World Hepatitis Day
Scotland
Monday July 28th
2014
Campaign Pack
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Introduction

World Hepatitis Day takes place every year on July 28th. Last year in Scotland saw the launch of the ‘Big Red C’ campaign which sought to raise awareness of Hepatitis C in Scotland. Four seven feet tall red C’s were constructed as the centre pieces of the campaign and were displayed in various locations throughout Glasgow, Edinburgh, Lanarkshire, Dundee and Aberdeen. Supplementing the Big Red C’s was an advertising campaign featuring a red C and the taglines ‘Ever injected? Get tested’ and ‘Hep C. It can be cured’. Advertisements appeared on bus sides and in the form of mirror stickers in pub washrooms across these locations in Scotland.

A campaign website, [www.hepscot.org](http://www.hepscot.org), was created with links to Hepatitis C services and information as well as a text back service informing people of the same. A twitter hashtag of #hepscot was used throughout the campaign and Hepatitis Scotland used some paid advertisements on Facebook to further increase awareness of the campaign.

The launch of the campaign took place in Glasgow and was covered by both national and regional media outlets including T.V, radio, newspapers and websites of the same. This featured all 4 Big Red C’s and a bus with the campaign advertisement emblazoned across the side. Over four thousand campaign leaflets were distributed to members of the public during Big Red C display days by volunteers and staff from both the third sector and NHS.

2013 also saw a rerun of the national ‘healthy living with Hepatitis C’ event at Scotstoun Leisure Centre in Glasgow. As in previous years this featured a five a side tournament and badminton doubles tournament, as well as relaxation and stress management workshops, open mic music, face painting, a bouncy castle, outdoor BBQ and mobile crèche. A Big Red C was on display, campaign leaflets were handed out and community action research was carried out by the National Patient Forum, supported by Hepatitis Scotland and the Hepatitis C trust. The event was also covered in the Glasgow Evening Times.

The Big Red C campaign is set to run again in 2014 with some changes. This document explains what will be happening in 2014 and presents ideas how you or your services can participate in raising awareness about Hepatitis C around World Hepatitis Day. In the absence of a national event due to the Commonwealth Games, it also provides all of the relevant contact information and campaign materials available to support any activities or events you may like to run locally, including websites and social media information.
Outcomes of the campaign

The outcomes of the Big Red C Scottish World Hepatitis Day campaign are aligned with the outcomes for Hepatitis C in the Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Framework 2011-2015. Specifically:

Outcome 1: Fewer newly acquired HCV infections

- Awareness raising campaign advertisements will be targeted specifically at high prevalence areas of participating health board areas, where injecting drug use is more prevalent
- Calls to action to access Hepatitis C testing and treatment, emphasising that treatments are getting more tolerable and shorter. More people completing treatment and being cured means fewer new infections are acquired.

Outcome 2: A reduction in health inequalities associated with Hepatitis C

- Reducing the number of Hepatitis C infected people who are not engaged in care
- Targeted campaign to increase testing
- Informing people about Hepatitis C treatment

Outcome 3: People affected by Hepatitis C lead longer, happier lives

- People have increased knowledge and are empowered to make healthy lifestyle choices
- As there are still significant numbers undiagnosed the awareness campaign may encourage those who have previously injected drugs to consider accessing testing.
- Informing people about improving Hepatitis C treatments will encourage people to access testing and treatment

Outcome 5: A society whereby the attitudes of individuals, the public, professionals and the media in Scotland towards Hepatitis C are positive, non-stigmatising and supportive

- Wide ranging media, press, social media and face to face public interaction and events across Scotland will help to increase the awareness of the general public, professionals and the media in Scotland of Hepatitis C, helping to foster positive, non stigmatising and supportive attitudes
- Marketing messages will encourage people to talk or think about viral hepatitis and emphasise that it is a curable illness. The tagline of ‘Hep C. It can be cured’ was particularly well evaluated from 2013.
Big Red C displays

The 4 Big Red C’s are available to put on display in various locations throughout your local area. Displays will commence on the week beginning the 7th of July through to Monday, July 28th – World Hepatitis Day. They are a good way of generating local media interest (particularly local newspapers) and provide good photo opportunities. During any display of the Big Red C, it should be manned by 2 volunteers/staff who should be on hand to give out campaign leaflets and speak with members of the public in order to raise awareness of World Hepatitis Day itself and hepatitis C.

