

RE- ENGAGING PWID TO HEPATITIS C CARE AND TREATMENT IN THE NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND

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Introduction:

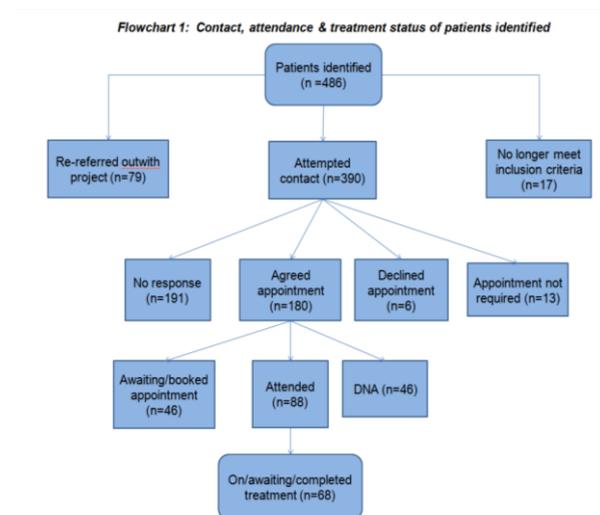
A significant percentage of patients referred to the Hepatology Service for assessment and treatment for Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) infection have chosen not to engage with services. A large proportion of those who do not engage are people who inject drugs (PWID). Those previously referred but no longer accessing the Hepatology clinic may not be aware of the advances in the efficacy and side effect profile of the current drug regimens.

Methods:

NHS Grampian's HCV database identified patients who are no longer under review, have active HCV and suitable for treatment. Patients who had died or no longer resided in the health board were removed. The Specialist Nurses contacted patients & GP practices, providing information about developments in treatments and offered appointments with the service. Standard letters were produced depending on the patient's circumstances, and sent to patients and GPs, these were uploaded to the patient's electronic notes, therefore, if patients did not respond to the initial contact, any other clinician who may review them would see that the service was attempting contact. For those who engaged, treatment was offered.

Results:

In total of 486 out of 2728 (18%) patients were identified as no longer under follow up. Seventeen no longer met the inclusion criteria. All patients have been contacted. Flowchart 1 describes the results.



Discussion and Conclusion:

This project has raised awareness of the advances in HCV treatment among PWID, GPs and the wider community. Patients have been empowered to take control of their own health and 23% of those contacted have attended appointments with the hepatology service, many having subsequently received HCV treatment. Patients have responded positively to the project and appreciative that they have not been forgotten and been given another opportunity. The project is ongoing, with the results being analysed on a regular basis.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

No interests to disclose