

Hepatitis C Aware Project

Hepatitis C Survey Responses and Poster Campaigns

Nova Scotia Northern Region

2010-2011

Report

Table of Contents

Overview	3
Opportunity for Education	4
Age Range of Survey Participants	4
Respondents by Gender	5
Overview	6
Survey Responses.....	6
Ballot Responses	6
Number of Correct Responses By Age Category and Gender	7
Geographical Origin	9
Blues Festival Background	10
Conclusion.....	11
Appendix	12
Appendix "A"	13

Overview

An awareness campaign was done in the northern regions of Nova Scotia (Colchester, Cumberland East Hants and Pictou counties). These were conducted at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition (NSPE), the Dutch Mason Blues Festivals as well as the New Glasgow Jubilee during the month of August. Posters were placed in the port - a - potties at the Dutch Mason Blues Festivals as well as the NSPE. Posters were also placed in the washrooms of all the buildings at the NSPE. A short six question survey to determine the public's general knowledge of Hep C was conducted at the New Glasgow Youth Jubilee and Blues as well as at the NSPE.

This slimmed down survey was based on a longer survey that we used that was loosely based on the "Street Survey" constructed by **Sastre, M et al (2006)**.¹ We also took note of questions that seemed to be frequently asked at previous events by members of the general public as well as specific target populations of this project over the last year. This provided the survey gatherers with an idea of the areas that seem to be the most misconstrued by the general population. A copy of the survey that was used has been attached in the appendix.

Surveys one day of a three day event in New Glasgow were collected. We chose the youth and blues day hoping to reach a specific targeted population. In New Glasgow there were 47 completed surveys. The NSPE was conducted over a longer period of time and took in a broader population. Most of the individuals staffing vendors/display tables were more than willing to complete the surveys if they were dropped off and collected by the end of the day. There were 128 surveys completed at this event.

The people at the NSPE upon completion of the survey were given a ballot to enter into a draw for a Hep "C" t-shirt, a ScotiaBank AIDS Walk T-shirt, a reusable Hep C cloth bag for shopping and a few other Hep C products. The ballot asked them to **"Name one new thing that they learned about Hep C."** The three answers that generated the most comments were.

- That they didn't realize just how strong the virus was. That it could live outside the body for so long even in dry blood.
- That there was no vaccine for Hep C, even though they knew about Twinrex™ and just figured that it was for everything.
- That it was possible to get Hep C by sharing personal belongings such as toothbrushes, razors, and fingernail clippers.

There were four spoiled ballots at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition and zero spoiled ballots at the New Glasgow Jubilee. Spoiled ballots did not have gender, and age indicated on them so they could not be used in analyzing the information for demographic purposes. The results of those surveys are as follows-two, two, three and five out of six. The ones that did indicate a postal code were however used for demographic purpose.

¹ **Changes in French people's misconceptions about Hepatitis C. 1997-2003. Preventive Medicine, (2). 150-153,**

Opportunity for Education

When the surveys were completed the majority of the participants wanted to know how well they did. This is the perfect time to educate them on the questions that they had wrong or were not sure of. This also gives them the chance to ask questions or to get some clarification on something they may not have been sure of but guess and guessed correctly. There were very few who do not want to know how they did. The majority of the participants were very receptive towards this learning opportunity.

Age Range of Survey Participants

Survey participants were grouped into age spans of ten years. There were more female than male participation in the **“Less and Twenty Years”** category at both events. In New Glasgow the rest of the age groups had an even amount of participants. However, when you look at the exhibition there are more females between the 20 to 40 age group than the 41 to over 60. In the males category there are more over 60, but the 20 to 60 age groups for males are evenly distributed. At both events there are more female than males that participated in the surveys. The following tables give a breakdown of the demographics of the two events.

