

ENHANCING HEALTH EQUITY THROUGH ONSITE INTERVENTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN PUBLIC HEALTH AND RIVER STONE RECOVERY CENTRE IN NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA

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Background:

This project involves onsite engagement at River Stone Recovery Centre (RSRC) with hard-to-reach clients, aiming to improve collaboration through a knowledge exchange between Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and RSRC staff. The focus is on an HCV nurse-led treatment model in people who inject drugs (PWID) to address health inequities.

Description of program:

This intervention involves a nurse-led treatment model for HCV care in PWID at RSRC. The model aims to address health inequities by providing onsite services to hard-to-reach clients. It includes tracking HCV data, completing surveillance forms, and facilitating testing for OAT participants. The intervention also focuses on increasing vaccination rates and collaborating on other health issues, such as food security, to improve overall health outcomes for River Stone participants.

Effectiveness:

From September 2023 to February 2024 a total of 118 action items were carried out by PHAC nurses at RSRC. Out of the action items, 72 vaccinations were completed. Immunizations included 1 influenza, 38 Twinrix, 30 Pneumo-23, and 3 Hepatitis A vaccines. Other action items included 6 follow-up sessions for communicable diseases, 14 sessions of harm reduction education, 7 distributions of harm reduction supplies, 3 sessions of sexual health education, 10 distributions of sexual health supplies, and 6 sessions of immunization education.

Conclusion and next steps:

The HCV nurse-led treatment model has shown promising results in addressing health inequities among hard-to-reach clients. The collaboration between Public Health and RSRC staff has facilitated the completion of numerous action items including vaccinations and education sessions. The future focus of PHAC involves monitoring HCV data to gauge the model's impact on PWID at RSRC. Collaboration with RSRC staff will be strengthened through ongoing knowledge exchange, while efforts to boost vaccination rates and address health issues like food security will be expanded through integrated interventions and partnerships.

Disclosure of Interest Statement: