

# HCVAction

Bringing you the latest hepatitis C news and events

May 2023

## HCV Action publishes case study on drug service HITT initiative

HCV Action: Sharing good practice hub  
Case study: Oxfordshire drug service HITT  
Published May 2023



### **Delivering a High-Intensity Test and Treat (HITT) initiative in Turning Point drug services**

**An example of joined-up working between services to find, test and support people into treatment**

Key points:

- Hepatitis C Trust peers, ODN nurses, and Turning Point drug service staff worked together to conduct a High-Intensity Test and Treat (HITT) project in Oxfordshire during the summer of 2021.
- HITTs were originally designed to support micro-elimination in prison settings, with this project adapting the approach to finding and treating people in drug services.
- Carried out across four different Turning Point services in Oxfordshire, resources and data were shared between the ODN and the drug services to identify a list of people to follow up with and offer a test.

[HCV Action](#) has [published our latest best practice case study](#), on the subject of conducting a High-Intensity Test and Treat (HITT) initiative in Oxfordshire drug services. The case study provides an example of coordinated working between service providers in an area to find new cases of hepatitis C as well as supporting efforts to engage people who were already known to services.

[Hepatitis C Trust](#) peers, ODN nurses, and [Turning Point](#) drug service staff worked together to conduct a HITT project in Oxfordshire during the summer of 2021, adapting the model successfully rolled out in prisons to a drug service setting. Carried out across four different [Turning Point](#) services in the area, resources and data were shared between the ODN and the drug services to identify a list of people to follow up with and offer a test. Across the four hubs in Oxfordshire between May and August 2021, HCV RNA tests were carried out on just under two-thirds (62.5%) of those who had been identified as requiring an RNA test. A total of 32 RNA positive test results were found.

Building on the initial proof of concept HITT, the team ran another Oxfordshire HITT to further progress the area towards the micro-elimination criteria.

Additional [Turning Point](#) staff have now been trained to use the Cepheid machine, so this allows for HCV RNAs to be taken when the peers and the Community Hepatology nurses are providing services elsewhere.

---

## NHS England launches HCV self-test kits

### Get a free home test for hepatitis C

You can do a simple test at home to find out if you have hepatitis C.

Hepatitis C is a virus that affects your liver. It can be cured by taking a course of tablets.

[NHS England](#) has [launched](#) a platform allowing people to order self-testing kits for hepatitis C. The tests can be ordered from [here](#) and require a small blood sample which is then sent via post to a lab for analysis. Results are returned within two weeks, and anybody who receives a positive result will be contacted by a healthcare professional to discuss the result. The portal has been developed in partnership with several organisations, including [The Hepatitis C Trust](#).

[NHS England](#) notes that the discreet test kit and the ability to order them online will support efforts to extend hepatitis C testing to people that have not yet been engaged by other services, such as drug and alcohol services or prison and probation services. The tests, they say, will be critical to eliminating the virus in the UK as the remaining population of positive cases become smaller and increasingly challenging to reach.

Rachel Halford, CEO of [The Hepatitis C Trust](#), commented that “People can be exposed to hepatitis C a number of ways, including having a blood transfusion before the early 1990s, having medical treatment or a tattoo abroad or via injecting drugs use. Free, at-home testing kits will give anyone who is worried about hepatitis C the ability to find out their status quickly and confidentially.”

---

## London Joint Working Group conference due to take place on Friday 9th June



**LJWG Conference 2023: the final push for hepatitis C elimination in London**  
Friday June 9th 2023  
NCVO Conference Centre, Society Building, 8 All Saints Street, London, N1 9RL

**LONDON JOINT WORKING GROUP**  
ON SUBSTANCE USE + HEPATITIS C

---

### **LJWG Conference 2023: the final push for hepatitis C elimination in London**

The [London Joint Working Group on Substance Use and Hepatitis C \(LJWG\)](#) annual conference will bring together professionals and patient advocates working in hepatitis C care in London. This year our theme is 'the final push for hepatitis C elimination in London'.

The annual conference of the [London Joint Working Group on Substance Use and Hepatitis C](#) is taking place in King's Cross on Friday 9th June, bringing together professionals and patient advocates working in hepatitis C care in London. The theme of the conference is 'the final push for hepatitis C elimination in London' and will mark the achievements across London so far in working towards eliminating hepatitis C, and will focus on what more needs to be done to achieve and maintain elimination in the critical years ahead.

The sessions throughout the day will include talks on: Where we are now: the journey so far & what we need to do to achieve elimination; Embedding hepatitis C testing and treatment into systems to maintain elimination; Preventing new infections: rebuilding harm reduction services; and Inclusion health: Learning from successes in approaches to hepatitis C to reduce health inequalities.

Due to popular demand, in-person spaces at the event are now at capacity but you can [register here](#) to take part in the event online. Keynote speakers include both current and former CEOs of [The Hepatitis C Trust](#), Rachel Halford and Charles Gore, and Professor David Nutt, the first chair of the [LJWG](#).

---

### News and reports

\* The [UK Health Security Agency](#) has [published a blog](#) on taking a place-based approach to eliminating hepatitis C in prisons. It covers the burden of hepatitis infection in prisons, the elimination and prevention of hepatitis within them, and the data challenges involved in diagnosis and treatment.

\* [Infectious Disease News](#) has [published](#) research finding that women in America with health insurance (51.2%) were significantly more likely to start hepatitis C treatment than uninsured women (3.5%).

\* The journal [Scientific Reports](#) has [published research](#) by a team of scientists finding that HCV, HIV and HBV rapid test diagnosis in non-clinical outreach settings can be as accurate as conventional laboratory tests.

\* Online journalism outlet [Vice](#) has [published](#) an article outlining a link between high hepatitis C rates in Australia's prison population (10-15% of the prison population) and the country's drug laws and needle and syringe provision policies. Vice has also [published](#) an article about HCV stigma.

\* The [Malaysian Ministry of Health](#) has [announced a new wave](#) of funding for the Malaysian AIDS Foundation to work on HIV and hepatitis C prevention programmes.

\* [Forbes](#) has [published an account](#) of Egypt's national programme to eliminate hepatitis C, following the country declaring that they have successfully eliminated the virus after having once been the country with the highest incidence globally.

\* The [local Government of Newfoundland and Labrador](#), a province in Canada, [has announced](#) the creation of a Steering Committee on the elimination of hepatitis C. The Committee will develop a Newfoundland and Labrador Framework for elimination.

---

## Share good practice

If you would like your service to be featured as a good practice case study on the HCV Action website, have any news to share with colleagues, or would be interested in being an [HCV Action Ambassador](#), please send an email to [hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk](mailto:hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk).



---

*HCV Action is co-funded by AbbVie, Gilead, and MSD.  
The Hepatitis C Trust provides secretariat support to HCV Action.*

Please encourage colleagues to join HCV Action for free hepatitis C related updates and tools by emailing their full contact details to [hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk](mailto:hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk).

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

---

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>  
[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)  
HCV Action · 27 Crosby Row · London, SE1 3YD · United Kingdom

