The Catalan model of hepatitis care, a special approach in prisons
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A special approach to eliminate HCV infection in Catalan prisons by 2021, as part of the wider regional elimination plan

Aim: to eliminate HCV infection in Catalan prisons before 2021 through the systematic screening of HCV upon admission to prison, to decrease reinfection rates and to decrease loss to follow-up after release by linking to specialist care

Why is a special approach in prisons needed?

- Heterogeneity in operating procedures and categories of prisoners across the 9 prisons in Catalonia

What is the microelimination approach in prison and how does it work?

Key features of Catalonia’s prison elimination plan

- Universal, voluntary infection screening on admission
- Periodic screening for those with high-risk behaviours
- Harm reduction programmes (OST, NSP) & vaccinations
- Information and educational activities
- Viral infection training (external consultants, prison doctors)
- Intra/extra penitentiary co-ordination

Strengths of the programme

- Universal screening reduces the risk of undetected infection
- Easier access to high-risk and/or difficult-to-reach groups who have little contact with conventional care (PWID, psychiatric patients)
- Opportunity to educate and offer harm reduction and vaccinations
- Opportunity to act as epidemiological observatories of some populations at risk of HCV infection/reinfection

Outcomes of prison elimination programme and nurse liaison

- 83.7% of inmates screened
- 860 inmates treated with DAAs (2015–2018)
- 2.2% decrease in HCV RNA+ among inmates from 2018 to 2019

What is the microelimination approach in prison and how does it work?

Prison elimination programme and nurse liaison

- HCV-infected inmates
- Released untreated
- DAA treatment not completed
- SVR but needs screening for HCC

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