Whilst this is the main function of these displays you are free to think of other ways of raising awareness of Hepatitis C using the big red C. Displaying them at events (for example recovery/harm reduction cafes) may be another good way of raising awareness of Hepatitis C. Hepatitis Scotland and partners in the third sector and NHS will be endeavour to support any ideas you have.

The ‘Ever injected? Get tested’ advertising campaign will be focussed on areas of high deprivation, due to the correlation with poverty and social issues such as injecting drug use which is the main cause of Hepatitis C infection in Scotland. However, this campaign also aims to raise awareness of Hepatitis C among the general public to tackle stigma around Hepatitis C. As such displays needn’t only take place in areas of high deprivation.

Below are examples of locations the Big Red C’s were displayed in 2013:

- City centre streets, particularly shopping streets (e.g. Buchanan St, Argyle St in Glasgow)
- Town squares (e.g. Paisley)
- Hospitals
- Outside supermarkets (e.g. ASDA stores in Lanarkshire and Glasgow)
- National World Hepatitis Day event at Scotstoun Leisure Centre
- Drug and alcohol services

Other potential locations could include:

- Inside shopping centres
- Places of worship
- Community centres
- Train stations/bus stations

You may be able to think of other locations where the Big Red C could be displayed. Campaign leaflets can be ordered through your local Managed Care Network (see contacts) or Hepatitis Scotland. You’re local Managed Care Network/voluntary sector contact will also be able to provide you with a 1 page leaflet with local contact details for Hepatitis C testing.
Display permissions
Depending on where you want to display a Big Red C you may have to apply for permission first. For displays in public spaces such as city streets, squares and parks you need to apply to your local council. Depending on your council there may be a fee involved.

To display a C outside of supermarkets or in shopping centres you will need to ask permission of the store or centre management. Hepatitis Scotland will be able to provide some support in gaining permissions.

Transporting the C's
The Big Red C's are 7 feet tall and weigh 45kg. This means that in order to transport them a van, trailer, or other large vehicle will be required. If you have questions on the transportation of a Big Red C to a venue where you would like to display it, contact Hepatitis Scotland.

Scheduling
Hepatitis Scotland will be drawing up a schedule of where each of the 4 Big Red C's is being displayed from day to day, including the locations they are being stored in between. This will be uploaded to the www.hepcscot.org website, or contact Hepatitis Scotland. You can refer to this when deciding whether you’d like to have a Big Red C on display at some location or event. This also allows for a social media stream tracking the Big Red C’s as they appear across the country.

Social Media
When displaying a Big Red C at an event or carrying out a display in public, be sure to take photographs of the C and staff and volunteers manning it for social media. If you are taking photographs of members of the public make sure you get their permission first. For campaign Twitter hashtags and other social media details refer to the social media section of this document.

Media and press
Display of the Big Red C's is a good photo opportunity and local newspapers tend to be interested. Hepatitis Scotland and partners will develop a national press release which will be sent out on World Hepatitis Day and from this, they will create a template press release that can easily be adapted for your health board area when the Big C is on display. The template press release will be sent to the MCN representative for each health board involved in the campaign so they can distribute it to their communications team.

Health and Safety
The Big Red C’s are aluminium and weigh 45kg and are 7 feet tall by 1 foot wide. They come with a detachable wooden base. Be sure that when you are lifting or loading the C that you observe normal health and safety practise. They usually require two people to lift or move.
Local events

You may be planning to hold a local event around or on World Hepatitis Day or you may like to organise a local event on or around World Hepatitis Day. If so you will be able to access Big Red C campaign resources and support.

