

Hep B PAST Plus

Bulletin Issue #2, August 2025

Introduction and Highlights

We begin this edition by recognising and celebrating the achievements and success stories that continue to shape our journey. These highlights reflect the dedication, innovation, and collaborative spirit that drive us forward. From noteworthy milestones to inspiring accomplishments, let's take a moment to appreciate our progress together:

The Hep B PAST Program is recognised nationally as a leading initiative in hepatitis B care, particularly for its innovative and community-led approach. Since its implementation, it has significantly improved access to care, monitoring, and treatment for people living with chronic hepatitis B. Modelling data from the WHO Collaborating Centre for Viral Hepatitis at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity highlights the program's remarkable impact—*showing that the Northern Territory is the only region in Australia to have successfully closed the gap in chronic hepatitis B care for First Nations Australians*. This achievement reflects years of dedicated effort, culturally responsive healthcare delivery, and strong partnerships between communities and health services. [Publication link click here.](#)

Congratulations Professor Jane Davies on publishing the study "Disease progression and treatment need in sub-genotype C4 hepatitis B infection: a retrospective cohort study in the Northern Territory, Australia." This has made headlines in over 90 news outlets. The findings offer valuable insights that can help shape public health policy and improve care, marking a significant contribution from the Menzies-led Hep B PAST (Partnership Approach to the Elimination of Hepatitis B in the Northern Territory) program.

[Click here to see our partners organisations](#)



Quotes: attributable to study lead and Menzies Hepatitis B Program Lead, Professor Jane Davies: "We are so proud of this work elevating equity in care for First Nations people living with Chronic Hepatitis B in the NT by understanding the virology and impact of this ancient virus. "The Hep B PAST Partnership continues to show us that working together we can close the gap in care for First Nations people."

This landmark study analysed data from more than 780 individuals across over 76% of remote community clinics in the NT, making it the most extensive cohort study of its kind in the region. [Publication link click here](#)

Last but by no means least — a huge congratulations to our wonderful Deputy Viral Hepatitis Program Lead, **Dr. Paula Binks**, who has officially crowned her journey with a PhD Graduation!



🎓 What an incredible achievement, Paula! Your passion, perseverance, and heart shine through in everything you do. We're all so proud of you and thrilled to celebrate this amazing milestone together.

Program update - Hep B PAST Plus

ENHANCE – MASLD

Work is underway on the MASLD initiative, with updated content recently added to the Training Package of the "Managing Hepatitis B for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce"

Recruitment is progressing through our valued partnership with Katherine West Health Board at Kalkarindji.

Our Program Lead, Professor Jane Davies, is working collaboratively with our program partners to identify an additional sites. Watch this space for exciting developments in the final quarter of the year!

Congratulations on the Successful Progress of the LUSH Pilot (Liver Ultrasound Training)

We are pleased to announce that the LUSH Pilot has received formal endorsement from the MID-IRG and is progressing smoothly.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Peter Coombs for his significant contributions and ongoing commitment to this important initiative. Your expertise and dedication have been invaluable to the project's success. Thank you for your continued efforts.



Those who are interested in participating '**Liver Ultrasound Training**' please send your EOI to: peter.coombs@menzies.edu.au



Staff update:

We're excited to welcome new Team members to our team!

Project Assistant: Jacqueline Grant

Research Nurses: Megan Hughes and Harriet Clarke

They bring valuable experience and a fresh perspective, and we're looking forward to their contributions and continuing to work towards our goals.

We're glad to have all on board!

Workforce Training update

To date, we have successfully delivered the **Managing Hepatitis B course for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce** in Darwin, Katherine, and Alice Springs across the Northern Territory. Additionally, we were proud to deliver the course for the first time in Cairns, in partnership with our Far North Queensland stakeholders.

