

SCREENING AND TREATMENT OF HEPATITIS C IN CORK PRISON

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Background: Although a model of care for the management of Hepatitis C in the community setting in Ireland exists, there is no mechanism to extend this into the custodial setting.

Description of model of care/intervention: We decided to implement a Hepatitis C management program in Cork prison. We liaised with prison authorities, hospital based medical, nursing and pharmacy colleagues and the national lead for Hepatitis C. We implemented a screening program for all new committals to the prison and commenced further screening for all those already in prison. All new committals are screened for Hepatitis C using Oraquick swabs. Positive results are followed up with blood screening and the results forwarded to the Hepatology staff in the local hospital. In-reach by the Hepatology clinical nurse manager follows with viral loads and fibroscans carried out on all patients. All patients suitable for treatment according to national community care guidelines are then commenced on medication.

Effectiveness: At the time of writing we have screened 120 prisoners since commencing in September last. We have identified 11 patients suitable for treatment and 10 have successfully been treated.

Conclusion and next steps: The program has proven very effective in identifying and treating Hepatitis C in this cohort of patients. We have found that a custodial sentence offers a period of stability in the often chaotic lives of this group allowing an opportunity to monitor treatment compliance.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: We have no industry affiliations to disclose