Ideas for events you could organise include:

- A family fun day (national event 2013 and local event in Fife 2013)
- A Hepatitis C conversation cafe
- Sports events (themed along the lines of the Commonwealth Games)
- Fundraising event for local Hepatitis C service

If you have any other ideas for events you might like to run, let us know about it and we can discuss how we can provide support and be involved. Hepatitis Scotland will be keeping a schedule of events happening across Scotland on our events calendar. You will be able to view the Hepatitis Scotland events calendar from the campaign website www.hepcscot.org or at http://www.hepatitisscotland.org.uk/latest-news-and-events/.

What can be provided in support of your event?
Depending on availability or capacity, we may be able to support you with the following:

- Big Red C campaign leaflets and posters
- One of the 4 Big Red C’s
- Staff and volunteers
- Media, press and communications support
- Consultation on event

Please refer to the contacts section of this document for local third sector and NHS contacts when seeking support for your events.

Training
In order to help raise awareness of Hepatitis C around World Hepatitis Day, you may wish to book in training for people who use your service or for your staff. Where there is a Hepatitis C community service in your local area you may be able to book with them. Alternatively you can contact Hepatitis Scotland to enquire about available training dates.
Social Media Use

This year’s World Hepatitis Day campaign will seek to make good use of social media in order to raise awareness of Hepatitis C among the general public. A campaign Facebook page has now been created which can be followed from the link below. Please ‘like’ the campaign page. Hepatitis Scotland will also be releasing blog posts in the weeks leading up to World Hepatitis Day from our blog which you can follow at the link below. The campaign also has a Twitter hashtag which can be followed below with explanations of how each one is intended to be used*.

Social Media details

- [https://www.facebook.com/hepcscot](https://www.facebook.com/hepcscot)
- [http://hepatitisscotland.wordpress.com](http://hepatitisscotland.wordpress.com)
- Twitter #hepCscot – for general use for any aspect of the campaign, including asking questions, seeking information, discussion, referral to services etc as well as posting media articles, posting photographs

Supporting the Campaign on Facebook

You can help to support the campaign on Facebook by liking the campaign Facebook page, liking posts on the campaign Facebook page and sharing posts on the Facebook page. You can do this both as an organisation and on any personal account you may have. The more likes the page has and the more likes and shares the page has, the greater the audience for these posts. Even where people don’t read these posts, seeing these on their timeline serves to raise consciousness of the campaign which may then be recognised through other media including bus and washroom advertisements.

Supporting the campaign on Twitter

You can help to support the campaign on Twitter by using the Twitter hashtag listed above, retweeting Tweets featuring the hashtag and favouriting Tweets featuring the hashtag. Again you can do this both as an organisation and using your personal Twitter accounts for the same reasons as detailed above. The more widely the hashtag are used the more likely they are to have a chance of trending in Scotland around the time of the campaign – again meaning a greater general awareness raising.

Changing your profile photograph on World Hepatitis Day

In order to further raise awareness, you could also change your organisational and personal Facebook and Twitter profile photograph to the World Hepatitis Day or ‘Hep C. It can be cured’ logo, on Monday July 28th. Please encourage staff and service users to do this on July 28th.
Leaflets and Posters

Campaign leaflets and posters are available and can be ordered through your local Hepatitis C Managed Care Network. If you would like to make an order please refer to the contacts section of this document. Should they run out or not have any available then you can order direct from Hepatitis Scotland. Leaflets are wallet sized fold outs with basic information about Hepatitis C transmission, testing and treatment as well as contact details and details of the campaign website where people can access information on services across Scotland.

Posters are available in A4 or A3 size and contain campaign slogans and a link to the campaign website. They are primarily for display in hospitals, community settings and services etc.

Content of posters
This year posters will contain 2 slogans specifically targeted at segmented population groups with different calls to action. This allows you to choose a slogan which better fits your client group. You can order posters with the following taglines/calls to action.

