



TREATMENT UPTAKE FOR HEPATITIS C INFECTION FOLLOWING AN INTERVENTION TO ENHANCE LINKAGE TO CARE AMONG PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS: THE ETHOS ENGAGE STUDY

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Background/Aims

Background: Despite unrestricted government subsidised direct-acting antiviral therapy for HCV since March 2016, gaps in treatment uptake remain.

Aims: Following an intervention to enhance linkage to care among people who inject drugs...

- What proportion of people initiated HCV treatment?
- How long did people take to initiate HCV treatment?
- What factors were associated with time to HCV treatment initiation?

Methods:



ETHOS ENGAGE

ETHOS Engage- observational cohort study

Location: 25 sites across Australia, OST clinics, drug & alcohol treatment, NSP sites

Wave 1 campaign days: May 2018 – September 2019

Study team: university academic and professional staff, peer support worker(s), and local clinical personnel

Inclusion criteria:

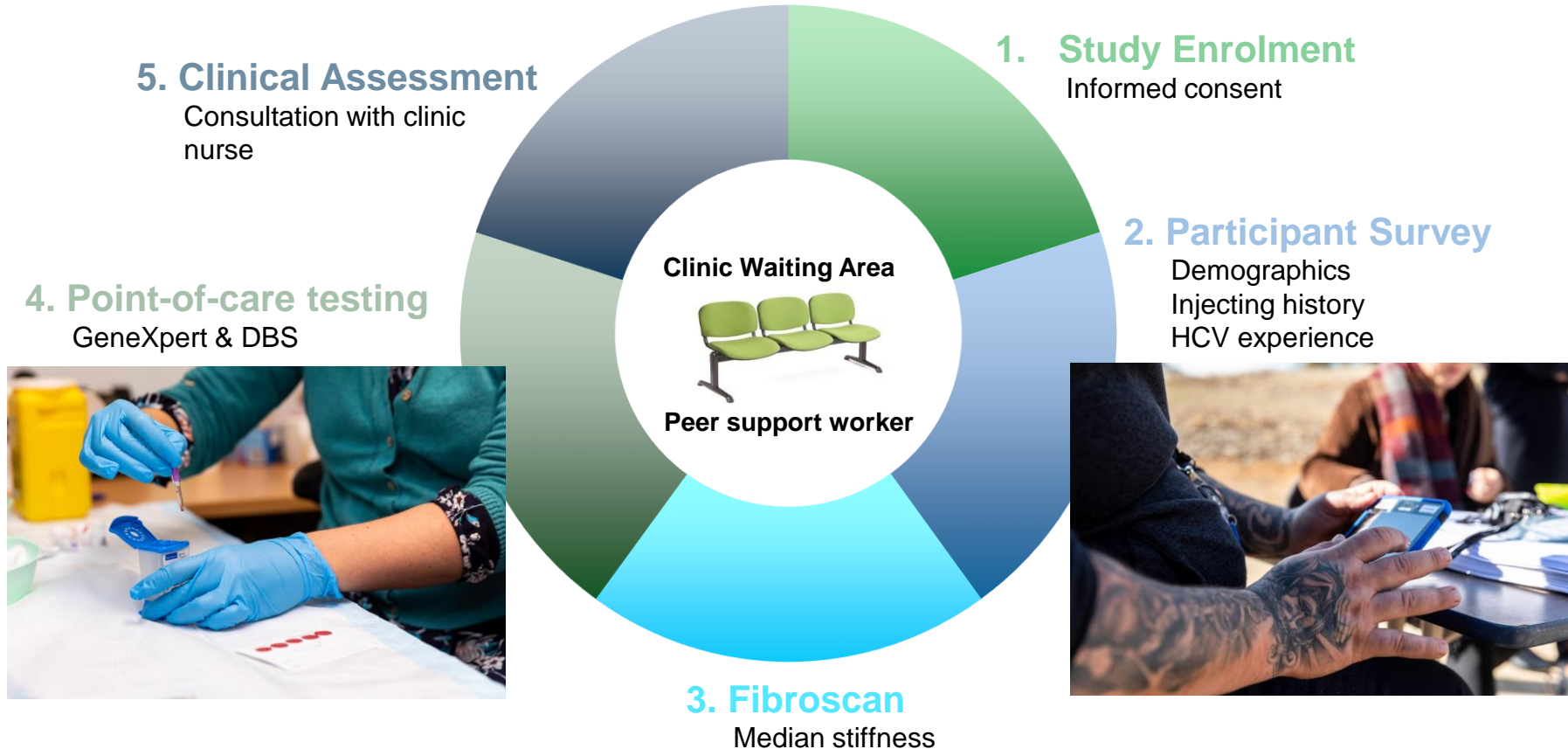
- ☒ 18 years of age or older;
- ☒ Written informed consent;
- ☒ History of injecting drug use;
- ☒ Recent injecting drug use (previous 6 months) OR currently receiving OAT.

