

HCVAction

Bringing you the latest hepatitis C news and events

November 2019

HCV Action holds prison roadshow in Southern England



[HCV Action](#) held a roadshow focusing on hepatitis C testing and treatment in prisons focused on the South of England.

As the opening speaker at the event, Mark Gillyon-Powell, National Lead for Public Health (Secure and Detained) at [NHS England/NHS Improvement](#), stressed the value of accelerated hepatitis C elimination and commented on the cost-effectiveness of initiatives to achieve this, such as incentives for patients to get tested.

After this, Professor Sumita Verma, Sussex ODN Clinical Lead and Hepatology Clinical Nurse Specialist Mucha Marufu then presented on the work of the Sussex ODN; Michelle Storer, former [NHS England](#) Senior Commissioner and Project Manager in the London region, explained the processes that had led to an increase in the take-up of opt-out testing in that region; [The Hepatitis C Trust](#) prison team talked from their own lived experience of the value of treatment for residents; and Kate Jack PhD, Advanced Virology Nurse Specialist at [Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust](#), spoke about treatment in prisons in the Nottingham area.

Following a question and answer session after lunch, Rachel Halford and Sean Cox from [The Hepatitis C Trust](#) described the lessons that had been learnt from recent whole-prison testing days. Finally, attendees divided into two workshops,

one with Francis Williams from [Forward Trust](#) focusing on working with substance misuse teams in prisons and the second with Janet Catt, Nurse Consultant at [King's College Hospital](#), on achieving SVR (sustained virologic response) if a resident is released part way through treatment. During this session, participants were told about a toolkit published by [Public Health England](#) on continuity of care for substance misuse patients leaving prison which may be of use to those working to improve follow-up. The toolkit can be accessed [here](#).

A full report on the day along with presentation slides will be available soon on the [HCV Action](#) website.

London Joint Working Group announces 2020 conference



[London Joint Working Group on Substance Misuse and Hepatitis C](#) has announced its 2020 conference will take place on January 27th. This year's conference will hear from experts across London about barriers and solutions to being the first global city to microeliminate hepatitis C. In particular, the focus will be on the work the LSWG has been coordinating with the Mayor of London's office as part of Sadiq Khan's health inequalities strategy.

The final agenda will be published by the end of November 2019 and will include sessions on:

- The UK and London's current progress towards elimination
- The impact of the elimination deal initiatives
- What is happening on the ground from representatives from drug and homelessness services and prisons
- Learning from the Fast Track Cities HIV initiative
- The importance of effective data sharing
- Funding and commissioning challenges
- Innovations in testing, including delivery in primary care and pharmacies

- Improving access to treatment

Those who wish to attend can register their interest [here](#).

New good practice case study: Pharmacy in Ramsgate giving out daily treatment

HCV Action: Sharing good practice hub

Case study: Hepatitis C treatment dispensed from pharmacy

Published November 2019

HCVAction

Courts Pharmacy hepatitis C treatment dispensing

Hepatitis C treatment given out daily from community pharmacy to support under-served patients

Key points

- Courts Pharmacy in Ramsgate provides hepatitis C treatment for patients accessing its drug treatment services.
- The pathway was made possible by linking The Forward Trust, Courts Pharmacy and Kent Network via Kings ODN.
- Patients who are deemed unlikely to independently manage four weeks of treatment are given the medication in the pharmacy itself so they do not have to look after large numbers of tablets for long periods of time.
- The initiative got around current legislative barriers preventing the dispensing of hepatitis C treatment from pharmacies by giving the patient the bottle when they came to collect their daily OST and taking it back for safe storage afterwards.

A new case study has been published on the [HCV Action](#) website on how a pharmacy was able to treat patients for hepatitis C, despite legislative barriers which prevent the dispensing of hepatitis C medication. The study covers a collaboration between [Courts Pharmacy](#) in Ramsgate, a nurse from [East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust](#), and [The Forward Trust](#). Patients who are deemed unlikely to independently manage four weeks of treatment are given the medication in the pharmacy itself so they do not have to look after large numbers of tablets for long periods of time.

Courts Pharmacy only holds the medication in safe-keeping for patients, leaving them to take the drugs out of the bottle themselves. Every day, when the patient comes to the pharmacy to collect their OST, pharmacy staff also hand them their bottle of medication and observe them taking one tablet, after which point the bottle is handed back for safe storage.