- ‘Ever injected? Get tested’ and ‘Hep C. It can be cured’.
- ‘See it, treat it, beat it’ and ‘Hep C. It can be cured.’

Content of leaflets
Front covers of the leaflets feature the slogan ‘See it, treat it, beat it’ and the content features basic Hepatitis C information on risks, testing and treatment with contact details on the back cover.

Monitoring and Evaluation

You can help us to achieve the outcomes of this campaign by doing some monitoring and evaluation of any activities you take part in or organise for which you use ‘Big Red C’ campaign materials. This pack includes monitoring forms for the following:

- Big Red C display shifts
- Events
- Campaign evaluation
- Hep C training evaluation

These monitoring forms should be returned to Hepatitis Scotland and will assist in writing the post campaign report.
## Contacts by Health Board Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Healthboard</th>
<th>MCN Contact Details</th>
<th>Voluntary Sector Contacts</th>
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</table>
| Ayrshire and Arran| Zoe Kelly or Tina McMichael:  
|                   | [zoe.kelly@aaaht.scot.nhs.uk; tina.mcmichael@aapct.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:zoe.kelly@aaaht.scot.nhs.uk; tina.mcmichael@aapct.scot.nhs.uk) | Hepatitis Scotland  
|                   | 0141 225 0419                                                |                           |
| Borders           | Julie Murray:  
|                   | [julie.murray@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:julie.murray@borders.scot.nhs.uk) | Hepatitis Scotland  
|                   | 0141 225 0419                                                |                           |
| Fife              | John Taylor:  
|                   | [john.taylor9@nhs.net](mailto:john.taylor9@nhs.net)         | Hepatitis Scotland  
|                   | 0141 225 0419                                                |                           |
| GGC               | Joe Schofield:  
|                   | [Joe.Schofield@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Joe.Schofield@ggc.scot.nhs.uk) | David Barbour, Hepatitis Scotland:  
|                   |                                                             | [david@hepatitisscotland.org.uk](mailto:david@hepatitisscotland.org.uk), 0141 225 0419  
|                   |                                                             | Leon Wylie, Hepatitis Scotland:  
|                   |                                                             | [leon@hepatitisscotland.org.uk](mailto:leon@hepatitisscotland.org.uk), 0141 225 0419  
|                   |                                                             | Or David Cameron, Waverley Care:  
|                   |                                                             | [David.Cameron@waverleycare.org](mailto:David.Cameron@waverleycare.org)  
|                   |                                                             | 0141 332 2520  
|                   |                                                             | [David.Cameron@waverleycare.org](mailto:David.Cameron@waverleycare.org)  
| Highland          | Trish Tougher:  
|                   | [Trish.Tougher@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Trish.Tougher@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk) | Marc Simpson, Positive Action:  
|                   |                                                             | [M.Simpson@addaction.org.uk](mailto:M.Simpson@addaction.org.uk)  
| Lanarkshire       | Penny Gillies:  
|                   | [penny.gillies@nhs.net](mailto:penny.gillies@nhs.net)       | Hepatitis Scotland  
|                   | 0141 225 0419                                                |                           |
| Grampian          | Hilda Stiven:  
|                   | [Hilda.Stiven@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Hilda.Stiven@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk) | Rhona Bythell, Waverley Care:  
|                   |                                                             | [Rhona.Bythell@waverleycare.org](mailto:Rhona.Bythell@waverleycare.org)  
|                   |                                                             | Matt Straw, Positive Help:  
|                   |                                                             | [mattstraw@positivehelpedinburgh.co.uk](mailto:mattstraw@positivehelpedinburgh.co.uk)  
|                   |                                                             | Jeannette Hepburn, C-Plus:  
|                   |                                                             | [Jeannette.Hepburn@nhs.net](mailto:Jeannette.Hepburn@nhs.net)  
| Lothian           | Donna Thain:  
|                   | [donnathain@nhs.net](mailto:donnathain@nhs.net)             | Hepatitis Scotland  
|                   | 0141 225 0419                                                |                           |
| Tayside           | Ann Mcgregor or Joe Hamill:  
|                   | [ann.mcgregor@nhs.net; joseph.hamill@nhs.net](mailto:ann.mcgregor@nhs.net; joseph.hamill@nhs.net) | Hepatitis Scotland  
|                   | 0141 225 0419                                                |                           |
| Western Isles     | Andrea Crossan:  
|                   | [andrea.crossan@nhs.net](mailto:andrea.crossan@nhs.net)     | Hepatitis Scotland  
|                   | 0141 225 0419                                                |                           |
| Dumfries and Galloway | Wendy Hatrikk:  
|                   | [wendi.hatrikk@nhs.net](mailto:wendi.hatrikk@nhs.net)      | Hepatitis Scotland  
|                   | 0141 225 0419                                                |                           |
Main contacts at Hepatitis Scotland

