DO NATIONAL HCV POLICIES IN THE EU ADDRESS TREATMENT AND CARE FOR PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS?

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Outline

1. Background
2. Methods
3. Results
4. Conclusions
5. References / Suggestions for further reading

Background

• Why are national hepatitis plans important?
  • An indicator of political commitment
  • Useful for advocacy by civil society

• WHO/Europe Action Plan – 2018 Milestone: “Costed and funded national hepatitis plan with clear targets or a viral hepatitis response plan in a broader health strategy or action plan”

• When starting this project in early 2017, we began with a scoping review to identify recent or ongoing activities looking at the implementation of national viral hepatitis plans and access to HCV treatment for PWID in Europe → ... we found a lot!
Events held in 2017 where access to HCV care for PWID in Europe was discussed *(Not a complete list!)*

3. Regional CEECA Harm Reduction conference *(April)*
4. The HCV Community Summit & EASL Int Liver Congress *(April)* [www.hepatitiscommunitysummit.eu](http://www.hepatitiscommunitysummit.eu)
5. The 25th International Harm Reduction Conference *(May)*
6. Improving Outcomes in the Treatment of Opioid Dependence (IOTOD) *(May)* [www.iotodeducation.com](http://www.iotodeducation.com)
7. Launch of the ACHIEVE coalition *(June)* [www.achievehepatiselimination.eu](http://www.achievehepatiselimination.eu)
11. Central & Eastern European Hepatitis/HIV meeting *(September)* [www.virology-education.com](http://www.virology-education.com)
14. World Hepatitis Summit *(Nov)* [www.worldhepatitissummit.org](http://www.worldhepatitissummit.org)
15. International Viral Hepatitis Elimination Meeting (IVHEM) *(November)* [www.virology-education.com](http://www.virology-education.com)

Other monitoring activities identified

1. WHO 2017 global survey on National efforts towards hep elimination *(not PWID focus)* – data presented at WHS2017 and ILC2018
2. INHSU review of DAA restrictions in Europe *(Marshall et al 2017)*
3. The Correlation network 2013+2016 surveys on national HCV policies and access to HCV treatment for PWID in Europe *(Maticic et al 2017)*
4. The European Liver Patient Association Hep-CORE study 2016+2017 *(Lazarus et al 2017)* *(20 EU countries)*
5. Wright et al 2017: Readiness in 12 European countries to treat HCV in people with opioid disorder
   • Monitoring national responses in 10 countries
7. Czypionka et al report 2015 *(5 EU countries)*

*A full list of references at the end of this presentation*
Objective

• To review if national HCV policies in the 30 EMCDDA countries (EU28+Norway & Turkey) promote or limit access to HCV treatment and care for people who inject drugs (PWID)

HCV policies defined as:
national strategies, programmes and action plans addressing HCV and/or HCV among PWID – including those integrated in broader health strategies/plans

Methods

• Initial scoping review of past or on-going efforts
• Between February-October 2017: targeted search in reports submitted by National Focal Points to the EMCDDA, published and grey literature, and relevant national websites
• Where no national HCV policy was identified, clinical guidelines were assessed
• Several rounds of interaction with the national experts in the EMCDDA network on drug-related infectious diseases (DRID)
• Analytical summaries for each country submitted in early 2018 to EMCDDA Focal Points for validation
• All countries except Turkey provided feedback (N=29 countries)
Results

• As of March 2018, 17 countries had official HCV policies inclusive of PWID
  • Large heterogeneity – ex DK & SE “only” guidelines on HCV among PWID.
  • Several policies without targets, monitoring or funding
• Malta, Romania & Poland have policies in preparation
• 12/17 national policies adopted or renewed since 2015

• In spring 2018, 9 EU countries excluded people currently using drugs from accessing HCV treatment

• 29 country summaries
• Links to key national documents and acknowledgement of the national experts providing input for each country

Conclusion

- In early 2018, still 9 EU countries who restrict access to HCV treatment for PWID
- Rapid increase in the number of countries with national HCV policies since 2015
- Large heterogeneity of national HCV policies available in Europe
  - Need for monitoring implementation efforts and funding available
  - National policy ≠ Action
- Future monitoring of progress towards HCV elimination in Europe to be done in collaboration between ECDC, EMCDDA and WHO/Europe (See Duffel et al 2017)


References / Further reading

3. ECDC 2017 “Technical report: Hepatitis B and C testing activities, needs, and priorities in the EU/EEA”
4. EMCDDA 2016 “Hepatitis C among drug users in Europe: Epidemiology, treatment and prevention”
5. Goldberg & Hutchinson 2014 “Hepatitis C: Setting Standards towards the Eradication of Infection and Disease as a serious Health Issue in the EU”
7. Lazarus et al 2017 “Restrictions on access to direct-acting antivirals for people who inject drugs: The European Hep-CORE study and the role of patient groups in monitoring national HCV responses” UDP
14. Wolfe et al 2015 “Human rights and access to hepatitis C treatment for people who inject drugs” IUDP
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