Read the full case study [here](#).

First phase of evidence sessions for Infected Blood Inquiry



This month, the initial phase of the [Infected Blood Inquiry](#) hearing testimony from those affected by infected blood concluded. The last three weeks of evidence hearings brought the number of people affected who had given evidence to 189.

In his concluding remarks the Chair of the Inquiry, Sir Brian Langstaff, spoke about the inquiry's next steps.

The next hearings are in February when the inquiry will hear from the Inquiry intermediaries and the expert groups who will be giving evidence on the psychological and social impacts of living with infections and current knowledge about hepatitis, HIV, haemophilia and blood and bleeding disorders.

In early June, hearings will start with clinicians and others who can shed light on the policies and practices of centres across the UK.

Notes from Inquiry sessions can be accessed on The Hepatitis C Trust website [here](#).

News and reports

* [HCV Action](#) has announced its next [#HCVchat](#) will be hosted by Kate Jack PhD, Research Associate and Advanced Virology Nurse Specialist, University of Nottingham and Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, focusing on testing and treatment in prisons. You can ask Kate your questions about testing and treatment in prisons on Twitter using the hashtag [#HCVchat](#) from 7pm on 18th December.

* A scheme offering Greggs vouchers to drug users who get tested for hepatitis was covered in The Guardian this month. [Gateshead and South Tyneside Local Pharmaceutical Committee](#) (LPC) is inviting pharmacies to participate in the scheme as part of efforts to eliminate the virus. The [Royal Society for Public Health](#) welcomed the "creative approach". The LPC said it was looking for expressions of interest from South Tyneside pharmacies that are already

delivering needle exchange services or other services for drug users to take part in the scheme. Read the article [here](#).

* [The Hepatitis C Trust](#) launched its manifesto for hepatitis C elimination following the announcement of a general election this month. Read the manifesto [here](#). The Conservative manifesto says they "will take a new approach to treatment so we can reduce drug deaths and break the cycle of crime linked to addiction". The Labour Party manifesto says the party will establish a Royal Commission to develop a public health approach to substance misuse, focusing on harm reduction rather than criminalisation, and pledges fair compensation for infected blood victims. The Liberal Democrats pledge to "act on the recommendations of the Public Inquiry into Infected Blood, ensuring a just settlement for victims and their families" and also say they would move to a public health approach towards drugs and invest in more addiction services and support for drug users.

* Five charities, [HIV Scotland](#), [Waverley Care](#), [The Hepatitis C Trust](#), [Terrence Higgins Trust Scotland](#), and the [Hwupenyu Project](#) wrote to all prospective parliamentary candidates in Scotland for the upcoming general election to ask them to back a new approach to drug policy. Using the hashtag [#DrugReformNow](#), PPCs can pledge their support for the campaign by posting on social media confirming their support with a printable pledge. It follows the publication of a report from the House of Commons' Scottish Affairs Committee – [Problem Drug Use in Scotland](#) – which called for a new approach to drug policy. Read more about the campaign [here](#).

* Research published in the [Journal of Viral Hepatitis](#) showed that successful treatment with direct-acting antivirals (DAAs) is correlated with reduced relative risk of decompensated cirrhosis, liver cancer, liver-related death, and mortality from all causes according to research based on patients in Scotland. By comparison, patients who did not comply with a treatment regime experienced a higher relative risk of all four hazards. The research had a study population of 1,073. You can read more [here](#).

* Another article in the journal described a high-rate of re-infection with hepatitis C in patients within prisons in North East England. Of 111 patients who achieved SVR in the study period, 21 (19%) were subsequently identified as having been re-infected. This equated to a reinfection rate of 0.406 cases per person-year follow-up. According to the authors, "the high HCV re-infection rate suggests a need to improve harm reduction approaches." Read more [here](#).

* The journal also published research from the United States showing:

- Improved patient-reported outcomes in patients with and without liver fibrosis for those patients achieving SVR with DAAs. Read more [here](#).
- Nurse case management has a positive impact on linkage to care for patients co-infected with hepatitis C and HIV. Read more [here](#).

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.



*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.

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>>](mailto:)
[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)
HCV Action · 27 Crosby Row · London, SE1 3YD · United Kingdom