Please use local contacts as directed in each section of the document where possible. Hepatitis Scotland is the main contact organisation for the Big Red C campaign. If you experience any difficulty in contacting your local contact; should you wish to submit evaluation forms; should you be seeking third sector support for any event or activity; or if you have general questions about any aspect of the Big Red C campaign, you can contact:

David Barbour
Information and Communications Officer
Hepatitis Scotland
91 Mitchell Street
Glasgow
G1 3LN

0141 225 0419
david@hepatitisscotland.org.uk

If you are seeking a Hepatitis C training session for your organisation or service users and there is not a local Hepatitis C service in your area, contact:

Graham Mackintosh
(Address and telephone same as above)
graham@hepatitisscotland.org.uk
How to run a Hepatitis C conversation cafe

Among local events you may wish to consider is a Hepatitis C conversation cafe. You may be part of an organisation which already runs harm reduction or recovery cafes or coffee mornings. Alternatively you may wish to run a one off conversation cafe around World Hepatitis Day.

Planning

If you have space within your organisation you can organise a Hepatitis C conversation cafe with limited effort. If you don’t then you may have to source a venue. Consider contacting partner organisations to offer you space free of charge. Speak with local contacts in this document to see if they can recommend a venue.

Have a named contact to deal with registrations and enquiries. Advertise the event by creating publicity materials and circulating them as widely as you can, including making use of social media.

Contact Hepatitis Scotland and inform them of when you will be holding the event. The event and any publicity materials will be uploaded to the Hepatitis Scotland events calendar, which is accessible through the www.hepcscot.org website as well as via www.hepatitisscotland.org.uk. Hepatitis Scotland and local partner organisations as well as NHS contacts will be happy to help in promoting your event.

Event Format

You can decide on the exact format of the event within your own organisation, including whether you facilitate discussion or bring in staff from a local service or NHS. However, you may wish to consider the conversation cafe format. This would see attendees split into separate tables, chaired by either a staff member or participant, each with a separate discussion topic. People move around the tables every 20 minutes (less/more). You can choose your own discussion topics, perhaps informed by what participants would like to talk about, but consider discussion topics which fit with the Sexual Health and BBV Framework outcomes for Hepatitis C.

Examples may include:

- Should people start treatment: The benefits of Hepatitis C treatment
- Hepatitis C and stigma: attitudes about Hepatitis C and injecting drug use
- Living a healthy life with Hepatitis C
- Why don’t people access testing or why don’t people access treatment

Feel free to come up with your own or use a variation on the examples above.

Discussions can be recorded by facilitators on flip charts and then written up in a report on the conversation cafes. Reports on these conversation cafes should then be sent to Hepatitis Scotland for inclusion in a national report on World Hepatitis Day in Scotland.

You can find tips on how to make your Hepatitis C conversation cafe as interesting as possible on the HarmReduction Cafe website at the following link.

http://harmreductioncafe.com/index.php/howto/successfulmeeting
Organising an event
You may want to organise Hepatitis C conversation cafe in partnership with other organisations or on your own. Individuals such as Hepatitis C patients may also want to organise a Hepatitis C conversation cafe.