NSPE

AGE

	Female	%	Male	%
Less than 20 years	32	36%	10	26%
20-30	13	14%	4	11%
31-40	15	17%	3	8%
41-50	9	10%	4	11%
51-60	8	9%	4	11%
60 +	9	10%	12	32%
No Age Indicated	4	4%	1	3%
Total	90	100%	38	100%

Ratio M/F

		%
Male	38	29%
Female	90	68%
Not Completed	4	3%
Total	132	100%

NGJ

AGE

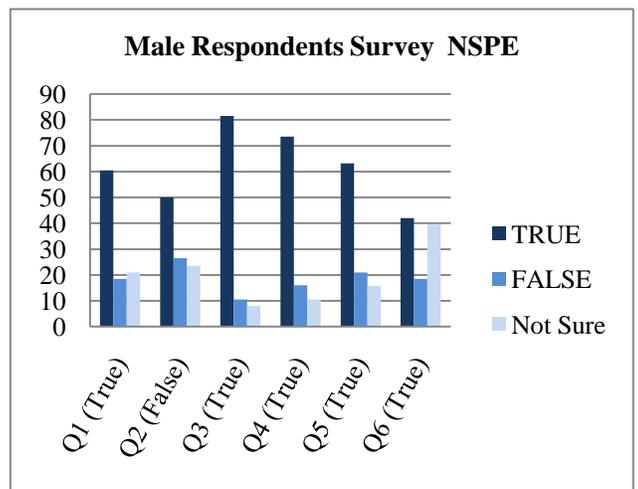
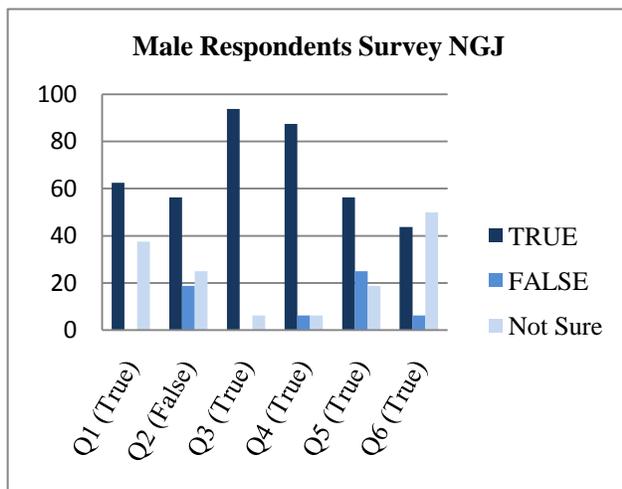
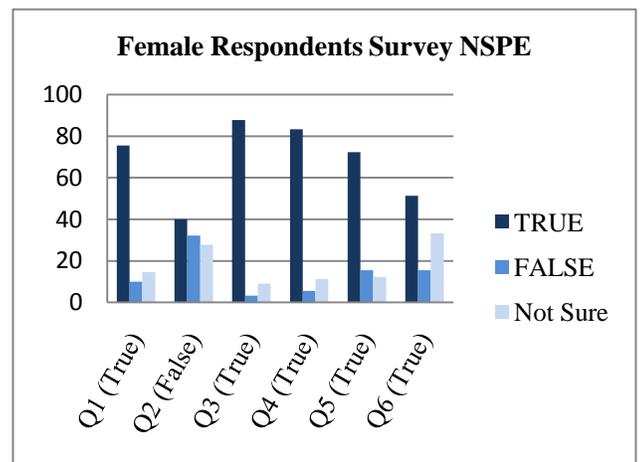
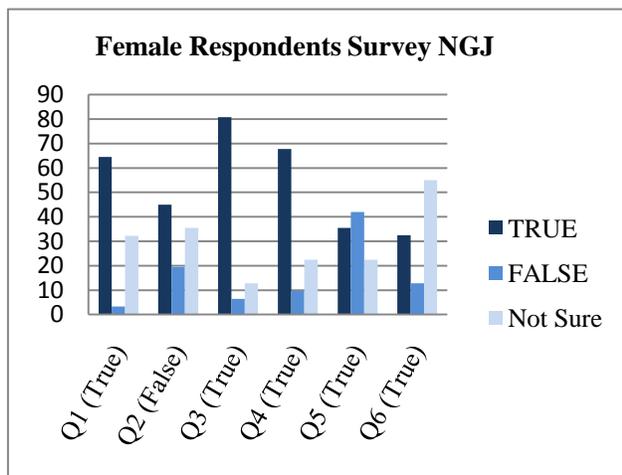
	Female	%	Male	%
Less than 20 years	13	42%	8	50%
20-30	0	13%	0	0%
31-40	2	13%	2	13%
41-50	4	10%	4	25%
51-60	1	16%	1	6%
60 +	1	6%	1	6%
Not Indicated	0	0%	0	0%
Total	31	100%	16	100%