This one-day, face-to-face workshop is designed exclusively for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants to build knowledge about chronic hepatitis B (CHB). The course focuses on health promotion, liver health, and holistic care, encouraging participation from health workers, trainees, clinic staff, and community members. Former participants are especially welcome to share their experiences and help facilitate. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce plays a vital role in delivering hepatitis B care on Country and advancing the goal of viral hepatitis elimination. This course is accredited by NAATSIHWP and provides 11 CPD hours.

If you or your organisation is interested in this free course, please contact us on: hepbpast@menzies.edu.au



Hepatitis B S100 Prescriber course delivered in Aice Spring on 14th August was received well.

This course is provided for General Practitioners, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses and other community-based medical practitioners.

Learning outcomes include:

- Outline the critical role of primary care in the diagnosis, management and treatment of people living with chronic hepatitis B
- Plan long-term care, including guideline-based monitoring and hepatocellular carcinoma screening, for patients with chronic hepatitis B
- Select and prescribe first-line antiviral treatment when clinically indicated
- Identify situations where specialist advice or referral is required
- Integrate principles of person-centred and culturally competent care into hepatitis B management

We appreciate our facilitators for their contribution:

Dr Jane Davies, Principal Research Fellow, the Menzies School of Health Research and Co-Director of Infectious Diseases, Royal Darwin Hospital

Dr Kelly Banz, s100 Prescriber, GP- Central Australian Aboriginal Congress & NT Health (Alice Springs)

Khim Tan, Nurse Practitioner

Follow up on upcoming: <https://ashm.org.au/conferences/events-calendar/>

Liver One Stop Shop update:

We're now halfway through the year, and the Liver One-Stop-Shop has delivered outreach clinics 2–3 times to individual Hepatitis B PAST Plus project partners. Here's a snapshot of where we've been and what we've achieved. Thank you to all our partners and communities. Together, we're delivering better liver health outcomes and making real progress across the NT.

Delivery update:

- Danila Dilba Health Service – 2 visits
- Miwatj Health Services – 8 visits across 4 different communities
- Katherine West Health Board (KWHB) – 2 visits in Kalkarindji Community
- Sunrise Health Service – 1 full week of service in Ngukurr & Minyerri
- Malala Health service - 3 visits
- CAAC - 2 visits in Mutitjulu and Ntaria
- NT Health Top End - 4 visits at Numbulwar & Wadeye
- NT Health Central Australia - 4 visits at Yuendumu & Papunya
- Gove District Hospital - 1 visit
- Katherine District Hospital - 2 visits
- Alice Springs Correctional Centre - 2 visits

[Click on this link to see all upcoming Liver Outreach clinics to your community](#)



Our Nurse Practitioner - Dale Thomson, NT health Hep B Coordinator - Tammy-Allyn Fernandes and Peter Coombs - Sonographer assessing a critical situation — whether to attempt a risky crossing through floodwaters or turn back!

Thank you to Sunrise Health - Minyarri Clinic who never gave up on us and managed to pick us up from the other side of the river safe and sound, operated business as usual - job completed!



Check us out! on [Doherty Website](#)
["Liver Outreach in Central Australia - Hep B PAST Plus Project"](#)

Translations -Hep B Story

Murrinh patha

Murrinh patha is the language of the Murrinh patha people, most of whom live in Wadeye in the Northern Territory, where it is the dominant language of the community.

Murrinh patha is one of the few Australian Aboriginal languages whose number of speakers has increased and whose usage has expanded over the past generation. The local school in Wadeye delivers a bilingual program in Murrinh patha and English.

In the Murrinh patha language, a common way to say "hello" is "Ngarra".

The word for "liver" in Murrinh patha is "Panhu".

The Hep B Story App is now available to download in Murrinh patha!

Apple App Store

Google Play Store

Murrinh patha

Hep B Story App Launch

A visual, interactive app which is designed for patients living with chronic hepatitis B and their families.

