

IMPLEMENTATION OF A MODEL OF CARE FOR THE SCREENING AND TREATMENT OF HEPATITIS C IN THE OBEDIJWAN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY WITH THE GOAL OF ELIMINATION

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Background: Obedjiwan is a geographically isolated Atikamekw community in Quebec, Canada. The Band Council is proactive with respect to health care in its community, including drug addiction. In 2017, collaboration was established between the Centre de santé d'Opitciwan (CSO) and the Coopérative de solidarité SABSA, with the aim of providing this community with prevention, screening, treatment and follow-up services for people infected with the hepatitis C virus (HCV). The objectives are to sensitize the community to HCV and prevent its transmission, to identify people at risk, to facilitate access to HCV treatment directly in the community (treat where they are), and to provide nursing, psychosocial and medical follow-up, as well as to prevent the risk of reinfection.

Description of model of care/intervention: The CSO identifies people at risk of HCV infections through the deployment of a street worker and public health nurses. During its quarterly visits to the CSO, Coopérative de solidarité SABSA offers the services of a nurse practitioner specialized in HCV, to train local health care providers on screening tools for sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBI), including HCV, and provides fibrosis assessment (Transient Elastography) for the measurement of liver fibrosis. A gastroenterologist comes to the community to initiate HCV treatment.

Effectiveness: From April to October 2018, 24 HCV positive patients were linked to care and started treatment. Updated numbers and sustained virologic response (SVR) results will be presented.

Conclusion and next steps: This project results from collaboration between the community of Opitciwan and the SABSA Solidarity Cooperative. The community supports SABSA's continuous effort to provide the community of Opitciwan tools required for full autonomy. Once achieved, it will enable them to become a reference in the prevention and treatment of STBBIs, and to transfer their knowledge to neighboring indigenous communities facing similar issues.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: *See example below:* The conference collaborators recognise the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in publications and presentations.