Ratio M/F

		%
Male	16	34%
Female	31	66%
Not Completed	0	0%
Total	47	100%

Respondents by Gender

When looking at the overall breakdown of the two events the **males got more correct response than the females at the New Glasgow Jubilee**, but the **females and males at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition both answered the same number of questions correctly**. The following four charts show the different age groups of both events divided into female and male responses. The percentages of true, false and not sure responses are categorized for each question and the correct answer for each is shown in the axis in brackets.



Overview

The male - female responses at both events that scored below 40%; points to the misconception that there is a vaccination for Hepatitis C. The vaccination Twinrex™ for Hep A and B has the general public thinking that it covers all the Hepatitis'. It is also clear that participants do not have an understanding of just how strong this virus can be. They are surprised when informed that the virus can exist outside the body even in dry blood for up to three days and some specialist believe it could be longer. They also were unaware that bleach will not kill Hepatitis C when used as a cleaning agent. These findings were also brought to our attention at the NGJ, as well. They are not aware of the fact that you can have Hepatitis C for 10 years and not show any symptoms or that you can spread the virus by using someone's personal belongs (e.g. toothbrush or razor).

Survey Responses

Ballot Responses

When the participants at the NSPE were finished filling out their survey and the answers had been gone over they received a ballot to fill out for a draw. On the ballot they were asked to name one thing they learned about Hepatitis C.

The following are the responses that were given:

2 people said "How long you have it and not show any signs for a long time."

10 people didn't answer the question

6 people said "That I knew all the answers." 1 of the 6 did research when a family member contracted it.

16 people said "That you could get it from using other people's personal stuff. razor, toothbrush, etc."

15 people said "How long it can live outside the body for."

2 people said "a lot"

15 people said "No Vaccination for Hep C."

1 person said "That I am ignorant."

1 person said "That it is also called Hepatitis C."

1 person said "Updates on Hepatitis C."

1 person said "Not spread through kissing."

1 person said "My co-worker doesn't know all."

1 person said "5 things I didn't know."

1 person said "Knew more than I thought."

1 person said "Very contagious."