Hepatitis Scotland may be able to offer advice and support on this. Alternatively contact your named local service using the contacts page of this document.

Costs
If you don’t have your own venue, try working with local partners to stage a Hepatitis C conversation cafe and pool resources to find a suitable venue and to pay for any catering or resources you may require. Depending on the facilities you are able to use, you may have to adapt the format.

Catering
If the event takes place in the evening people will need to eat. If you are unable to provide catering for any reason this should be clearly stated to people who register to attend and/or through publicity materials. There may be an issue for some stakeholders about hosting a cafe on licensed premises. This should be considered in the planning process.

Marketing and Attendance
You should promote your conversation cafe using local third sector and NHS contacts. They will be happy to promote all local events taking place around World Hepatitis Day. Hepatitis Scotland is the main communications point for World Hepatitis Day events across Scotland. Please inform Hepatitis Scotland and all events and publicity materials will be uploaded to the Hepatitis Scotland events calendar which will be accessible through the campaign website www.hepcscot.org.

Outputs and Outcomes
Hepatitis C conversation cafes are a great way of helping to raise awareness of issues around Hepatitis C, and of supporting the national campaign. They enable us to increase understanding of issues around Hepatitis C, ensure that people are empowered to make informed decisions on testing and treatment, increase awareness of local and national support services and help to reduce stigma associated with Hepatitis C.

They also provide an excellent opportunity for capturing information and data which can then be used to inform local and national priorities, decision making and care.

This kind of cafe is common in the field of harm reduction and drugs. You may find it useful to visit http://harmreductioncafe.com/ for further ideas or to contact Hepatitis Scotland.
Family Fun Day event
You may wish to consider running a family fun day event on or around World Hepatitis Day in your local area. In 2012 and 2013 a national family fun day event took place in Glasgow at Scotstoun Leisure Centre and was attended by around 200 people both years – mainly Hepatitis C patients, people from Hepatitis C and drug and alcohol services, and people from homeless or other related services.

You could consider repeating the theme of ‘Living a healthy life with Hepatitis C’ or you may want to adopt your own theme. Under the theme of healthy living with Hepatitis C the following activities took place in 2012 and 2013:

- A five aside football tournament
- A badminton doubles tournament
- Relaxation and stress management workshops
- Massage

Entertainment on the day for children and adults included:

- A bouncy castle
- Face painting
- Open mic music
- A prize raffle draw
- An outdoor BBQ

Mobile crèche facilities were also provided.

The event also provided a useful focus for other activities such as distributing campaign leaflets, talking to people about Hepatitis C, displaying a Big Red C and providing an opportunity for media coverage. In 2013 the event was also used to conduct a piece of community action research. This research was devised and conducted by representatives of the National Patient Forum and supported by Hepatitis Scotland and the Hepatitis C Trust.

If you think you might like to use volunteers to conduct research on Hepatitis C awareness in your area contact Hepatitis Scotland for support.

Costs
Organising a fun day event doesn’t need to be costly. If your funds are limited you could think of fun activities that families can participate in which don’t require any hire or purchase. However, if you wish to stage something larger scale, you could consider working together with other local services and pooling resources.

If you would like any guidance or advice on running a family fun day event you can also contact Hepatitis Scotland.
# Big Red C – Shift Overview

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Time Started</th>
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**Location**

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Estimated – How many people did you speak with today?

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Estimated - How many leaflets handed out?

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Any problems / issues

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Topics covered

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Any other Comments

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## Event Monitoring Form

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**Location**

**Event Name**

**Estimated – How many people attended**

**Estimated - How many leaflets handed out?**

**Summary of activities**

**Any problems/issues**

**Any other Comments**
1. Have you noticed any bus advertisements regarding Hepatitis C recently? If so do you remember what they said? Were the adverts inside busses or on the outside? Where were you? (which town or city)

2. Have you noticed any posters or leaflets regarding Hepatitis C in places you have visited recently? E.g. GP surgeries, dentists, pharmacies, hospitals

3. Have you noticed any newspaper articles (either printed or online) or T.V news items regarding Hepatitis C recently? If so do you remember what they were about?

