

Anwernekenhe* Consensus Statement



We the undersigned **acknowledge** the fact that viral hepatitis is a major, devastating, under-recognised health issue within Indigenous communities globally. This statement **recognises** our desire to reduce the impact of viral hepatitis on Indigenous peoples' economic, social, emotional, physical and spiritual health. Doing so will help maintain our cultures and the future of Indigenous populations. We **urge** nation-states and their governments to make special provision in health and funding policies for equitable access to prevention, testing, treatment and management of viral hepatitis in Indigenous peoples.

Our **aim** is to promote greater visibility, action, knowledge and accountability by nation-states in recognising viral hepatitis as a major chronic disease in Indigenous peoples, within an Indigenous and human rights framework.

In developing this statement we have taken regard to the following **principles**

- viral hepatitis is everybody's business
- Indigenous leaders, scientists, researchers, academics, people in industry, and indigenous people living with viral hepatitis – working together;
- Indigenous self-determination;
- privileging and incorporating cultural and traditional knowledges; worldviews, and culturally resonant practices;

· Arrernte language for 'belongs to us'.

Phonetic: Un-wer-ne-nge-nee

- freedom from racism, discrimination and stigma;
- health equity for all Indigenous peoples;
- respecting and protecting Indigenous habitats and communities;
- creating opportunities for sharing Indigenous views and perspectives on health and supporting Indigenous models of hepatitis care and treatment;
- empowering Indigenous communities to control their relationship with viral hepatitis.

The **key priorities** are to:

- develop national, indigenous-specific targets within strategies to address viral hepatitis;
- commit to a reduction in the incidence, prevalence and burden of viral hepatitis in Indigenous populations;
- improve access for indigenous peoples to quality healthcare across all levels of the healthcare system;
- incorporate indigenous knowledges and customs in viral hepatitis health education (including through Indigenous educators);
- develop and implement Indigenous models of viral hepatitis care and treatment;
- respond to the viral hepatitis needs of indigenous peoples in prison;
- promote harm reduction as a strategy for reducing the burden of viral hepatitis in indigenous peoples;
- improve surveillance, data collection, reporting and monitoring of viral hepatitis in Indigenous communities;
- encourage, facilitate and fund (indigenous controlled) research in viral hepatitis;
- support international meetings and workshops to address viral hepatitis in indigenous peoples.

[signatures and affiliations] 16 September, 2014, Alice Springs, Australia

Supporting Documents:

UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN, September 2007)

WHO Viral Hepatitis Resolution (WHA 67.7, May 2014)