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Local hepatology partnership curing Hepatitis C in the community

Sunshine Coast University Hospital’s gastroenterology and hepatology department is helping cure hepatitis C sufferers in the Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay regions.

The Sunshine Coast Hepatitis C Partnership (supported by the Department of Health’s Clinical Excellence Division) is providing an innovative and rapid access service to patients across the two regions.

The Acting Clinical Director of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Dr Jonathan Mitchell said the community-based, nurse-led hepatitis C (HCV) clinic offered mobile fibroscan service to patients at multiple locations across the region. This simple, quick and painless test uses ultrasound to screen for liver disease by assessing the amount of HCV-related scarring in the liver.

“The scan is followed by a rapid decision on treatment through a multi-disciplinary team meeting run by hepatologists (liver specialists),” Dr Mitchell said.

“The amount of liver scarring influences the choice of treatment and the follow up required.”

“If necessary, treatment is prescribed by a specialist and is able to be monitored by the patient’s GP, with ongoing support from the Hepatology Partnership.

“It is great that patients are able to have their treatment initiated though this fantastic rapid access program, close to home.

“Patients can ask their GP to organise a referral into the service, or call our Hepatology Nurse about the program,” Dr Mitchell said.

Recent advances in medicine mean that in most cases, hepatitis C can now be successfully treated.

The project partnership is funded by the Queensland Health Integrated Care Innovation Fund (ICIF) and the Australian Centre For Health Services Innovation (AusHSI) until December 2018.

For more information call Clare (Hepatology Nurse) on 0408 405 440.

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Media contact: Angela Baldwin | 5470 5833

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