



Roundtables in Melbourne and Sydney on Hepatitis C

The House of Representatives Health Committee will hold public roundtable hearings for its inquiry into hepatitis C in Australia in Melbourne on 21 January 2015 and in Sydney on 22 January 2015.

The Committee will hear from several advocacy bodies, selected experts, pharmaceutical companies, Commonwealth health officials and people with lived experiences of hepatitis C.

Committee Chair Steve Irons MP said “this inquiry brings a renewed focus to a disease that is a major health challenge in Australia, as it is globally.”

Hepatitis C is a common cause of liver disease and cancer in Australia. It is estimated that 230 000 Australians live with a chronic hepatitis C infection and that in 2013 there were 630 liver-related deaths linked to hepatitis C.

“The roundtables will enable the Committee to learn more about the prevalence of hepatitis C in Australia, the options for treatment and what is like to live with disease. In addition, the roundtables provide a means for identifying which aspects of Australia’s past responses to hepatitis C have worked well, and where there may be room for improvement” Mr Irons said.

The Committee is investigating the disease’s prevalence, the early testing and treatment options, and the short- and long-term costs associated with treatment.

Methods to improve prevention of new hepatitis C infections, as well as methods to reduce the stigma associated with a positive diagnosis, are also key areas of focus for this inquiry.

Details of the hearings are as follows:

Wednesday, 21 January 2015 – 9.00am to 3.00pm
Legislative Council Committee Room, Parliament of Victoria, Spring St, Melbourne

Thursday, 22 January 2015 – 9.00am to 3.30pm
Ionic Room, Sydney Masonic Centre, 66 Goulburn St, Sydney

The hearings will be broadcast live (audio only) at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/live>

Detailed programs and further information about the inquiry, including the terms of reference, are available at: www.aph.gov.au/hepatitisc

For media comment please contact the office of Mr Steve Irons MP on (08) 9355 0099.
For all other enquiries, please contact the committee secretariat by phone on (02) 6277 4145 or visit the committee’s website: www.aph.gov.au/health.