

DRUG USER HEALTHCARE DELIVERED ONSITE AT A SYRINGE EXCHANGE: HCV, MAT, AND PREP

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Background: Syringe exchange programs (SEPs) serve populations with high rates of unmet health needs, and completion rates of offsite health care referrals are low. We describe a novel partnership between an academic medical center and an SEP to deliver low barrier healthcare to people who inject drugs (PWID) onsite at an SEP.

Methods: A collaboration between Montefiore Medical center and a local SEP, a clinic was opened at an SEP drop-in center on February, 11, 2019. We conducted a retrospective chart review of patients seen at the clinic from 2/11/2019-5/29/2019 using the electronic medical record.

Results: A total of 118 patients were seen by a provider during the study period. The mean age was 43 (IQR 17). The majority of patients were Hispanic (44%), followed by non-Hispanic Black (32%) and were female (53%). The primary reason for a patient's first visit to the clinic was for buprenorphine treatment (32%), followed by hepatitis C treatment (20%) and PREP (20%). Of those who initiated buprenorphine treatment, 72% were retained in treatment at 30 days. Of the patients with HCV, 40% were currently injecting drugs; 40% were using heroin, and 30% were using cocaine/crack. All HCV+ patients received an appropriate HCV evaluation with fibrosis determination. Most are awaiting insurance approval for medication, however 15% have initiated treatment. 30% of patients evaluated for HCV treatment also initiated buprenorphine.

Conclusion: Through a novel SEP-academic medical center partnership, PWID received buprenorphine, HCV, and HIV prevention services on-site at an SEP, demonstrating the feasibility of such initiatives. Rates of retention in buprenorphine treatment are comparable to retention rates at non-SEP office-based treatment programs, and many people received both HCV treatment, as well as buprenorphine treatment. Low barrier care delivered onsite at an SEP should be further explored to improve access to care for PWID.

Disclosure of Interest: none