

FACTORS INFLUENCING ENGAGEMENT WITH A MULTIDISCIPLINARY INCENTIVISED HEPATITIS C PROGRAM FOR INTRAVENOUS SUBSTANCE USERS

Jackson E¹, Luo J^{1,2}, Downie J¹, Page J¹, Bridges-Webb I¹

¹Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District, Sydney

²University of Sydney, Sydney

Background:

“Positively Hep” is a multidisciplinary project led by the Needle and Syringe Program in a Western Sydney Hospital. Small monetary incentives are given for participation in education, testing and treatment of hepatitis C to target intravenous drug users with barriers to accessing mainstream healthcare.

Since program commencement in March 2016, 319 people have received education, 71 people were diagnosed with hepatitis C and 22 people initiated treatment. We aim to determine the factors associated with disengagement from screening and treatment in the eligible groups.

Methods:

A retrospective analysis was performed on the 319 participants. The association between Aboriginal status, co-morbidities, sex and age with disengagement at screening was assessed using logistic regression. The association between these factors as well as symptoms and co-morbidities with disengagement from treatment was also assessed.

Results:

In the 319 participants, 127 (40%) were female and 81 (25%) identified as Aboriginal; 145 (45%) underwent screening. In the 71 participants with hepatitis C, 22 (35%) commenced treatment. In those who received education, neither Aboriginal status nor sex was associated with being screened ($p=0.61$, $p=0.30$). In those with hepatitis C, neither Aboriginal status nor sex was associated with the decision to be treated ($p=1.00$, $p=0.26$). Further, multivariable associations will be presented.

Conclusion:

In the community that this hospital services, 3.2% of people identify as being Aboriginal. This intervention saw a high proportion of engagement from the Aboriginal community. Once engaged the Aboriginal participants were just as likely to be screened and treated as the non-Aboriginal population.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The authors declare no conflict of interest.