



Dear Colleagues,

PHE London Hepatitis C Update

World Hepatitis Day takes place on 28th July this year and PHE London would like to take the opportunity to remind Local Authorities and Service Providers of the range of resources available to look at the issue of Hepatitis C at a local level. Up to 58,000 people in London have been exposed to the virus, with 40,000 of these people estimated to have active disease. Forty percent of these people are thought to be undiagnosed. Ninety percent of those affected by Hepatitis C will have acquired their infection through injecting drug use.

New Direct Acting Antivirals (DAAs) have revolutionised the treatment of Hepatitis C in recent years, reducing the amount of time treatment takes, vastly improving cure rates, and eliminating unpleasant side effects. In January 2018, NHSE committed to eliminating Hepatitis C five years earlier than the goal set by the World Health Organisation of 2030.

Ensuring a joined up local approach which enables access to testing and easy onward referral to Hepatitis C treatment is key to tackling the issue. This is therefore an opportunity to further stimulate conversations about how your local area is tackling Hepatitis C. Please also circulate this bulletin to other local stakeholders.

Hepatitis C Treatment

PHE Public Health matters: The importance of Hepatitis C treatment for people who inject drugs.

Read more about the compelling reasons to treat drug users for Hepatitis C: <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2017/07/28/the-importance-of-hepatitis-c-treatment-for-people-who-inject-drugs/>

And the reasons to test for it: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-health-england-encourages-hepatitis-c-testing>

New Hepatitis C Treatments

Since 2015, a new range of Direct Acting Antivirals have become available to treat Hepatitis C, with shorter treatment times, better outcomes and fewer side effects. The new treatments are only available via four Operational Delivery Networks (ODNs) across London and access to treatment is made by a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) in each ODN. Drug treatment services in most London boroughs have direct referral routes into their local ODN, and where these are not available, PHE would encourage local areas to initiate discussions with their local ODN. NHSE produced their clinical commissioning policy statement in January 2018. The outcome of the current drug procurement process is expected to be announced by NHSE in Autumn 2018: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2018/01/hepatitis-c-2/>

All Local Authorities are encouraged to consider referral pathways to their local ODN to ensure that their residents can gain access to the new treatments. Please contact emma.burke@phe.gov.uk if you do not know how to make contact with your local Operational Delivery Network or would like support in developing pathways.

Turning Evidence into Practice: Improving Access to and Completion of Hepatitis C Treatment

This short briefing has the latest practical advice for commissioners and services on improving access to, and completion of, Hepatitis C treatment. It provides an overview of the key issues that local providers and commissioners of drug and Hepatitis C treatment should consider. It covers testing for Hepatitis C and then acting on a positive result to support someone in getting effective treatment. To access the briefing please use this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/treating-substance-misuse-and-related-harm-turning-evidence-into-practice/improving-access-to-hepatitis-c-treatment-turning-evidence-into-practice>

Cost effectiveness of Hepatitis C Treatment

This paper outlines the case for treating Hepatitis C and the cost benefits it will bring. Please follow the link for more information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-study-reveals-the-costs-of-low-uptake-of-hepatitis-c-treatment>

Hepatitis C Data and Prevalence

Local Prevalence Estimates of Hepatitis C

PHE provides local estimates of those living with Hepatitis C in each Local Authority area. Please follow the link for local data:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hepatitis-c-commissioning-template-for-estimating-disease-prevalence>

National Drug Treatment Monitoring Service (NDTMS) Data Recording

Core Data Set N, introduced in April 2017, has increased the number of mandatory Hepatitis C data fields contained in NDTMS. Providers are now encouraged to gather information about PCR test results and whether service users have been referred to hepatology. PHE would like to encourage commissioners to check that providers are gathering and recording this information and use the data to monitor local service delivery. Further information on these fields is included in the NDTMS Business definitions: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/alcohol-and-drug-misuse-treatment-core-dataset-collection-guidance>

Information about current levels of testing in local drug services is available to Local Authority commissioners and providers on the restricted section of the following site: <https://www.ndtms.net/>

Hepatitis C in the UK 2018 Report

This report gives the latest data on Hepatitis C in the UK. This indicates that around 160,000 people in England have Hepatitis C. Further information can be found in the report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hepatitis-c-in-the-uk>

Hepatitis C in London Report

This report gives the most up to date information about Hepatitis C in London. In London, an estimated 60,000 people have been infected with Hepatitis C (meaning they are Hepatitis C antibody positive), of whom 40,000 have not cleared the infection. An estimated 40% remain undiagnosed. Further information can be found in the report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hepatitis-c-in-london-annual-review>

HIV and Viral Hepatitis Monitoring in People who Inject Drugs (PWID)

The latest data tables and report from the Unlinked Anonymous Monitoring Survey of injecting drug users are available on the PHE website. The report presents an overview of the trends for HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and risk behaviours for people who inject drugs and that are participating in the main UAM Survey. Data from the survey shows that Hepatitis C remains the most common infection among PWIDs with 53% having antibodies to Hepatitis C. Just under half remain unaware of their infection. The uptake of testing for Hepatitis C has increased over the past decade, but remains low in those who have recently initiated injecting.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/people-who-inject-drugs-hiv-and-viral-hepatitis-monitoring>

Shooting Up: infections among people who inject drugs in the UK

The latest 'Shooting Up' report gives further information on the extent of infections in people who inject drugs: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shooting-up-infections-among-people-who-inject-drugs-in-the-uk>

PHE Liver Profiles

The PHE Liver Profiles provide a valuable resource relating to one of the leading causes of premature mortality, a disease where mortality rates are increasing in England but decreasing in most EU countries. The Liver Profiles support the development of Joint Strategic Needs Assessments to assist Health and Wellbeing Boards present key local statistics and highlighting questions to ask locally about current action to prevent liver disease. Please follow the link for more information:

<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/liver-disease>

Resources for Services and Service Users

Harm Reduction Works

This website contains a range of posters and materials which can be printed or purchased to promote awareness of Hepatitis C, and other BBVs, in local services.

http://www.harmreductionworks.org.uk/hep_c.html

The London Joint Working Group (LJWG) on Hepatitis C and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine produced two booklets for service users - one for those who don't have Hepatitis C but may be at risk, and one for those who have been diagnosed. The booklets were developed by LJWG in partnership with Dr Magdalena Harris of London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, with service user input.

Hep C Info: Understanding Hepatitis C and Staying Safe. This booklet explains what Hepatitis C is, how to avoid getting it or passing it on, as well as information on your rights to testing and treatment.

Hep C Care: Living with Hepatitis C and Treatment Options. This booklet contains information about living with Hepatitis C, your rights and treatment.

The booklets are available free online at

<http://ljwg.org.uk/ljwg-toolkit/educational-tools/>

Further Hepatitis C resources

PHE Hepatitis C Data, Guidance and analysis:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hepatitis-c-guidance-data-and-analysis>

NICE Public Health Guideline 52: This guidance makes recommendations on needle and syringe programmes: <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/PH52>

NICE Public Health Guideline 38: Hepatitis B and C: Ways to promote and offer testing to people with increased risk of infection:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph43>

Organisations providing further support on Hepatitis C

London Joint Working Group on Hepatitis C: <http://ljwg.org.uk/>

British Liver Trust: <http://www.britishlivertrust.org.uk/>

Hepatitis C Trust: <http://www.hepctrust.org.uk/>

Worldwide Prison Health Research & Engagement Network:
<https://wephren.tqhn.org/>