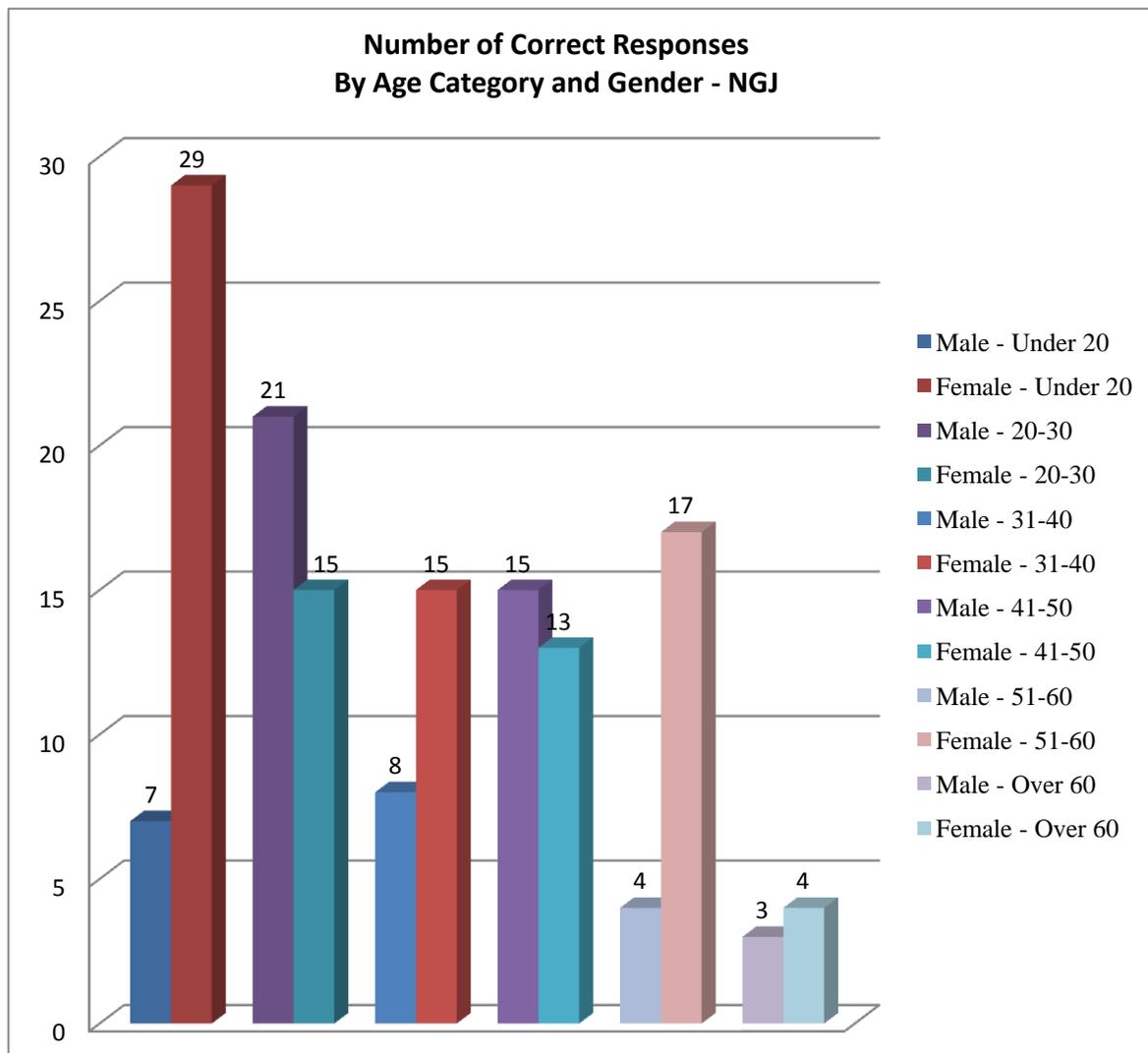
1 person said "Its blood to blood thanks."

Number of Correct Responses By Age Category and Gender

The following graph shows the number of correct responses on the Hepatitis C Survey that were conducted in New Glasgow at the Jubilee by gender and age groupings. The males scored a lower number of correct responses to most of the questions. The Under 20 males and the 51 – 60 age groups really had the hardest time with correct responses. However, it must be noted that the males 20 – 30 had more correct responses to the survey question than their counterparts.

The under 20 female and the 51 – 60 year old female seem to have a better understanding of Hepatitis C. They answered an overall total more correct answers than their male counterparts. It must also be noted that the females in the other groups 20 – 50 seemed to be about the same with overall correct responses.