Exclusion criteria:

- ☐ Women who are pregnant

Recruitment: 1,468 people

Methods: ETHOS Engage campaign days



Methods:



ETHOS ENGAGE

HCV RNA results were returned to clinics after quality assurance checks. Clinic staff contacted people with HCV RNA +ve result to initiate treatment.

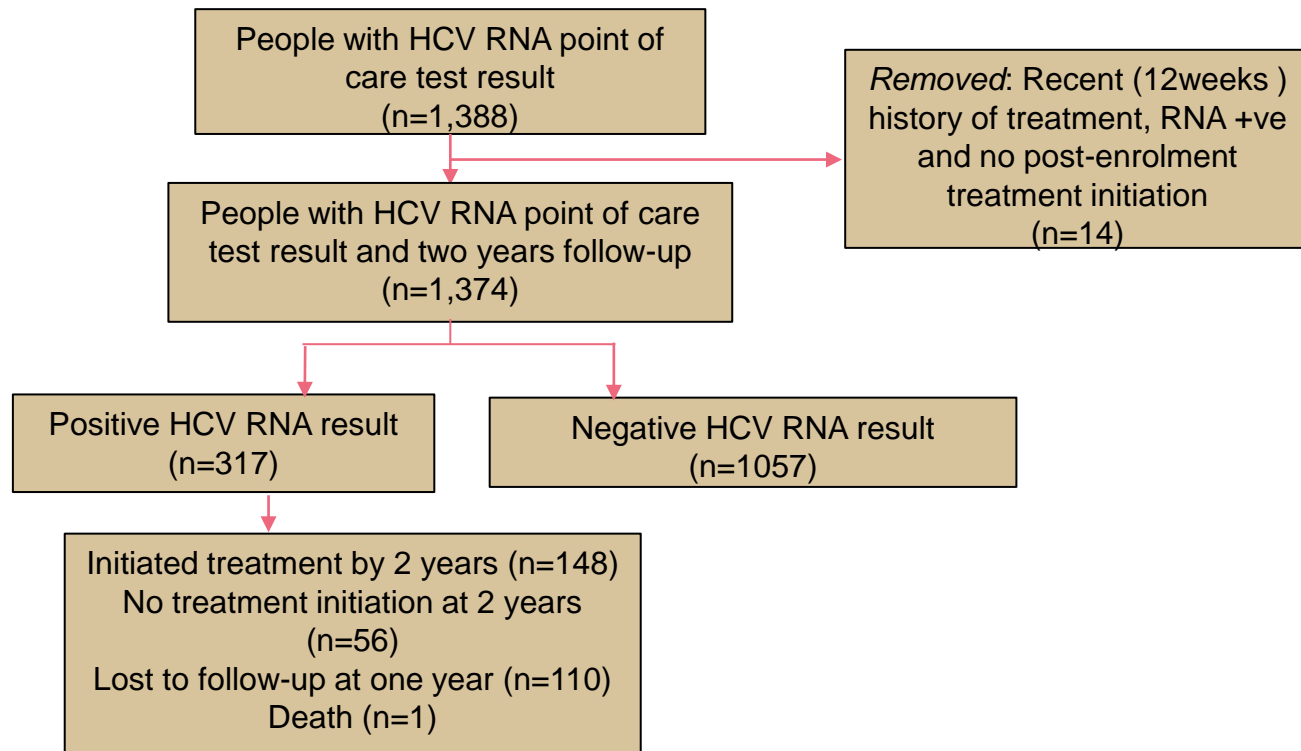
Sites reported treatment follow-up annually over two years

