HCV TREATMENT IN A NEEDLE AND SYRINGE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Leanne Myers
Nurse Practitioner
Overview

• WASUA
• The Treatment Clinic
• The Pilot Hepatitis C Treatment Program
• The Prospective Hepatitis C Treatment Project
• Summary
WASUA – 2 fixed sites in Perth and Bunbury

NSEP

- Needle and syringe one for one exchange program – approx 12,000 client interactions yearly
- Advocacy & support for people on pharmacotherapies
- Provides health promotion and information, resources and resource production
- Consultation on policy, consumer issues, NSEP etc
- Training and education for the broader AOD, Health, Mental Health, Community Welfare and other services

OUTREACH SERVICES – METRO AND SOUTHWEST

- Ace program – outreach to Aboriginal clients including home visits
- Youth – outreach to males and females aged 16-25
- Outreach to the general population
- Safe Disposal Program
- Overdose Prevention and Management Project
- Peer Administered Naloxone program
WASUA

- 22/7 Aberdeen Street, Perth
- 97 Spencer Street, Bunbury
- Hours –
  - 10 to 5 pm M, T, W,
  - 10 to 8pm Th, F
  - 10 to 4pm S, S
- Clinic open Tuesdays and Thursdays for walk in and booked appointments
The Treatment Clinic
WASUA Health Clinic

STI’s and Sexual and Reproductive Health
- STI education, testing, and treatment
- Contraceptive advice and scripts for the pill
- Pap Smears

BBV’s
- BBV testing and treatment
- HCV treatment
- Advanced liver disease – HCC screening

General
- Wound dressings
- Treatment for infections – cellulitis, UTIs, URTIs
- Naloxone prescribing
- Vaccinations
- General Health care
The Pilot Hepatitis C Treatment Program
To evaluate the effectiveness of a nurse led hepatitis C treatment program within a community needle and syringe exchange program.
Methods

- A peer based initiative provided specific hepatitis C related information to inform and subsequently make client referrals to the health clinic.
- Pre-treatment assessment, on treatment management and follow up was undertaken by a nurse practitioner.
- Patients received treatment according to current Gastroenterological Society of Australia guidelines.
- Clinical outcomes were ascertained and self-reported compliance was assessed.
- Patients with advanced liver disease were referred to a tertiary specialist liver clinic.
Demographic and clinical characteristics of population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>N = 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean age</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>16 (77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current amphetamine use</td>
<td>9 (43%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current heroin use</td>
<td>3 (14%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combined heroin/amphetamine use</td>
<td>3 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>6 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance (&gt;95%)</td>
<td>20 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvoni</td>
<td>8 (38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zepatier</td>
<td>4 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofosbuvir/Daclatasvir</td>
<td>9 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost to follow up</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOT response</td>
<td>15/16 (93%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVR response</td>
<td>17/18 (94%)</td>
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Patient Statement

“I MS truly believe with ongoing support and encouragement by staff, helps me remain focused and reinforces my commitment to the program I’m currently participating in. Support is a huge benefit during the recovery process.”

(23/8/2016)
The Prospective Hepatitis C Treatment Project
Assessing the impact of treating Chronic Hepatitis C on health clinic engagement and injecting risk behaviours

A project by:
Leanne Myers (Nurse Practitioner)
Katherine Reid (Medical Student)
What are we doing?

• Determining suitability for HCV treatment without having to see a Doctor or go to the hospital

• Providing HCV treatment for free!

• Asking lots of questions!
  • Does HCV cure lead to cessation of drug use?
  • Does HCV cure reduce a person’s risky injecting behaviours?
  • What do they know about WASUA’s services, which services do they use and would they recommend WASUA?
## Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug and alcohol issues</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor venous access</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of stable accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-treatment requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding the people for treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-infection issues</td>
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## Addressing the Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commence the discussion – referral, in-house counselling, case management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternate specimen collection agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support services – case management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes as pan genotypic treatments and point of care testing become available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reinforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think outside the square</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timing of discussion</td>
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Advantages of Community Based Treatment

- **Flexibility for the patient**
  - Appointments
  - No rigid rules
  - No cost to the patient

- **Improved access**
  - Everything is done at one location

- **Improved patient outcomes**
  - Increased satisfaction
  - Reduced health morbidities
  - Improved accessibility to other services such as accommodation, counselling etc.

- **Treatment provides a point of connectedness to:**
  - Engage clients
  - Reduce “felt” and “enacted stigma”
Summary
Expectations of working with people who inject drugs:

- Often based on stereotypes
- Often based on what is reported in the media
- Often NOT based on experience
- People who inject drugs often have negative experiences with health care providers, therefore are often fearful
Reality of working with people who inject drugs or use substances

- Not all stereotypes are true
- Not all media reports are true
- What you put into the relationship is what you will get out – if you are disrespectful or judgemental then your patient will respond the same way
- Take time to build rapport – be friendly, concerned and non-judgemental
- Not every health issue will link back to drug use