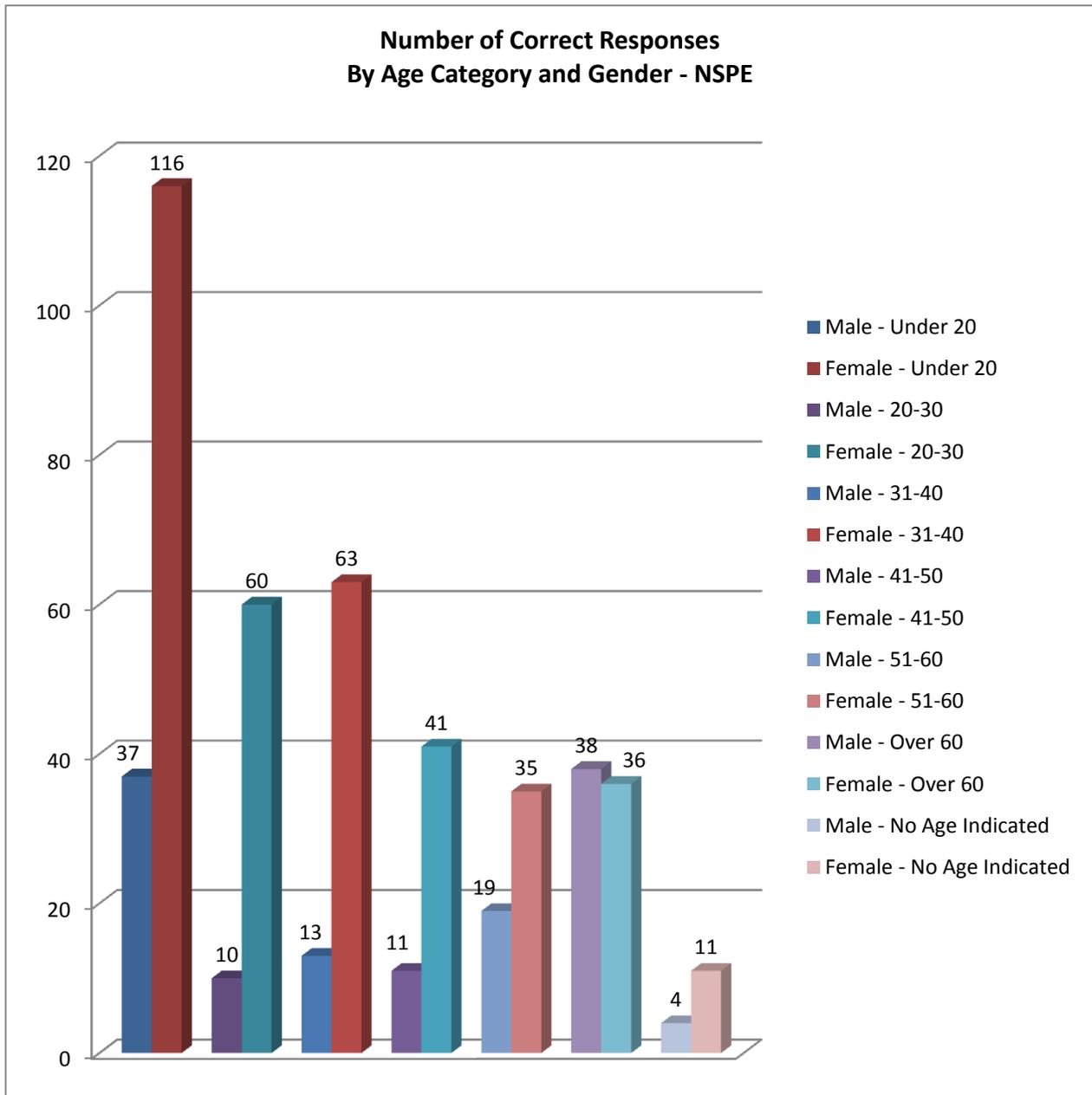
Is it that the message is being received by females more so that males in this area? Are females more exposed to the information that is be put out by our project? This level of knowledge transfer to females may be attributed to the increased number of mature females returning to post secondary education such as the Nova Scotia Community Colleges in classes such as Continuing Care and Nursing. There seems to be a 95% higher number of females enrolling in these programs.



The following graph provides a picture of the number of correct response to the Hepatitis C survey that was conducted at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition. It is very clear that the females had a greater knowledge of Hepatitis C than did their male counterparts. In almost all age groups the female out answered the males in correct responses. The Under 20 category did have a lot more participants answering the survey than did the other group.

