

Hepatitis C Education in Drug and Alcohol Settings: Preliminary Evaluation Findings from a National Online Training Program

Dawson O¹, Jaworski, A¹, Kerr, S¹, and Grebely J².

¹ Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine, Sydney

² The Kirby Institute, UNSW Sydney, Sydney

Presenter's Email: olivia.dawson@ashm.org.au

Introduction: Strategies to address hepatitis C virus (HCV) elimination requires interventions to enhance testing, linkage to care, and treatment among people who inject drugs (PWID). Education of healthcare providers has been demonstrated to improve linkage to HCV testing and treatment. The aim of this workshop is to increase confidence among people working in Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) settings and is adapted from a successful education program delivered between July 2020 and February 2021.

Method: The Hepatitis C in Drug and Alcohol Settings Education Program was developed by the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine in collaboration with the Kirby Institute, UNSW, under the guidance of an expert advisory group. The workshop program incorporates the interactive components of the education program with a focus on case discussions designed to engage participants in practical application of key learnings.

Key findings: The education program was run 6 times between July 2020 and February 2021. A total of 118 individuals attended, with 75 persons providing data at both pre and post time-points (64%). 93% of participants reported that their overall learning needs had been entirely met. Compared to baseline, following course delivery there were significant increases in the proportion of participants reporting they were confident/very confident in their ability to educate patients and staff ($p < 0.001$), ensure regular screening, interpret test results and diagnose hepatitis C ($p < 0.001$), advise about new therapies ($p < 0.001$), treat patients ($p < 0.001$) and manage side effects.

Conclusion: Self-reported confidence related to testing, treatment and management of HCV improved immediately following the delivery of the Program. Evaluation results indicate workshop efficacy, which would be well suited the target audience of the APSAD Conference.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: The Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine recognise the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. The development and delivery of the education program evaluated in this work was funded by Gilead Sciences and AbbVie.