

## **COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO THE MANAGEMENT OF HEPATITIS C AT NUMINBAH QUEENSLAND CORRECTIONAL FACILITY**

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**Background/Approach:** Correctional facility clients have high rates of Hepatitis C, but accessing care can be difficult. Numinbah Correctional facility, 50 minutes from Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH) did not have dedicated medical support to prescribe Hepatitis C Direct Acting Antiviral (DAA), resulting in treatment delays.

**Analysis/Argument:** Transfer of hepatitis C patient/s with correctional officers or taking the liver team to Numinbah is expensive, time consuming and associated with logistical delays. Instead the Numinbah and hepatology clinical teams collaborated to streamline Hepatitis C treatment.

Numinbah Correctional facility clinical nurses (CNs) have built capacity with the assistance of the hepatology team to be the "point of care" clinicians. Numinbah CNs provide information including co-morbidity, medications, pathology to hepatology clinician/s. If AST to platelet index (APRI) is <1 with no other clinical concerns the hepatology GP with special interest (GPwSI) prescribes DAA remotely. Numinbah CNs monitor treatment and follow-up, liaising with Hepatology CNC with any concerns.

**Outcome/Results:** This team approach to managing Hepatitis C has allowed twenty-seven patients access to treatment in the first eleven months, most completing treatment during incarceration. Pharmaceutical benefits Regulation 24 endorsement, allowing dispensing of complete course, has reduced risk of interruption to treatment for those discharged prior to completion.

Now we have established professional relationships, patients with cirrhosis or a more complicated clinical presentation are seen within 2-4 weeks through GCUH. The correctional facility has a new Medical Officer who has completed Hepatitis C training, so treatment access will be further streamlined.

**Conclusions/Applications:** The reciprocal enthusiasm, support and team work between Hepatology team, pharmacists and Numinbah CNs has allowed this process to develop into a smooth referral system. We would recommend this model or a variation of it to other regions trying to establish outreach treatment to correctional facilities and other clinical groups who have traditionally been difficult to reach.

### **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

Authors have on occasions attended educational events that included simple meals, been paid to present at clinical meeting for pharmaceutical companies or attended conferences/ advisory boards sponsored or paid for by pharmaceutical companies. Pharmaceutical companies include Gilead, AbbVie and MSD.