SEAMLESS INTEGRATION OF HEPATITIS C TREATMENT WITHIN AN INTRAVENOUS (IV) HYDROMORPHONE OPIOID AGONIST TREATMENT (IOAT) PROGRAM.

Zaganelli C [1] , Ghosh SM [1 2]

[1.] Alberta Health Services
[2.] University of Alberta

Background: Hepatitis C is prevalent within our IV substance use populations. Co-located and integrated hepatitis C programs for these populations facilitates the cascade of care from hepatitis detection, to completion of treatment.

Methods: In this observational study, we examine the treatment of hepatitis C for patients on an intravenous hydromorphone program in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Patients come up to three times a day for treatment for illicit opioid use using intravenous hydromorphone. The full cascade of care is completely integrated into this service seamlessly from initial evaluation, initiation of treatment for both opioid agonist therapy and hepatitis C treatment, co-dispensing of medications, and subsequent follow up. Wrap around services including income, housing, and justice supports are also fully integrated into their care.

Results: Since the clinic opened in October 2018, all patients have been tested for hepatitis C, including viral load and genotyping. Based on results, patients were triaged to see an internal medicine physician to initiate treatment in-house. The physician was able to assess both their substance use concerns and hepatitis C concurrently, removing the need for separate appointments. A team based approach capitalizing on the scopes of practice of nurse practitioners, registered nurses, and physician members has expedited the detection, evaluation, and treatment of hepatitis C in this high risk population. Patients were overall receptive to hepatitis C treatment integration into their addiction treatment and served as a form of motivation for patients to be a part of this comprehensive program.

Conclusion: Seamless integration of hepatitis C treatment into an IOAT settings, along with wrap around services, demonstrates a practical method to engage clients with intravenous substance use.

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.