

CHOICE OF HCV TESTING PATHWAY IN PRISONS IS NOT A BARRIER TO FREEDOM FROM HCV

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Background:

Prisons present an opportunity to provide HCV testing and treatment services to a relatively high-risk population. Two main testing approaches are used in prisons: dry-blood spot testing (DBST) and Point of Care (PoC) testing. How do these two approaches compare in the setting of a prison? Is the choice of testing a barrier that needs to be overcome?

Description of model of care/intervention:

In English prisons, DBST or PoC HCV tests are most used. DBST combines HCV antibody testing and HCV RNA testing and requires a virology lab. PoC antibody tests can be combined with virology lab RNA testing or with a PoC RNA test. We compared the uptake of different testing pathways and the time taken for the patient to receive their HCV RNA result, in Remand Prisons.

Effectiveness:

DBST pathway:

Uptake was 88%.

Average time from accepting test and receiving an HCV antibody result was 5 days.

Average time from accepting test and receiving an HCV RNA result was 15 days.

PoC antibody and viral lab HCV RNA pathway:

Uptake was 94%.

Average time from accepting test and receiving an HCV antibody result was 0 days.

Average time from accepting test and receiving an HCV RNA result was 15 days.

PoC antibody and PoC HCV RNA pathway:

Uptake was 94%.

Average time from accepting test and receiving an HCV antibody result was 0 days.

Average time from accepting test and receiving an HCV RNA result was 1 day.

Conclusion and next steps:

Choice of testing pathway should not be a barrier to identifying patients with HCV. Uptake of testing is similar regardless of testing pathway. PoC antibody testing with PoC HCV RNA testing can reduce the time taken to determine HCV RNA status and presents an opportunity to further reduce the time taken from test-to-treatment especially in busy remand prisons.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: See example below:

Gilead Sciences Ltd plays an active role in the design and execution of the activities with Practice Plus Group and Spectrum Community Health CIC as part of the NHS England HCV Elimination Programme.

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