

AUSTRALIA: New Hepatitis C Treatment Available in Australia

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The new hepatitis C drug Victrelis (boceprevir) recently won approval by Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration. Scientists report the protease inhibitor is effective against hepatitis C genotype 1.

"In the last 10 years, there has been little development in the availability of treatments for hepatitis C, and a significant proportion of patients fail to respond to current standard of care," said a statement from Professor Geoff McCaughan, director of the AW Morrow Gastroenterology and Liver Center in Sydney. "Victrelis is an approved treatment that works directly on the hepatitis C virus and prevents it from replicating and therefore reproducing." An estimated 200,000 Australians are infected with hepatitis C, and 20,000 new cases are reported each year. "Hepatitis C is a huge burden for individuals and is still very heavily stigmatized, and having another new treatment option marks progress in the management of patients with the disease," said McCaughan.

At its meeting in March, the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Committee is set to consider whether to list the drug.

[See the topic on aegis.org](http://aegis.org)