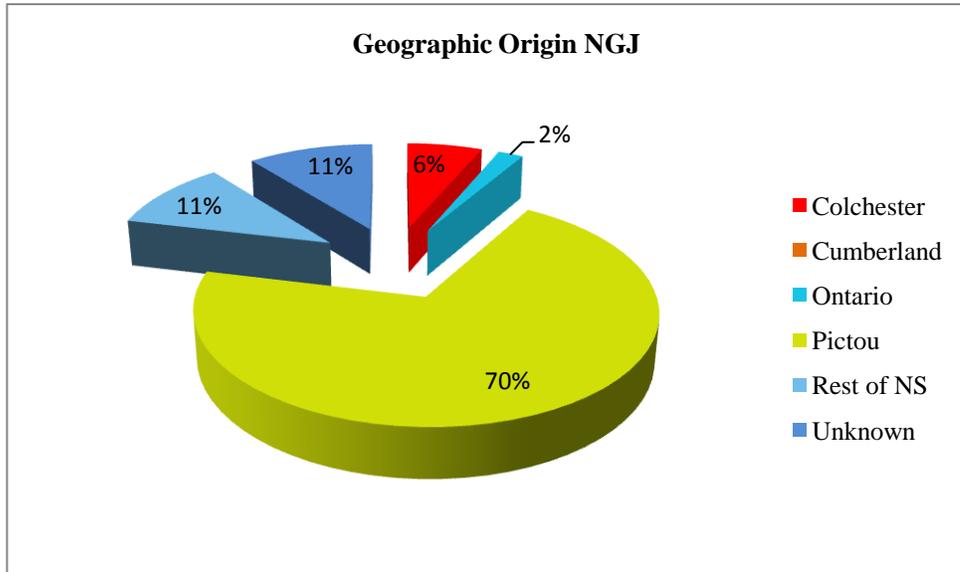
The under 20 age group had a large response of correct answers and this may be contributed to the fact that the project has been going into the schools in this area and doing Hep 101 talks. This comment was heard from some of the participants when they took the survey.

The other groups had between 50 and 60 participants that answered correctly. However, the females outnumbered the male by a large percentage.

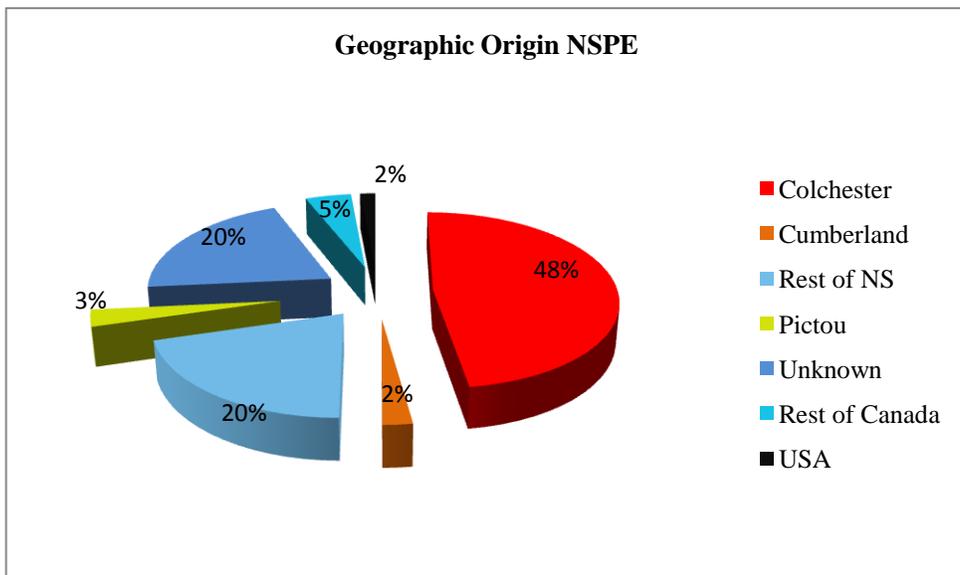


Geographical Origin

The largest numbers of surveys completed by respondents at the New Glasgow Jubilee were from the Pictou Region. The next highest number of surveys were completed by residents making up the rest of Nova Scotia (excluding the northern region which is represented by the Northern AIDS Connection Society) and those that did not provide us with this information. Both of these were tied in percentage. Colchester County made up the next largest area represented demographically.



