

What's the point of hepatitis care? Evaluation of the HepLOGIC point of care tool.

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Background: Viral hepatitis diagnosis and management in primary care is crucial to preventing liver cancer. Clinical decision support systems interacting with the electronic medical record (EMR) at point of care (POC) can prompt clinicians to increase testing and improve care for people living with viral hepatitis. A POC tool was developed in the Population Level Reporting and Analysis (POLAR) data environment to identify people needing testing for, or management of viral hepatitis. Nineteen general practices were recruited to a pilot and feasibility study to test the tool.

Methods: Evaluation of the POC tool was conducted using online surveys and interviews with practice staff. It included ease of installation, training provided and barriers to use in everyday practice. Analysis of user metrics included reach and use of the tool.

Results:

Three practices failed to get their clinicians to use the tool and withdrew from the study. Fifty-eight GPs (+25 nurses) were set up with the tool from a reported 113 GPs (+47 nurses) in 16 practices, but uptake of the tool varied. Online surveys and interviews were completed by 37 users, comprising 13 practice managers/administrative staff and 24 clinicians. Reasons for not using the tool included lack of integration into the EMR, issues with the software and competing clinical pressures within the consultation. There was notable dissonance between clinicians' perceived usefulness of the tool and the user metrics.

Conclusion:

While POC tools may have potential in primary care to identify people needing screening and management for viral hepatitis, implementation is challenging. Lack of integration with the EMR and competing demands limit use in this setting. These findings suggest POC tools are not a panacea for improving care delivery for people living with viral hepatitis in Australia.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The authors have no disclosures of interest to declare.

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