

PEERS AND MEDICAL STAFF TESTING FOR HEPATITIS C, THE BEST MATCH TO REACH DRUG USERS AND MAKE THEM HEPATITIS FREE

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Background: Screening and treatment for hepatitis C is a high priority for patients using intravenous drugs (active PWID) to accomplish the WHO HCV elimination goals by 2030. Simplification of the treatment cascade is a key to reaching this goal.

Description of model of care/intervention: Between 2019 and 2021, a team of ex drug addicts cured for hepatitis C accompanied by nurses or doctors made 4 roadtrips in Burgundy county and stopped in addictological structures to meet drug users and offer screening for hepatitis C.

Three tools were proposed : HCV RADT, fibroScan, POCT (HCV fingerstick RT PCR testing)

- Screen patients for hepatitis C by RADT. If they are, check virologic confirmation with POCT and assessment for fibrosis with FibroScan and prescribed the same day.
- Confirm the cure for patients treated for their hepatitis C by doing a viral research after treatment with POCT (Check recontaminations and put them back again into care if it's necessary)
- Assessment of hepatic elastometry for all patients who wish it with the aim of detecting cirrhosis

Effectiveness: 411 people met. 394 rapid diagnostic tests were done. 42 were positifs. After POCT : **30 ARN+**, all with FibroScan <2.

Among these 30 drug users, 2 recontaminated, 1 had treatment failure and was oriented on an expert service

The POCT also allows to confirm **cure for 21 persons**

Conclusion and next steps: A roadtrip led by cured patients of hepatitis C, ex drug users for some of them, members of an association and trained with screening tools is a guarantee of listening and recognition by active drug users. the positive screening rate and the access to care or health care is proof of the effectiveness of such a device.

Disclosure of Interest: None