

## **Factors influencing the health-related quality of life of people with chronic hepatitis B and C**

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One goal of health promotion is improved health-related quality of life (HRQoL) which was found to be affected in people with chronic hepatitis C (CHC) but is not well documented in people with chronic hepatitis B (CHB). This study explored and compared the impact of the variables received information and care (RIC), illness perceptions (IP), and stigma on HRQoL in people with CHB and CHC, with the aim to inform future health promotion requirements (for secondary care) and identify aspects which may differ between the two groups.

Participants were recruited mainly online. Of 77 retained participants (median age=48yrs), 46 were female, 20 had CHB, 56 were Caucasian and only 3 were Indigenous Australians. A self-report questionnaire was constructed comprising demographic questions and four scales assessing RIC, IP, stigma, and HRQoL.

No significant differences between CHB and CHC participants were found in HRQoL or IP, but CHB participants scored lower on RIC. RIC and IP were predictive of HRQoL, explaining 57.7% of the variance. A significant difference was found in HRQoL scores between the low- and high-stigma groups, and people with CHC were more likely to be in the high-stigma group than people with CHB.

People with CHB and CHC appear to enjoy similar levels of HRQoL but differ in satisfaction with RIC. Stigma seems to be a particularly important differentiating factor which may require separate consideration in future health promotion efforts. However, a more structured recruitment process is recommended for future research in order to obtain a more representative sample.