Come join us to launch the new language additions, Wubuy & Murrinh Patha

MONDAY
19 MAY

12PM - 2PM
Menzies JMB Foyer
Royal Darwin Hospital Campus

REGISTER HERE

Light refreshments provided.
Please RSVP for catering numbers

hepbpast@menzies.edu.au



Wubuy

Wubuy, also called Nunggubuyu, is the language of the Nunggubuyu people living in the area near Numbulwar on the Gulf of Carpentaria in the Northern Territory.

The Nunggubuyu's traditional lands extend over 7,000 km² southwards from Cape Barrow and Harris Creek to the coastal area opposite Edward Island, and their western boundaries are formed by the Rose and Walker Rivers.

In the Wubuy language, a common way to say "hello" is "Ngunha".

The word for "liver" in Wubuy is "Arman".

The Hep B Story App is now available to download in Wubuy!

Apple App Store

Google Play Store

Wubuy

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Hep B Story App translations — a big step in our work to support hepatitis B awareness through culturally safe, language-based health communication.

Over the past ten years, the app has been translated into 11 First Nations languages, helping communities access clear and accurate information about hepatitis B. These translations have supported health workers, improved patient understanding, and helped build trust in care.

We're genuinely grateful to all the community members, health workers, language experts, and partner organisations who have made this possible. Your support and collaboration have been key to the success of this project.

A big thank you to everyone who joined us for the 10th anniversary lunch — your stories and support made it a day to remember.

We're excited to share that two new language translations are in progress:

- Warramungu in Tennant Creek is spoken by over 400 people (2021 Census). Warramungu is an essential language in the Northern Territory.
- Luritja, in partnership with the Purple House Language Group, is spoken across Central Australia, including areas west and south of Alice Springs, such as Papunya, Haasts Bluff, Kintore, and Aputula (Finke). In many communities, younger speakers use a hybrid dialect known as Pintupi-Luritja.

We look forward to continuing this important journey — building health equity and committing to many more years of impact and collaboration!



Scan the barcode to access information and learn about Hepatitis B
Available in 11 Aboriginal languages.

Conferences and presentations



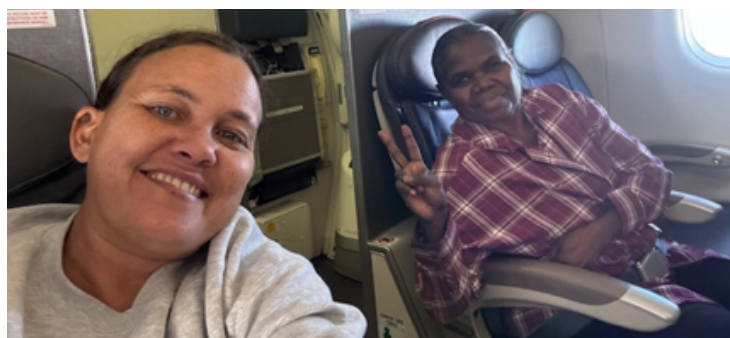
Lowitja Conference 2025



Patricia Nunhirribala - Cardiac Care Senior Aboriginal Health Practitioner - presenting poster at Lowitja



George Gurruwiwi - Senior Researcher - helping us out with the poster presentation and enjoying his lunch



Tammy Fernandes and Patricia Nunhirribala - on the plane to Adelaide

Listening, Learning, Leading: Insights from the Menzies School of Health Research, Infectious Diseases Indigenous Reference Group

Aaliyah Bailey¹, George Gurruwiwi¹, Sarah Bukulatjpi^{1,2,3}, Roslyn Dhurrkay¹, Heather D'Antoine^{1,4}, Teresa De Santis⁵, Sandra Nelson⁵, Shiraline Wurrawilya⁵, Cheryl Ross¹, Kumalie Riley⁶, Tiana Alley¹, Tammy-Allyn Fernandes⁵, Patricia Nunhirribala⁵, Emily Vintour-Cesar¹, Kelly Hosking^{1,5}, Paula Binks¹, Jane Davies^{1,5}

