

ATTITUDES TOWARDS HEPATITIS C AND TREATMENT WILLINGNESS AMONG PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS

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CONCLUSIONS

- A majority of people who inject drugs (PWID) wanted more information about hepatitis C (HCV).
- Treatment willingness did not change after 6 months in opioid maintenance treatment (OMT).
- No factors associated with treatment willingness.

Need for more information about and easy referral to HCV therapy as part of opioid maintenance treatment.

BACKGROUND

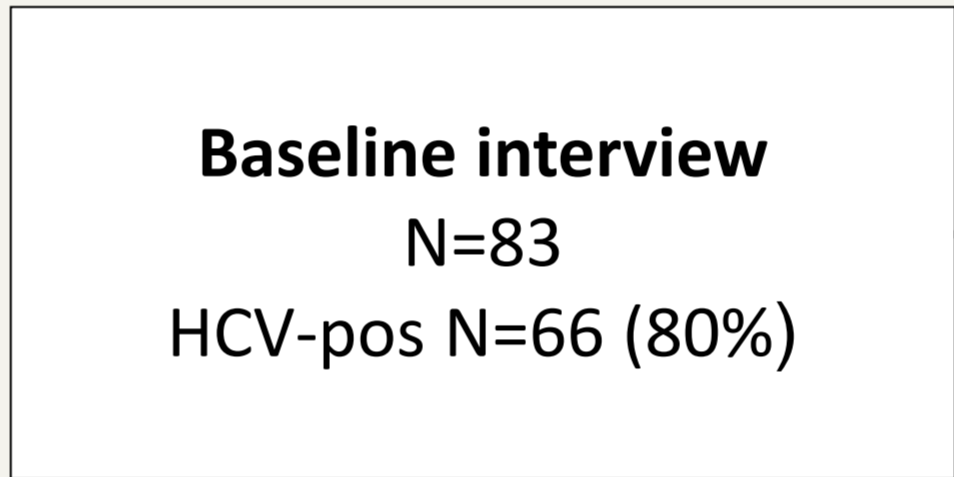
HCV prevalence is 60-91% among PWID at Malmö needle exchange (NEP) (1). Cirrhosis and hepatocellular cancer develops within 20 years in 10-15% of people with HCV (2). Opioid maintenance treatment (OMT) reduces the risk of overdose and thus increases the incentives for HCV treatment from an expected survival point of view (3).

Thus, we aimed to

- assess the **attitude towards HCV** among people with heroin dependence at Malmö NEP starting OMT,
- investigate the **level of HCV treatment willingness** and correlates thereof.

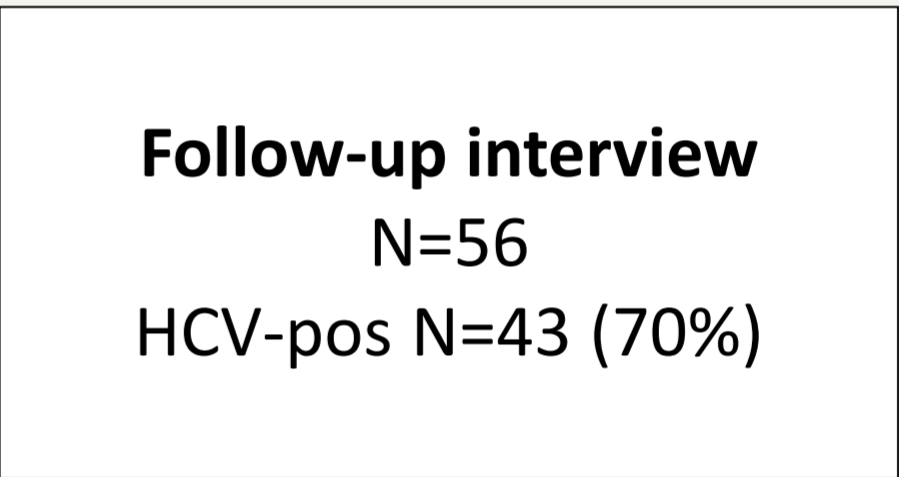
SUBJECTS & METHODS

Recruitment for MATRIS*



6 months

Patients still in OMT



Structured interviews including 20 questions concerning HCV, at baseline and follow-up.

* Malmö treatment referral and intervention study, aiming to refer opioid dependent PWID from NEP to OMT (4). Recruitment at Malmö NEP October 2011-April 2013.

RESULTS

ATTITUDES TOWARDS HCV – Change baseline to follow-up

Variable (all study participants, N=56)	Baseline n (% of N=56)	Follow-up n (% of N=56)	P-value
Wanting more information about HCV	33 (59 %)	33 (59 %) ²	1.00
Holding some knowledge about treatment	42 (75 %)	47 (84 %)	0.27

Variable (HCV positive persons, N=43)	Baseline n (% of N=43)	Follow-up n (% of N=43)	P-value
Wanting HCV treatment now/later	33 (77%)	30 (70%)	0.18

1) N_{missing}=1. Missing values are coded as “no”.
2) N_{missing}=2.
P-value calculated with McNemar test.

CORRELATIONS WITH HCV TREATMENT WILLINGNESS AT BASELINE

Variable (HCV positive persons, N=66)	Persons willing of HCV treatment n (% of 52)	Total sample n (% of 66)	OR (95% CI)	P-value
Holding some knowledge about treatment	40 (77%)	52 (79%)	0.56 (0.11-2.84)	0.72 ³
Wanting more information about HCV	31 (60 %) ¹	41 (62%) ¹	0.59 (0.16-2.13)	0.42 ²
HCV affecting life situation	8 (15%)	8 (12%)	NA	0.19 ³
Further assessed for HCV	14 (27%)	15 (23%)	4.78 (0.57-40.07)	0.16 ³
Belief that HCV heals during drug abstinence	20 (39%)	29 (44%)	0.35 (0.10-1.19)	0.08 ²
Belief that treatment always cure HCV	8 (15 %)	9 (14%)	2.36 (0.27-20.68)	0.67 ³
Belief that HCV infection may be deadly	42 (81%)	53 (80%)	1.15 (0.27-4.89)	1.00 ³
Male gender	38 (73%)	48 (73%)	1.09 (0.29-4.03)	1.00 ³
Age, median (IQR)	35.5 (30-43)	37.5 (31-43)	0.93 (0.87-1.00)	0.04*

1) N_{missing}=1. Missing values are coded as “no”.
2) P-value calculated with Chi-Square test.
3) P-value calculated with Fisher’s exact test.
*) Statistically significant, p<0,05. P-value calculated with logistic regression analysis..

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