

A TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT HEPATITIS C (HCV) TESTING, TREATMENT, AND PREVENTION ADVOCACY EFFORTS IN THE PRISON SECTOR GLOBALLY: THE INHSU PRISONS HCV ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

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Background:

Prison-based hepatitis C virus (HCV) services are inadequate globally. Advocacy is needed to support HCV testing, treatment, and prevention scale-up. We conducted a global mixed methods scoping study amongst key stakeholders (policymakers/funders; implementers/service providers; community members). In Stage 1, we gathered recommendations for tools (separate abstract - accepted). This abstract presents the co-development process for the suite of advocacy tools in the INHSU Prisons HCV Advocacy Toolkit (Stage 2).

Methods:

Informed by findings from Stage 1, the Project Team drafted the templates and initial content for the advocacy tools. Key stakeholders (n=8) were engaged to provide various country-specific examples for inclusion in the tools. Draft tools were then shared with all key stakeholders from Stage 1 (n=25 participants from ten selected country settings [low-, middle, and high-income]) for review (feedback collected via survey and email) at two timepoints: 1) early drafts for input into topics/messages/design/format of tools; 2) near-finalised tools to refine, and understand acceptability of, the content/design/perceived suitability and utility of the tools by advocates. Feedback was incorporated and tools were finalised.

Results

A suite of 30 advocacy tools were co-developed, including factsheets (e.g. HCV testing/treatment; transmission/prevention; stigma/discrimination; HCV in prisons), how-to guides and templates (e.g. letters to parliament; press releases), and videos and infographics (e.g. best practice model of care case studies). Although tools were focused on selected country settings, they were designed for global usability. Initial feedback from in-country stakeholders suggests that the tools were well-designed, will meet advocacy needs, and are likely to be utilised by advocates.

Conclusion:

The Toolkit holds promise as a means of influencing and mobilising action for enhanced HCV testing, treatment, and prevention in prisons globally – a setting critical to global HCV elimination efforts. The Toolkit will be launched at INHSU2024, followed by global dissemination and further evaluation of uptake and utility.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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