

# The Hepatitis C Peer Harm Reduction Education (Hep C PHRE) project

Our project demonstrated the critical role of peer educators in reaching and engaging people with and at risk of hepatitis C in their networks.

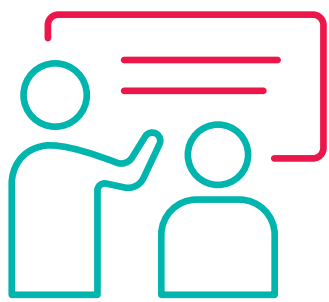
We recruited and trained peer educators to disseminate accurate information and normalise conversations about hepatitis C within their peer networks. Peer educators received mentoring and monthly remuneration.

Peer-to-peer education sessions were recorded in a diary that was submitted monthly. Qualitative data from peer diaries has informed service provision and health promotion activities at PBHRWA.



## Outcomes

Over a three-year period:

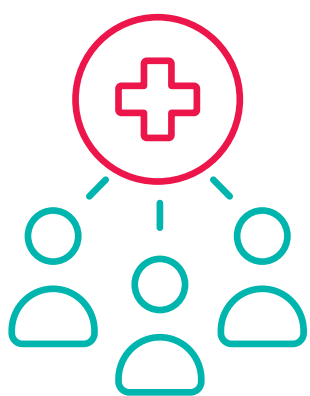


34

key peers were recruited and trained as peer educators.



Peer educators provided hepatitis C education to **more than 877 people**, around 20 per cent of whom identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.



158

peer referrals were collected and followed up by a project officer.



Peer referrals resulted in 65 appointments for hepatitis C **testing and/or treatment.**

## Learnings

- ✓ A key success factor in the project is peer educators reaching people in their networks who had never had a hepatitis C discussion before.
- ✓ Many people **did not know that hepatitis C is curable**, and were unaware of the hepatitis C services offered by PBHRWA.
- ✓ People found it easier to trust information about hepatitis C that came from a peer, rather than a health professional. This generally stemmed from a **lack of trust in authority.**

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