

DOES SVR AFTER DIRECT ACTING ANTIVIRAL (DAA) THERAPY AFFECT THE QUALITY OF LIFE (QoL) OF PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC HEPATITIS C (CHC) AND A HISTORY OF DRUG USE?

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Background – Aim: Treatment with DAAs achieve high sustained virological response (SVR) rates, however the long-term effect on PWUD patient's health-related quality of life (HRQoL) is limited. This study aimed to evaluate the impact of HCV clearance on HRQoL in PWUD with HCV infection after successful antiviral treatment.

Patients – Methods: We used the questionnaire SF – 36 for HRQoL assessment before treatment (baseline visit) and 12-24 weeks after the end of treatment in 56 consecutive CHC patients under substitution in the Organization Against Drugs' (OKANA) Units in Greece, who consented to participate. The SF-36 is consisted by 36 questions divided in the domains of: physical functioning (PF), role physical (RP), bodily pain (BP), general health (GH), vitality (VT), social functioning (SF), role emotional (RE) and mental health (MH).

Results: We included 56 patients, mean age: 47±10 years, males: 50, 9% cirrhotics. At baseline SF-36 domains of MH, BP, RE, PF, SF were associated positively to female gender ($p = 0.02$), alcohol use ($p = 0.014$), no cannabis use ($p = 0.02$) and marital status (married/in relationship)($p = 0.002$). In the multivariate analysis, cannabis use was an independent factor associated with decreased patients' perception of PF and increased BP ($p = 0.02$ and $p = 0.029$, respectively). Comparison of the questionnaire before and three months after successful antiviral therapy showed improvement in most areas of the questionnaire with statistically significant improvement in the domains of MH, VT and GH. Improvement was associated independently with marital status (married/in a relationship) ($p=0.05$).

Conclusion: We have shown that cannabis use is independently associated with several HRQoL indicators in PWUD; in addition, DAA therapy has an overall benefit on health in PWUD population with HCV. We believe that our data may help the development and implementation of effective monitoring, management and treatment models for PWUD under opiate substitution.