

A RESPONSIVE MODEL OF CARE UTILIZING A COLLABORATIVE NURSE PRACTITIONER AND PEER BASED MODEL OF CARE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF INJECTING DRUG USERS

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Background:

Enhancing access and targeting the specific needs of injecting drug users and their networks requires a flexible approach. Peer Based Harm Reduction WA (PBHRWA) utilizes a unique model in which a nurse practitioner collaborates with experienced peer-workers to provide care in a health clinic setting or in the consumer's home to reduce consumer barriers.

Description of model of care/intervention:

A peer-worker is the first point of contact via interactions at PBHRWA needle and syringe exchange (NSEP) or during outreach NSEP delivery. The perception of discrimination and fear of stigma act as significant barriers to accessing health services. This first intervention is of vital importance, providing a unique level of consumer engagement and trust in the service.

The second component of the model involves care provided by the nurse practitioner, who utilises a one-stop-shop model, which greatly eases engagement and increases retention in treatment. The peer-worker provides ongoing support for consumers; facilitating the treatment process, assisting them to attend appointments, and addressing other issues and complex needs.

Effectiveness:

Forty-seven consumers have undergone HCV treatment. Ninety-six percent of the Intention-To-Treat population have achieved a Sustained Viral Response (SVR). Five consumers instigated treatment in a non-traditional setting. Of the forty-five consumers who attended the SVR visit, all achieved a sustained viral clearance. A focus group of ten of these consumers reported that attending a peer-based organisation increased their confidence and willingness to enter treatment and made them feel safe from judgement.

Conclusion and next steps:

Integrating services via a peer-based organisation that has well-established and trusted access to injecting drug users and their networks is a uniquely effective way to reduce barriers to HCV treatment and provides a highly cost-effective alternative to traditional health models.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

Leanne Myers has the following disclosures of interest to declare:

- MSD – Advisory Board 2017 – payment received
- Abbvie – Advisory Board 2017 – payment received