

## STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016

### **Sydney North Health Network supports lifesaving hepatitis C drugs going on the PBS from March 1**

Eliminating hepatitis C as a public health threat in Australia within the next 10 to 15 years is now a real possibility with four new treatments listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

With what is set to be an increased demand from patients for the new hepatitis C drugs being listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) from 1 March 2016, it is pivotal that the Northern Sydney PHN (operated by the Sydney North Health Network) supports their local GPs with education and resourcing around the roll-out of these new treatments.

The new treatments - **sofosbuvir** (Sovaldi), **ledipasvir/sofosbuvir** (Harvoni), **daclatasvir** (Daklinza) and **ribavirin** (Ibavyr) – can successfully cure hepatitis C in over 90 per cent of cases. Treatment can take as little as 8-12 weeks, without many of the serious side-effects associated with older, interferon based treatments. Currently only one per cent of people with hepatitis C are receiving treatment each year. As of 1 March, the drugs will be listed by the PBS, dramatically dropping the price to \$38.30 for general patients and \$6.20 for concessional patients.

Sydney North Health Network Chair, Dr Magdalen Campbell says, “Having these new treatments listed on the PBS revolutionises the way that GPs can now treat patients with hepatitis C. These previously expensive drugs are now accessible and give patients living with hepatitis C the opportunity to experience a better quality of life.”

Although GPs will now be able to prescribe hepatitis C treatments for their patients without having to refer them on to a specialist, they are still required to have a brief consultation with a specialist before writing a prescription.

Sydney North Health Network CEO Lynelle Hales said, “As a Primary Health Network it is our role to disseminate the correct information and resources. Through our clinical and community councils we will be engaging with both health professionals and people within the community who have hepatitis C to make access to this treatment easier.”

There is a 1 day course in Sydney on **Sat 12<sup>th</sup> March** in Surry Hills for **Hepatitis C New Treatments for GPs and other medical practitioners**. For more information and to register please [CLICK HERE](#).

**Find out more via the following resources:**

- [Treating Hep C: What's New](#)
- [PBS Factsheet](#)
- [PBS FAQs](#)

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#### **Enquiries**

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#### **Interview Opportunities**

SNHN Chair Dr Magdalen Campbell  
SNHN CEO Lynelle Hales

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