Survival analysis techniques using Kaplan-Meier estimator and Cox regression model

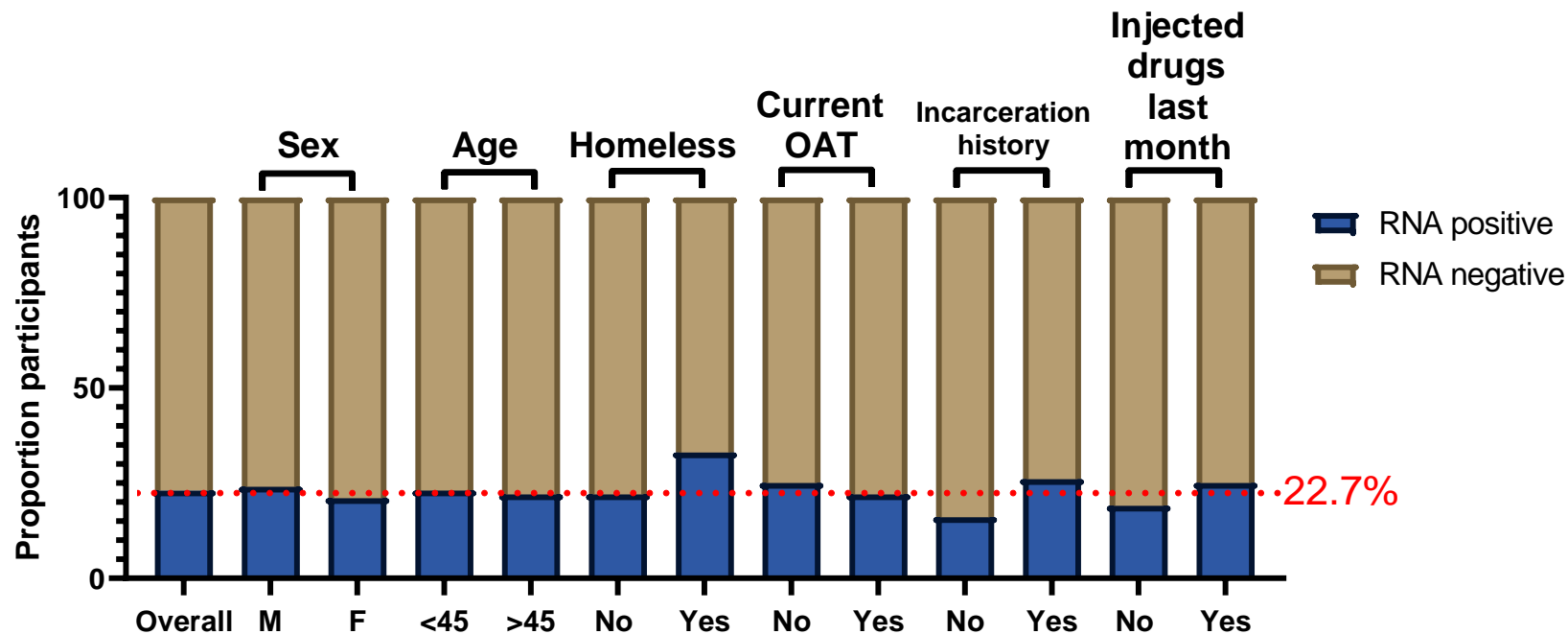
Event: Date of HCV treatment prescription