¹Menzies School of Health Research, Charles Darwin University, Darwin, Northern Territory; ²Mwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation, East Arnhem, Northern Territory; ³Marthalal Homelands Health Service, East Arnhem, Northern Territory; ⁴University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD; ⁵Northern Territory Health, Darwin, Northern Territory; ⁶Tjanguk Cultural and Interpretation Services, Alice Springs, Northern Territory

Background

The Infectious Diseases Indigenous Reference Group (IRG) was established in 2014 and initially included 14 members from seven remote NT communities. The group was created to provide cultural advice and set research priorities for the Menzies Viral Hepatitis Team. Viral hepatitis contributes significantly to poor health outcomes in the NT's First Nations Peoples, particularly in remote regions, including the highest rates of liver cancer nationally. The IRG ensures that research efforts are aligned with community needs and cultural expectations, supporting respectful and community-driven research.

IRG members and facilitators - 2024

Approach

The IRG works through two-way learning, where everyone learns from each other. Before each meeting, education sessions are run to give IRG members the background they need to make informed decisions about the research. It's also a chance for people to ask questions, share their own stories, and talk about what matters most in their communities. This back-and-forth helps build strong relationships between researchers and community members and makes sure the work we do is useful and meaningful. It also builds confidence and helps IRG members become leaders and knowledge-sharers in their own communities.

Indigenous Leadership

The group sets research priorities and influences project design to ensure cultural relevance and respect for local values. Non-Indigenous researchers receive guidance on culturally appropriate ways to engage with communities. Cultural safety is protected through IRG-only sessions, allowing members to share openly and confidently. The IRG also embraces the cultural diversity of NT communities and adapts to local governance systems to support inclusive, respectful collaboration.

Some of the original IRG members - 2014

Achievements & Future Vision

In 2024, the IRG proudly celebrated 10 years of impact - a decade of cultural leadership, meaningful guidance, and strong relationship building. Widely recognised and highly respected, the IRG is now a valued voice in shaping research priorities far beyond viral hepatitis.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge all the Traditional Owners of the beautiful lands on which we live and work, all people living with viral hepatitis, and all collaborators and partners in our work.

CONTACT US
Email: henh@menzies.edu.au

4th INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS HEALTH AND WELLBEING CONFERENCE 2025
16-19 June 2025 | Kaurna Country, Adelaide, SA

MEMBERS ENROLL

We also presented:

- Screening for Hepatocellular Carcinoma in the Northern Territory of Australia – The “Liver One-Stop Shop”, at the Global Hepatitis Summit, Los Angeles, 25-28 June.
- Navigating Stigma: Lessons on Co-Creating Liver Cancer Screening Resources for Priority Communities, at the Public Health Association of Australia Screening Conference, Sydney 4 March.
- Screening for liver cancer in the Northern Territory – the “liver one-stop shop”, at the Public Health Association of Australia Screening Conference, Sydney 4 March.
- Screening for Hepatocellular Carcinoma in the Northern Territory – The “Liver One-Stop”, at the 15th Australasian Viral Hepatitis Conference 6 – 8 August.
- Empowering First Nations Leadership in Hepatitis B Research: The Role of the Infectious Diseases Indigenous Reference Group, at the 15th Australasian Viral Hepatitis Conference 6 – 8 August.

Acknowledgement

We sincerely thank our project partners, contributors and all involved for their unwavering support and collaboration. This project's success is a result of all of your dedication and expertise.

We look forward to continuing these partnerships, to work together to achieve sustainable health improvements through research, education and capacity development.



Marthakal Homelands Health Service



Menzies Viral Hepatitis Program Org Chart

Program Staff



Team contact:

General enquires: hepbpast@menzies.edu.au

Outreach Liver one stop shop, contact: Dale.Thompson@nt.gov.au

Mananing Hep B Course, contact: aimon.riyana@amant.org.au

S100 prescribe Course, contact: hannah.reedy@menzies.edu.au

All other enquiries: jacqueline.grant@menzies.edu.au

General information on Hep B PAST Plus program- on [Menzies's website](#)