

# HEPATITIS HEROES:

## digital fight against stigma and discrimination

Presenter: MELANIE EAGLE, Chief Executive Officer, Hepatitis Victoria

### Background:

Stigma and discrimination often inhibits people with viral hepatitis from demanding support and health care they deserve. New digital techniques, giving expression to affected community and supporters, can help maximize the voice against stigma.

### Method:

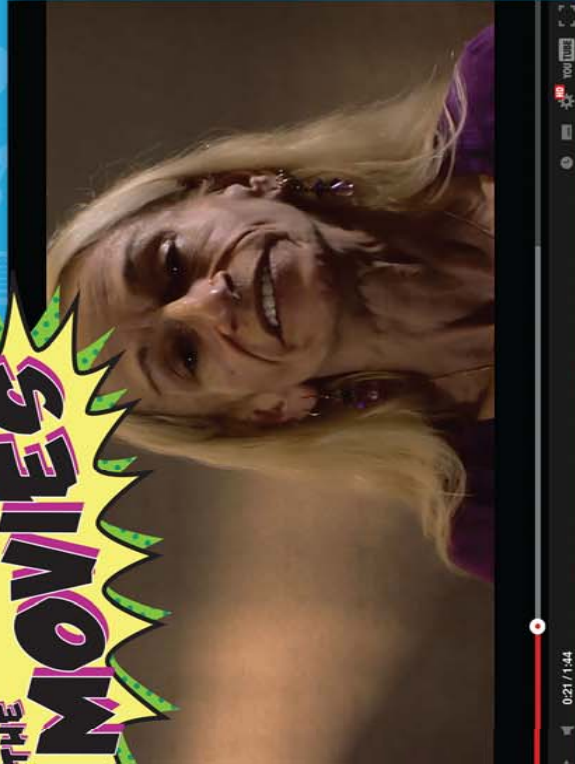
On its 21 Anniversary, Hepatitis Victoria focused on the people – those behind the organisation, and taking it forward. Activities culminated in a 'Hepatitis Heroes' event at Melbourne's Federation Square.

In November 2013 a Government representative, surrounded by people in Hepatitis Heroes t-shirts, launched the website. Passersby were asked – online or in person – to fight discrimination. With the Happy Livers band playing, Heroes spoke candidly. The Hepatitis Heroes website features individual Heroes, including public health advocates, clinicians, community workers, and those bravely confronting their own condition.

Launched with 21 stories, further Heroes have come forward. Each shares why the issue is important and their message to others. Each is encouraged to use social media to spread the word, reinforced across multiple media channels by Hepatitis Victoria. The website, containing a video of the launch, invites the public to make a pledge against discrimination, and encourages comment.

As a result of each Hepatitis Hero is underway. These vignettes will enliven the site, inviting others to use it to better convey the personal dimensions of hepatitis. These collated personal videos will be utilised in a variety of digital forms to further spread the word – via you tube, social media, in health promotion and in education sessions.

### THE MOVIES



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Meet Our Hep Heroes  
More than 30 people have volunteered to become Hep Heroes and help raise awareness and fight discrimination against people living with hepatitis.

Read their stories or click on their pictures below to view their videos. MAKE THE PLEDGE and become our next hero!

Hep Heroes: Breaking the Silence  
A seven-minute overview of  
Jan Anderson, Ronald Briggs,  
Jofa Corfe, Rose Coulter,  
Kieran Donoghue, Melanie  
Murray, Garry Santoro and Jay  
W...

On the left are our Hep Heroes, take the minute to view their short interviews. Alternatively, our movies combine multiple perspectives to tell a story as can be seen below.

Meet Our Heroes | About Hep Heroes | Become a Hero | Contact Us

### Results:

Promoting hepatitis heroes has allowed Hepatitis Victoria to build relationships with valued collaborators in fighting discrimination. It has also generated a versatile body of information to be used in multiple ways to further spread the word.

### Conclusion:

Digital media can be a useful tool in giving expression to the personal impact of hepatitis and maximizing the fight against discrimination.

### Presenter's biography



Melanie Eagle has qualifications in Arts, Social Work, and the Law and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Prior to joining Hepatitis Victoria as Chief Executive Officer she worked professionally in city strategic planning, social policy, equal opportunity as a solicitor and union researcher. Other activities have included being Mayor of the City of St Kilda and on the Board of a number of community and health related organisations. She is passionate about collectively working to improve broader community wellbeing.

## www.hepheroes.com

Why not go online, check it out, make your own pledge, and go viral to