

Enablers and barriers to hepatitis C treatment uptake

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"Not just one box"

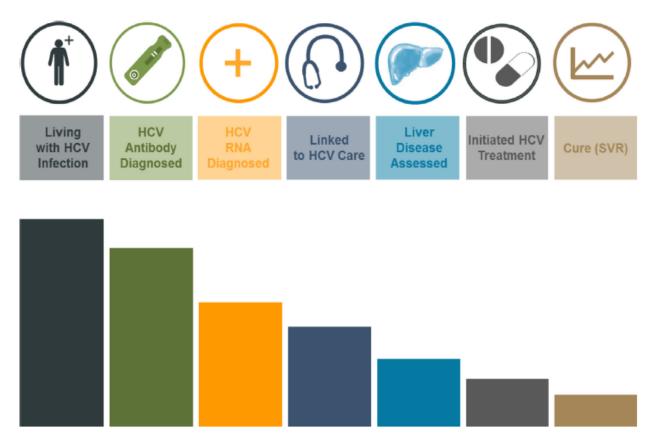


Fig. 1. Hepatitis C Care Cascade [Reprinted from The International Journal of Drug Policy, Oct; 26(10), Grebely, J., Bruggmann P., Treloar C., Byrne J., Rhodes T., Dore G.J., et al. Expanding access to prevention, care and treatment for hepatitis C virus infection among people who inject drugs. 893–8. (2015), with permission from Elsevier.1.

Case study (5 participants)

- 2 disengaged in care cascade after RNA diagnosis
- 2 'housed' at post-treatment pillar
- 1 received treatment; dissenting case







HCV RNA point-of-care testing at a reception prison

 Same-day RNA testing and results reduced systemic barriers to hepatitis C care in the prison setting

I knew of my hep C nine years ago [...] they do all the blood tests again and then it's three or four weeks before they get a result back. In that meantime, I've been moved again, so then we ended up getting the results. Now it shows that yes I do have hep C. [....] and come back and said, "well we can't start treatment, because we don't have the [genotype]". [...] Now this has been going on for the last six years [...] but yeah, I'm glad this time when I come in, within the first week, the new testing, like with the new equipment, I don't think yous could improve it much better than it is now, cause like, I got tested the first week I was in here. Mate, within the hour [...] yous told me [...] yes I did have hep C and not even a week later I started the medication. (Brendan, IDU, Venepuncture)





Enabler: Integrating care

OAT service integrated provision of DAAs alongside methadone

Like I'm hep C free ... the methadone and the counselling: all that combined. (Rachel)



Enabler: Supporting diverse approaches to treatment adherence

Amelia's story

I guess, like, [taking my hepatitis C treatment] was **last on my list to do**, which probably **harmed my health**. [...] It's a 12-week medication and three quarters of it was taken in, like, dribs and drabs pretty much. So, like, **out of seven days of the week, I was lucky if I took it four times a week**.

Yeah, it was [difficult to manage treatment] and especially, like, you are **not really wanting certain people to know, because they will judge you** [...] Then you kind of [are] **hiding your medication** and then you're **not taking it anymore** and then you're **taking it whenever**.

My best friend, like, was trying to help me, so I moved into the place [house] that I'm in now, so my own place. She was just trying to help me get sorted and some sort of routine and whatever. So she's like, 'Amelia, why don't you take the medication to the chemist?' [...] '[You] go to the chemist every day [to get your methadone dose], so while they are dosing you, they might as well dose you your [HCV medication], and then you are not forgetting'. And yeah, so that's what I did.





Barrier: Disruptions

I started treatment at [prison], I was on it for maybe a few weeks, and then I got released, and they gave me my treatment to take with me, and then when I got out, I lost the treatment, and life proceeded. [Yeah, yeah, okay. How much of your treatment did you complete?] Maybe a month. [Okay.] Yeah, so they gave me four boxes of pills to take with me. [...] [How much [treatment] had you done before you got ... just before you got this?] Maybe a month, so maybe four weeks. [So it was pretty quick after you got released that you stopped treatment?] Yeah. (Participant #7)





SHARP-p

- Transition to community and continuity of care
- Stability (e.g., stable accommodation)



Point-of-care operator interviews (Nat'l Program)

- Support to attend pharmacy
- Roadblock: Pharmacy



A gender lens

- Gender disparities in accessing hepatitis C and OAT services
- Women more vulnerable in discussing and accessing hepatitis C and drug use care needs
 - Gender-based violence
 - Family responsibilities
 - Fear of child removal
 - Stigma and discrimination
- Women have lower incarceration rates and shorter lengths of stay





Thank you

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