The largest geographical region of participants surveyed at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition was Colchester County followed again by a tie with those that did not complete the postal code section of the survey and those that live in Nova Scotia but are from outside the northern region (Colchester, Cumberland, East Hants and Pictou areas). The third region represented in the graph is from the rest of Canada. It must also be noted that we had participants complete the survey that were from the United States of America.



Blues Festival Background

The 2010 festival event took place August 13th to 15th at the Truro Raceway & Exhibition Grounds in Bible Hill, Truro. The venue offers all festival amenities including an onsite campground for tents and trailers, VIP Deck, seating areas, and a free festival shuttle to local accommodations. The Truro Raceway & Exhibition Grounds has the capacity to host up to 25,000 festival patrons on site. ²

At this festival a partnership was formed with Baird's Septic. They were responsible for placing all the port – a - potties on the grounds. The partnership allowed the placing of Hep C posters inside the port – a - potties. Any that were removed were immediately replaced.

A total of 108 **Think Before You Ink** posters and 110 **Skin & Steel** posters were on display in all of the washrooms. These posters also had the information of the NACS Hep C Aware Project on them.

If you stop to consider the number of people present at this Festival and the number of times that one person would need to utilize these facilities the exposure is huge. If you add alcohol into the equation this would make the exposure to these posters and the message they deliver even greater.

Because this was such a great way to get the message out to the general public it was also used at the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition. We did not have as many port – a - potties at the exhibition but were given permission to place the posters in the washrooms in all of the buildings on the grounds as well as on the bulletin boards and on some of the entrances to the buildings. The total posters displayed during exhibition week were as follows:

- 46 #1 Hep C Poster
- 42 #2 Hep C Poster
- 5 Stigma Discrimination Poster
- 14 Think Before You Ink Poster
- 20 Skin & Steel Poster

We also had a table set up in one of the buildings in the entry way with a display board and information and some of the information did get pick up. The following is a list of the material that was disseminated.

- Hep C #1 Brochure (105)
- Hep C #2 Brochure (105)
- Hep C #3 Brochure (105)
- Tattooing Before Cards (250)
- Tattooing After Cards (300)
- Body Piercing Before Cards (270)
- Body Piercing After Cards (260)
- Straight Up on Hep C (300)

² <http://www.dutchmason.com/festival/program.html>

Conclusion

Being able to go out to public events like these gives NACS the opportunities to not only conduct the survey but the ability to share information with the general public. It is during these conversations that questions are asked and you are able to give the information that is needed. It also allows for misconceptions as well as misinformation to be clarified.

The advertising of Twinrex™ is widely viewed but also has given the misconception that it must also cover Hep C. It has been heard on a regular basis when conducting these surveys that “I had my shots for that”. When questioned further it was discovered that the shot that they had was Twinrex™ and then the teachable moments begin.

Another thing that came up during the surveys is that the younger participants would mention that they had been either in school or event that the Northern AIDS Connection Society had been doing a talk on Hep C. We are starting to get the message out there but there is still a lot of work that needs to be done which is evident in the number of surveys that were conducted and the number of incorrect responses. The key issue is knowledge transfer and information sharing through education and dissemination of materials during events.

Appendix

Appendix "A"

Copy of the Survey that was used with the correct answers

Hepatitis C (Hep C) Survey

Gender: _____

Postal Code: _____

Age: Under 20 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 Over 60

Question True or False	True	False	Not Sure
1. You could have Hepatitis C and not show any symptoms for more than 10 years.	T		
2. There is a vaccination for Hepatitis C available.		F	
3. You can get the Hepatitis C virus from shared drug equipment like needles, or straws for snorting drugs, unsterile tattooing and body piercings equipment and acupuncture equipment.	T		
4. You can get Hep C virus from someone who is infected but does not have any symptoms.	T		
5. Hep C can be spread using someone's personal belongings (e.g. toothbrush, razor).	T		
6. Hep C can live outside the body for more than 3 days.	T		