial

ntahc.org.au/clinics

ELIMINATE HEP C CLINIC

You can live free from Hepatitis C

FREE CLINIC ON WEDNESDAYS

Medical Check Up
Fast and free Hepatitis C testing and treatment
Fibromax (liver scans)
Live health check app

Testing and Treatment
Peer workers available to provide personal support through the testing and treatment process

Transport options
To assist with transport to and from appointments.
Vaccinations
For Hepatitis A and B

Gift cards will be offered for your time and available at testing and on completion of treatment.

"THE NEW TREATMENTS TAKE JUST 8 OR 12 WEEKS, I AM NOW CURED FROM HEP C"

Text or call 0474200111 or speak to our Clinic staff

"While Anngie was hitting the books learning the theory, I was out in the wild doing the prac, thus, making us the perfect team"

Sal – Peer Engagement Officer

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the Larrakia people, the traditional owners of the beautiful lands on which we live and work and acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

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discovery for a healthy tomorrow