Observation time endpoint: First of the following: two years/ treatment initiation/ lost to follow-up/ death

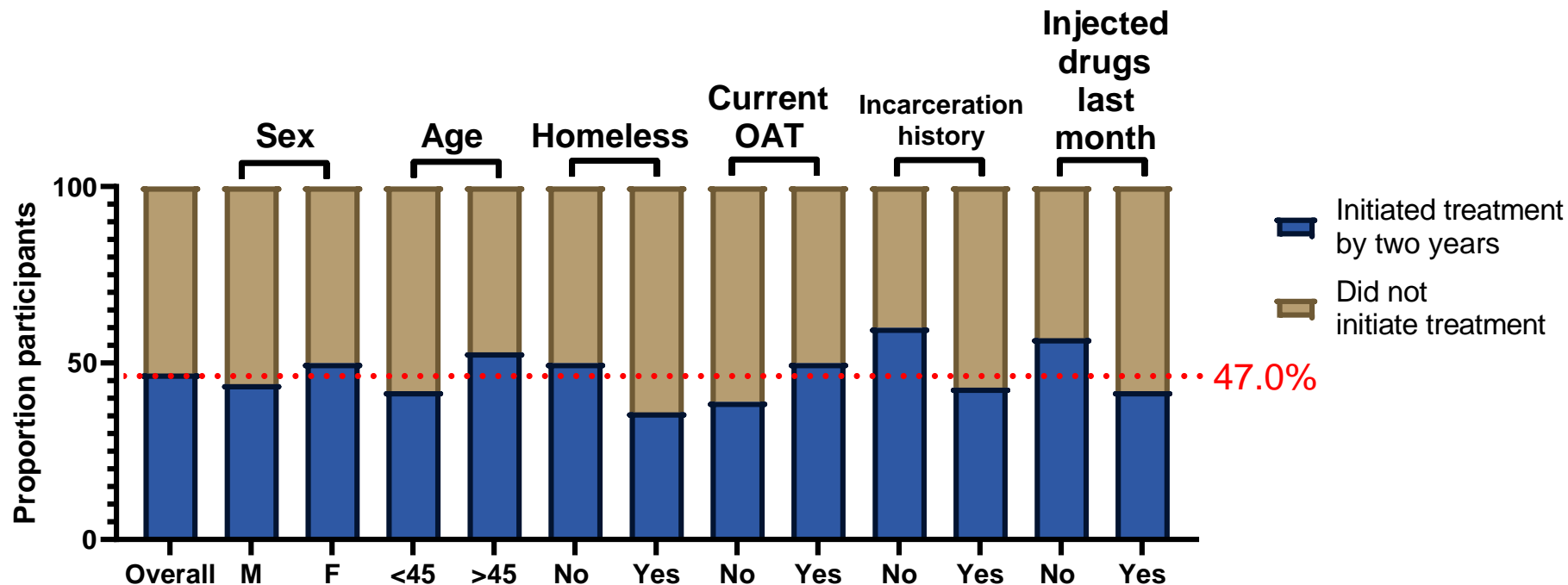
Results: inclusion flowchart



