HCV TREATMENT UPTAKE AMONG MARGINALIZED PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS IN NORWAY: A REGISTRY-BASED STUDY

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Background:
Improving HCV treatment uptake among people who inject drugs (PWID) is crucial to achieve the WHO elimination targets, but there is a paucity in data on DAA treatment uptake among PWID. The aim was to assess HCV treatment uptake and associated factors in a large cohort of PWID in Norway.

Methods:
Registry-based observational study where all registered users of the City of Oslo's low-threshold social and health services for PWID between 2010-2016 were linked to HCV notifications (1990-2019; 67% HCV RNA+, 33% anti-HCV+) and prescriptions of HCV treatment, OAT and benzodiazepines (2004-2019). HCV treatment rates were calculated using person-time of observation assuming a Poisson distribution. Factors associated with treatment uptake were explored using logistic regression analysis.

Results:
Among 2436 participants with notified HCV infection (median age at end of observation 45.9 years, 30.7% female, 73.3% OAT), 1118 (45.9%) received HCV treatment between 2010-2019 for an overall treatment incidence of 7.39/100 PY (95% CI 6.96-7.83). Treatment was interferon-based in 102 (9.1%) and DAA-based in 1016 (90.1%) individuals. Treatment rates increased from 1.42/100 PY (95% CI 1.12-1.78) in the pre-DAA period (2010-2013) to 3.51/100 PY (95% CI 3.04-4.04) in the early DAA period (2014-2016; fibrosis restrictions) and 18.4/100 PY (95% CI 17.19-19.70) in the late DAA period (2017-2019; no fibrosis restrictions), peaking at 24.07/100 PY (95% CI 21.68-26.66) in 2018 (Figure 1). DAA uptake was less likely among females (aOR 0.68; 95% CI 0.62-0.87) and more likely among participants with current OAT use (aOR 1.34; 95% CI 1.11-1.62).

Conclusion:
Treatment uptake among PWID increased in the DAA era. Strategies to enhance treatment among women and individuals not engaged in OAT should be addressed.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:
HM, OD and KU have received lecture and consultancy fees from Gilead, MSD and Abbvie. No pharmaceutical grants were received in the development of this study.

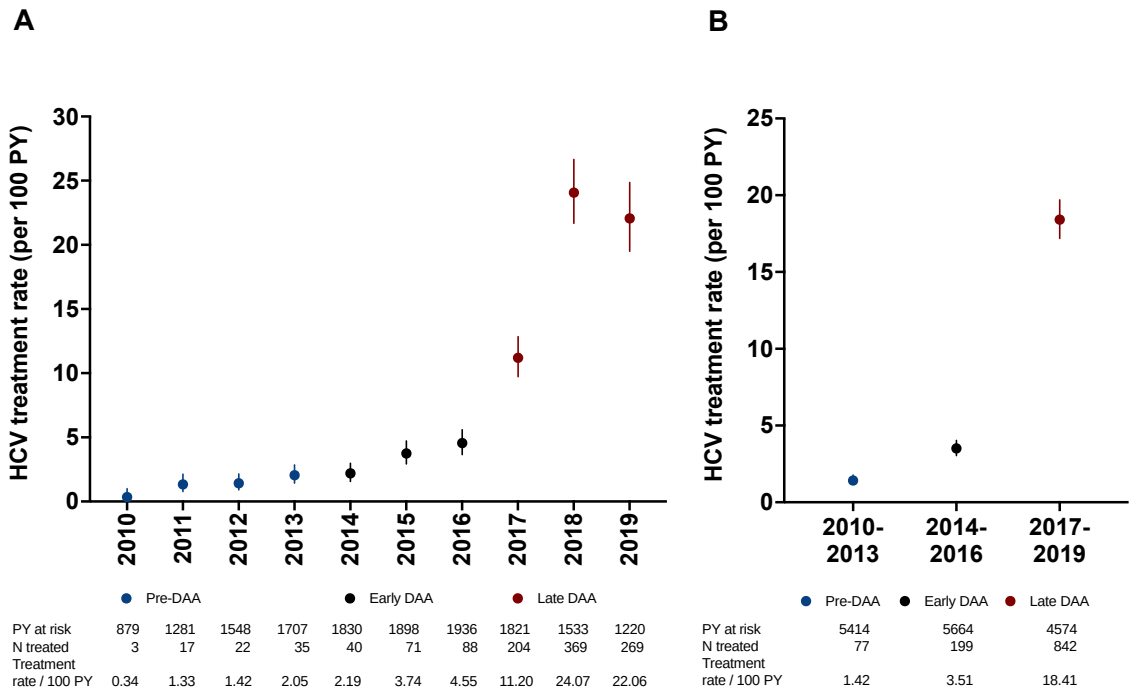

Figure. Annual HCV treatment incidence rates (2010-2019) among people who inject drugs in Oslo, Norway. Dots represent point estimates and bars represent Poisson 95% confidence intervals.