

Share your story, connect with yourself and others

Storytelling Guide

Feel free to use the following as a guide to telling your own story.

Listed are some of the things you may achieve as a consequence of telling your story:

- ✓ Personal realization: details of treatment, impact on lives
- ✓ Personal responsibility
- ✓ Motivation to care for yourself
- ✓ Know you have somewhere to go
- ✓ Enable to be more assertive because you have support
- ✓ Reduce stigma and enable connections
- ✓ Help people feel better about themselves

Confidentiality

You can contribute under any name you like. **There is no need to identify yourself or anyone else** in order to share your experience to help others. Please supply your contact details *if you* choose to use your own name.

Possible areas to cover

Remember, there are many aspects to your story—which aspect(s) will serve your purpose for your audience best?

Using this Guide

Use the six sub headings and questions in Section 1 to prompt your story **OR** use the 8 questions in Section 2 to assist with telling your story. Either way, the questions outlined are there to guide and prompt you when necessary with telling your story in a way that helps you and others.

Section 1

1. Your diagnosis experience

How did you get your diagnosis?

What was significant for you about your diagnosis experience and why?

What do you think this could mean for others with hepatitis C?

Did it make any difference that you were in/from a rural area?

Have any of your thoughts or beliefs about diagnosis changed over time?

How were you told of your diagnosis?

Did you have any support at the time?

What was your reaction like?

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Who did you share this with and why?

How much information were you given—was it too little or too much?

Were you able to understand it?

Did you feel you could ask for more information or clarification?

2. Your emotional experience

What have been emotional experiences for you in relation to living with hepatitis C, being diagnosed or clearing the virus?

What have been your experiences with managing other people's emotions in relation to your diagnoses?

What would you say to others about emotion as part of the journey of living with hepatitis C in a rural community?

How do you feel about your diagnosis now?

Do you feel better able to deal with your situation?

Have others been sympathetic to your circumstances?

Do you think there is a better understanding now compared with when you were first diagnosed?

What emotional supports did/do you have? What did/do you need?

3. Your support experience

Do/did you have support as someone with hepatitis C? And if so, how did this support come into your life?

What did the support relationship look like (professional, friend, sporadic, loving, judgmental, letters, etc)?

What were your beliefs about 'getting help'?

Have they changed over time?

What sort of help have you received?

Was it what you expected?

What suggestions would you have for others about being in supportive personal or professional relationships?

Was any person or any experience not supportive? And what do you think others would find useful to know about this?

Are you caring for someone with hep C? If so, what supports do you have or need?

Do you tell others that you care for someone with hep C?

What have been some reactions?

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4. Your information experience

Were there the things you felt you needed to know about?

What helped you to be motivated to learn more (or not)?

How easy was it for you to get information about hep C?

Was your GP/specialist your only source of information or did you approach anywhere else for information and support?

Did you get information that you found out later was insufficient or incorrect?

Did anyone else in your life have information needs? And if so, how was this managed?

5. Your treatment experience

What are your beliefs about treatment?

Have these changed over time?

Have other people's beliefs about treatment been important to you, or had an effect on you?

Have you undergone treatment? Why, why not?

If you have, what was your experience of: side effects, the impact on those around you, health professionals, employment, disclosure, support etc?

Were there any surprises to you along your journey of getting treatment? What might these surprises mean for others?

If you haven't had treatment, have you considered it?

What have you been told about treatment?

How did you get told this? Is that significant to you?

If you do want to get treatment, what do you think you will need that will help you make it happen?

6. Hepatitis C

What do you think about this virus?

What sort of a relationship do you have with hep C?

Has it changed over time?

What do others think of your relationship with hep C?

What are your hopes for your relationship with hep C?

Are there times you forget hep C exists?

When are you most comfortable with hep C? Are there any songs that remind you of hep C?

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Section 2

1. What do you want to share about your experience of living with hep C in a rural community?
2. How were you told of your diagnosis? What do you think about this? Do you have any suggestions about what could be helpful when telling someone their diagnosis?
3. Who were the people who helped you the most with your experience of living with hep C? When & how did they help you? What was that like for you? How do you imagine it was for them?
4. What was your experience like with health professionals (Doctors, Nurses, Health workers, etc)?

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8. What would you like to share to help others with hep C?

How to get “it” to us

You have several options available to share your experiences and are not limited to the written word.

For more information contact:

John McKiernan *Coordinator Education Program*

E-mail: john@hepccouncilsa.asn.au

Phone: 08 8362 8443 or 1300 437 222