

HEAD-START DELHI

The Hepatitis C Elimination through Access to Diagnostics (HEAD-Start)* project in Delhi, India aims to enhance hepatitis C diagnosis and treatment pathways by introducing a simplified and near-patient diagnostic and care pathway starting from screening to sustained virologic response (SVR), within public health settings. It specifically highlights that access to hepatitis C virus (HCV) screening tests, confirmatory tests, treatment and SVR tests is possible under one roof.

THIS SHORT VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS HOW DECENTRALIZED APPROACHES USED AS A PART OF HEAD-START DELHI HELPED REACH THE GENERAL POPULATION.

"I received free hepatitis C diagnosis and treatment. They first took blood from my finger and then from my arm. After my diagnosis was confirmed, in 2-3 days my treatment was started. I've come to collect my last dose of medicines, I am feeling a lot better. I have started eating well again."

– Lata



In Delhi, HEAD-Start has introduced decentralized HCV screening by incorporating rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) using the method of whole blood finger prick test (WBFPT) in 15 polyclinics (primary health care centres) and 5 hospitals (secondary care centres).

The video will take you on HEAD-Start's hepatitis C diagnosis pathway in Delhi. At the polyclinics, patients found to be HCV antibody positive (Ab+) are referred to one

of the 5 participating hospitals. At these 5 hospitals, a blood sample is collected from HCV Ab+ patients and transported to the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) for an HCV RNA or confirmatory test. Results of the RNA test are communicated electronically to hospitals. Patients who are HCV RNA+ are initiated on direct-acting antivirals (DAAs) for treatment of hepatitis C infection. Patients who are found to have cirrhosis or other complications are referred to ILBS for further evaluation and management.

** HEAD-Start project is led by FIND and supported by Unitaïd. The project is establishing innovative models for screening and treatment for HCV across 4 countries: Georgia, India, Malaysia and Myanmar. In Delhi the project is implemented in partnership with Institute of Liver & Biliary Studies (ILBS) and is supported by the government of NCT of Delhi.*

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