

PRISON TRANSITION PROGRAM, A COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAM; THAT FACILITATES THE CONTINUITY OF CARE FOR CLIENTS IN DIFFERENT PHASES OF HCV TREATMENT AMONG PEOPLE TRANSITIONING IN OR OUT OF CORRECTIONAL CENTRE IN SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND

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Background/Approach:

The prevalence of Hepatitis C in the prisoner population is higher than the general population. Diagnostics and treatment of HCV in prisons faces many challenges such as: Frequency of movement – Discharges direct from court – Short sentencing - Loss of medication after release – Lost to follow-up results and where to get treatment/support in the Public Health System.

Analysis/Argument:

Prison Transition Service offered through QulHN Prison Transition Worker aims to reduce the disruptions of the individual's HCV treatment of clients transitioning out or into the prisons by modelling a centralised referrals pathway between 4 SEQ correctional centres and community service providers.

Outcome/Results:

Total of 336 clients were referred into the program since the start of the program Feb 2019 until 31st of December 2020. Total of 219 from 4 SEQ centre, the remaining 117 clients were from 8 other correctional centres. Of these 336 clients; 277 referrals were made to other Health Services and Systems. 162 into prison health service and 115 into community services. The referrals were made to either HCV testing, follow-up results, commence treatment either in prison or in the community, deliver lost medication and connection to other services like counselling or other welfare services.

Conclusions/Applications:

Very positive views of the service both from clients and stakeholders. A steady increase in referrals were seen over time because of increased presence within prisons. This equally increased number of referrals into the Prison health system. With the increased number of referrals, there is a need for expanding the service with an additional worker to cover current demand and to service remaining prisons in QLD. COVID 19 restrictions and updated data to April 2021 will be discussed.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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