

## **MAPPING HEPATITIS C SERVICES TO REMOVE BARRIERS TO TREATMENT FOR PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS**

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**Background:** The West Midlands hepatitis Operational Delivery Network (ODN) is the largest in England serving a population of just over 5,500,000 people. Overall hepatitis C prevalence is low (0.2%) but is 29.2% in people who inject drugs (PWID) and 10.6% in people with a history of injecting drug use. The ODN consists of a regional hub that oversees treatment across 13 spoke National Health Service (NHS) Trusts. In 2017/18, the ODN treated 742 people with antivirals but treatment rates will need to increase if the NHS is to realise its elimination target of 2025.

A situational analysis of the West Midlands ODN was initiated in 2017 to define the management pathways of services providing hepatitis C care to PWIDs with the aim of addressing barriers to treatment.

**Description of model of care/intervention:** 13 NHS Trusts and 14 drug and alcohol services were identified. Informal interviews were performed with staff from each service and a baseline map of the service developed to visually represent the patient journey from testing to treatment. Each map was then reviewed to identify barriers to treatment and recommendations made to redesign or remove steps. Barriers included unnecessary clinic appointments, a requirement for hospital-based consultant-delivered appointments, and the requirement for pre-treatment transient elastography.

**Effectiveness:** A 'best practice' map was developed against which services were compared. Best practice required three patient visits ('dried spot test offered', 'results, counsel and full bloods taken' and 'treatment started') within a 4-week period. A mapping tool was developed to enable reporting of patient attrition at each visit and performed at baseline and following change.

**Conclusion and next steps:** Regional mapping of hepatitis C services has highlighted common challenges and enabled simplification of care. Services across the ODN are working towards three-visit pathways. An equivalent mapping process is underway in the ODNs prisons.

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