4. Have you noticed any social media advertisements, posts or updates regarding Hepatitis C or World Hepatitis Day? If so do you remember a ‘Big Red C’ or any particular wording?

5. Did you notice any of your friends change their Facebook or Twitter profile photo to either the World Hepatitis Day or ‘Hep C. It can be cured’ logo?

Big red C display public engagement

This section provides a small selection of possible conversation starters for engaging members of the public during a Big Red C display shift where you are handing out leaflets. The list is not exhaustive and you may find that with experience you discover your own equally effective way of starting a conversation.

It may be a good idea not to mention money at all, even to say we are not looking for money because that’s usually the first thing someone who is looking for money would say. Only mention it if someone tries to dodge the conversation by saying they have no money.

Always be polite and respectful. If someone doesn’t want to engage then don’t pursue them. Generally speaking, in 2013 volunteers found that handing leaflets out was a good way to start a conversation with people.

The following examples are conversation starters that were used effectively during display dates in 2013. Some of these questions could also be used as follow up questions.

‘Hi. We’re raising awareness of Hepatitis C for World Hepatitis Day on July 28th. Have you heard of Hepatitis C?’

‘Have you heard of Hepatitis C?’

‘Hi. We’re asking people to guess what our big red C stands for. What do you think it stands for?’

‘What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear Hepatitis C?’

‘Did you know that July 28th is World Hepatitis Day?’

‘If you knew someone who was at risk of Hepatitis C, would you know where they could get tested?’

‘What do you think causes Hepatitis C?’

‘This represents a virus which 38,000 people in Scotland currently have? Can you guess what it is?’
Big Red C display – Hepatitis C factsheet

What is Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is a blood borne virus which causes liver damage, in some cases leading to fibrosis, cirrhosis or liver cancer. An estimated 38,000 people in Scotland are living with Hepatitis C and around 18,000 don’t know they have it.

How is Hepatitis C transmitted?

Hepatitis C is transmitted by blood to blood contact. This means to become infected, your blood has to come into contact with the blood of someone who is infected. A person may be at risk from Hepatitis C who:

- Has ever injected or snorted drugs in the past (including anabolic steroids) using shared equipment, however long ago, even if this was only once or twice
- Has had a blood transfusion in the UK before September 1991
- Has received any blood products before 1987 in Scotland (before 1986 in England)
- Has been the recipient of an organ/tissue transplant in the UK before 1982
- Has ever received medical or dental treatment in countries where infection control may be poor
- Is the child of a mother with Hepatitis C
- Is a regular sexual partner/household contact of someone with Hepatitis C
- Has been accidentally exposed to blood where there is a risk of transmission of Hepatitis C (eg. healthcare worker with a needlestick injury)
- Has had tattoos, piercings, acupuncture or electrolysis where infection control procedures are poor
- Is infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- Is a migrant from a country with a medium or high prevalence of Hepatitis C

How do I know if I have Hepatitis C?

There are no symptoms of Hepatitis C until the disease is in its’ later stages, often many years after infection. The only way to know if you have it is to get tested. If you think you have been at risk, you can be tested at your GP, local sexual health clinic and at certain voluntary sector organisations.

Is there treatment?

Hepatitis C treatment is available which can cure the virus. This treatment is pegylated interferon and ribavirin which can cause some unpleasant side effects. New treatments are due to become available in late 2014 for some forms of the virus which will mean shorter length of treatment and with much less side effects, with a higher chance you will be cured. Other new treatments are due to be available in 2015 which may eventually mean you do not need to take interferon – the main cause of negative side effects.
Social Media Profile pictures for July 28th

WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

HepC
It can be cured