

1a. Does your party support a sensitive mass media campaign to educate the broader community about hepatitis C?

1b. Will your party commit to advocating within the new Parliament for adequate resourcing of a hepatitis C mass media campaign?

1A– The Greens support funding preventive health programs, including appropriate screening activities and healthy lifestyle education. We believe that the health needs of all Australians should be provided for without discrimination and with respect and equity. We support health-oriented education school and public education programs are an important preventative measure in reducing the rate of transmission of Hepatitis C.

1B – The Australian Greens believe that the basis for an effective health system must be based on adequately investing in primary health care and preventative health care, including health promotion, disease prevention and early intervention programs.

2a. Does your party support the expansion hepatitis C treatment access points to improve treatment uptake?

2b. Will your party commit to funding of clinical trials of different models of treatment for hepatitis C?

2A The Greens believe a well resourced public health system is the best means to deliver health services across Australia. We believe that everyone has the right to timely, high quality health care.

This includes a policy commitment to increase the number of well funded multipurpose community health care centres and services in regional, rural, and remote areas.

We would:-

- Reallocate the \$3.5 billion spent on private health insurance rebate to public health and hospitals (the government is currently putting this money into the private insurance companies and taking desperately needed funds out of the public health system)
- support measures, including legislation, to protect and extend the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.
- Increase incentives for GPs and medical specialists to bulk bill.

2B We support increased funding to health related research. The Greens' proposal for an Australian Drugs Policy Institute to undertake research trials and evaluation of policy and treatment programs would potentially encompass clinical trials into treatment models for Hepatitis C.

3a. Will your party support the development of a comprehensive National Hepatitis B Strategy and commencement of implementation by 2009?

3b. Will your party commit to the provision of adequate infrastructure within community organisations to facilitate their participation as partners in the development of the National Hepatitis B Strategy?

3A The Greens would introduce a National Health Care Strategy to provide a comprehensive, co-ordinated and properly evaluated approach to health care provision.

3B We support increasing the number of well funded multipurpose community health care centres and services, including in regional, rural, and remote areas. Our policy also seeks to review and implement effective measures to attract health professionals to rural and remote areas of the country to ensure that health programs can be readily accessed beyond the metropolitan centres

4a. Does your party support the provision of successfully proven harm reduction programs such as methadone and needle syringe programs?

4b. Will your party commit to advocating within the new Parliament for provision of funding incentives to the States & Territories to ensure expansion of access to needle syringe programs?

4A The Greens' drug policy is based on the principle of harm minimisation and on the best available international evidence. We believe that drug dependence should be treated as a health program – and that all policy responses to drug and other substance use issues are fully researched, co-ordinated and evaluated. We want to improve access to harm reduction programs by drug dependent people.

All harm minimisation programs should be scientifically-based, effective and subject to regular evaluation. Our policy approach is based on the premise that the provision of medical support to drug dependent people will result in their health suffering less due to their habit, that they will be less likely to resort to crime to support their habit, and that they will be more likely to access the support programs to assist overcoming their

addiction. We support needle exchange programs as a means to minimise transmission of diseases by sharing needles with infected drug users.

4B We would support any measures to invest in a comprehensive, evidenced-based policy program to reduce the harm done to drug users and the community due to substance use. Improving access to needle syringe programs would form part of a national harm minimisation plan.

5a. Will your party advocate within the new Parliament for the implementation of the Hepatitis C Prevention, Treatment and Care: Guidelines for Australian Custodial Settings?

5b. Does your party support the expansion of harm reduction programs to custodial settings?

5A The Greens believe that everyone – including prisoners – has the right to timely, high quality health care. This must include targeted preventative health care programs to reach particular sectors and groups in the community.

However, because these guidelines are not yet released, we are not able to indicate whether or not we would support the Advisory Council's guidelines until we have had the chance to appraise the contents of these guidelines.

5B Given the particular risk factors associated with custodial settings, we would support effective measures and programs to improve harm minimisation in this context.

6a. Will your party commit to advocating within Parliament for increased funds specifically targeting hepatitis C and hepatitis B research across all research streams (basic science, clinical, social, viral, and epidemiology)?

6A The establishment of an Australian Drugs Policy Institute to undertake research trials and evaluation of policy and treatment programs would determine the priority areas for funding.

7a. Will your party commit to on-going support to hepatitis community organisations for their work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities around viral hepatitis education and prevention programs?

7A The Greens recognise that Indigenous Australians are the most disadvantaged group in Australia, not least in rural and remote Australia.

Within a generation, we want to close the 17 year gap in life expectancy and bring equity of health and well-being between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. An effective health policy is critical to this objective.

The Greens will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and relevant agencies to deliver accessible, culturally-appropriate and community-controlled health services.

8a. Will your party commit to endorsing May 19th as World Hepatitis Day from 2008?

8b. Will your party commit to advocating within the new Parliament to specific additional funding for raising awareness of hepatitis B and C within Australia in association with World Hepatitis Day?

8A **Yes**

8B **Yes**