

## TESTING AND VACCINATION UPTAKE AMONG PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS WITH A HISTORY OF INCARCERATION, ENGLAND, WALES, AND NORTHERN IRELAND

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**Background:** Prisons offer a key opportunity to offer interventions to people who inject drugs (PWID). The COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted opt-out testing and vaccination programmes in prisons. We investigated testing and vaccination uptake among those with a history of incarceration (IH) to highlight missed opportunities.

**Methods:** Data were extracted from an annual cross-sectional survey of PWID in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, where participants provided a blood sample and self-completed a questionnaire. Trends in hepatitis B (HBV) vaccination and HIV and hepatitis C (HCV) testing were reviewed over 2013-2020/21 and compared between those with IH vs. no IH for 2020/21 using multivariable logistic regression, adjusting for age, gender and region of recruitment.

**Results:** In 2020/21 a substantial proportion of PWID reported IH (62%). Although vaccination uptake among PWID testing negative for HBV was significantly higher among those reporting IH than no IH in 2020/21 (71% vs. 56%; aOR 2.10 95%CI:1.67-2.65), it has declined significantly in both groups between 2013 and 2020/21 (IH: 78% (aOR 0.69 95%CI:0.58-0.84), no IH: 60% (aOR 0.74 95%CI:0.59-0.93)).

Although no decline was seen in recent HCV testing (current or previous year) among those with IH between 2018 to 2020/21, recent HIV testing declined from 41% to 35% (aOR 0.79 95%CI 0.68-0.93). In 2020/21, when compared with those with no IH, PWID with IH had greater odds of testing recently for both HIV and HCV (aOR 1.28, 95%CI:1.05-1.56 and aOR 1.29; 95%CI:1.08-1.55 respectively). In 2020/21 there was no difference in the proportion reporting testing or vaccination uptake by length of prison stay.

**Conclusion:** Recent declines in HIV testing and HBV vaccination among PWID with IH are concerning as prisons offer a key opportunity for BBV prevention in this population. Opt-out testing and vaccination programmes should be strengthened in prison settings to reduce BBV transmission both within the prison and upon release.

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