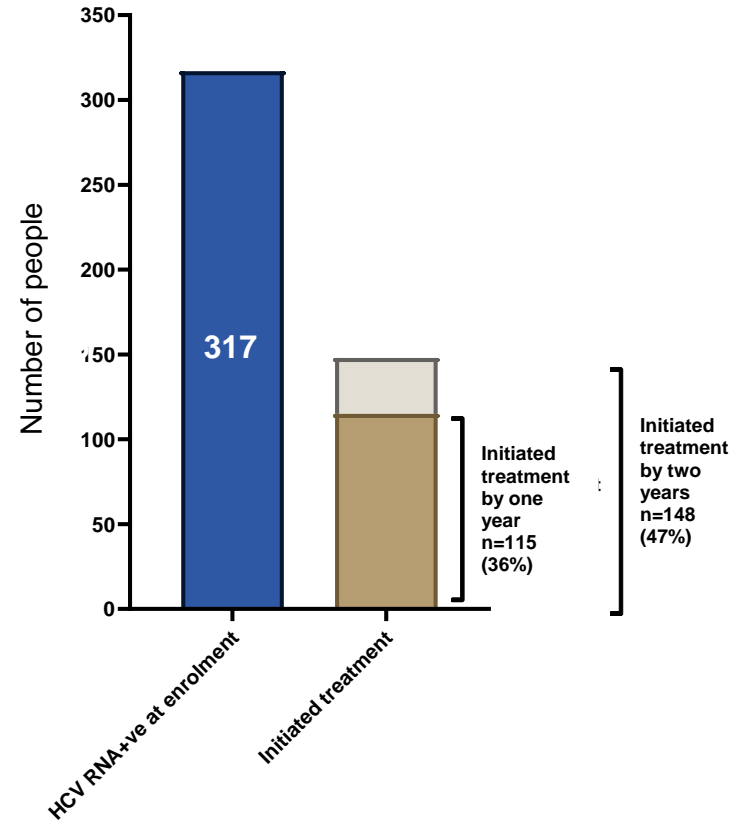
Results: HCV RNA result (N=1374)



Results: HCV treatment initiation among HCV RNA+ve (n=317)

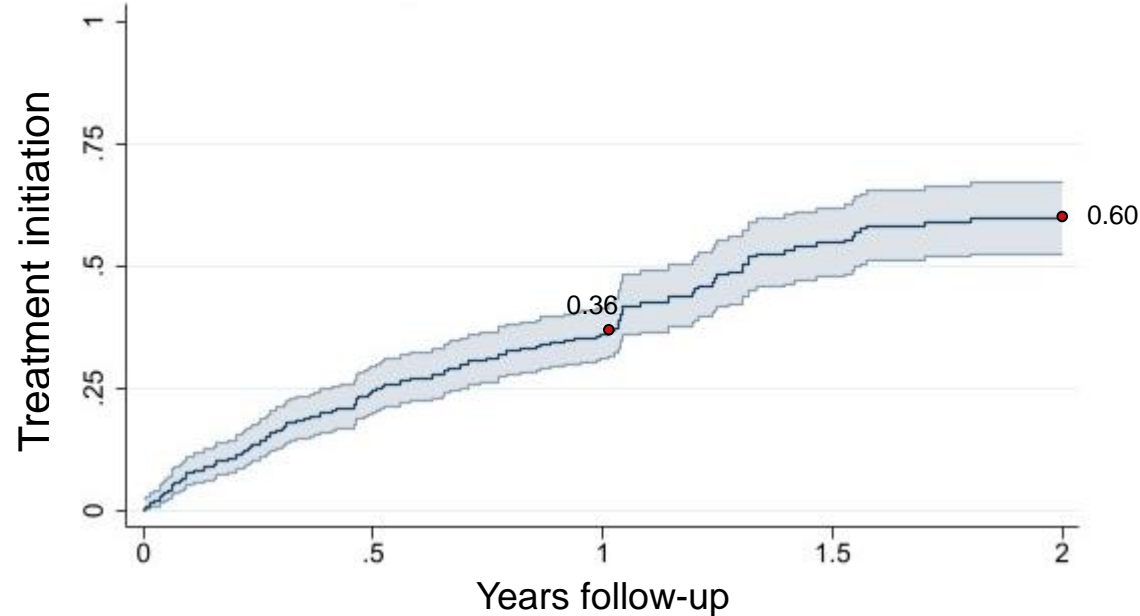


Results: HCV treatment initiation



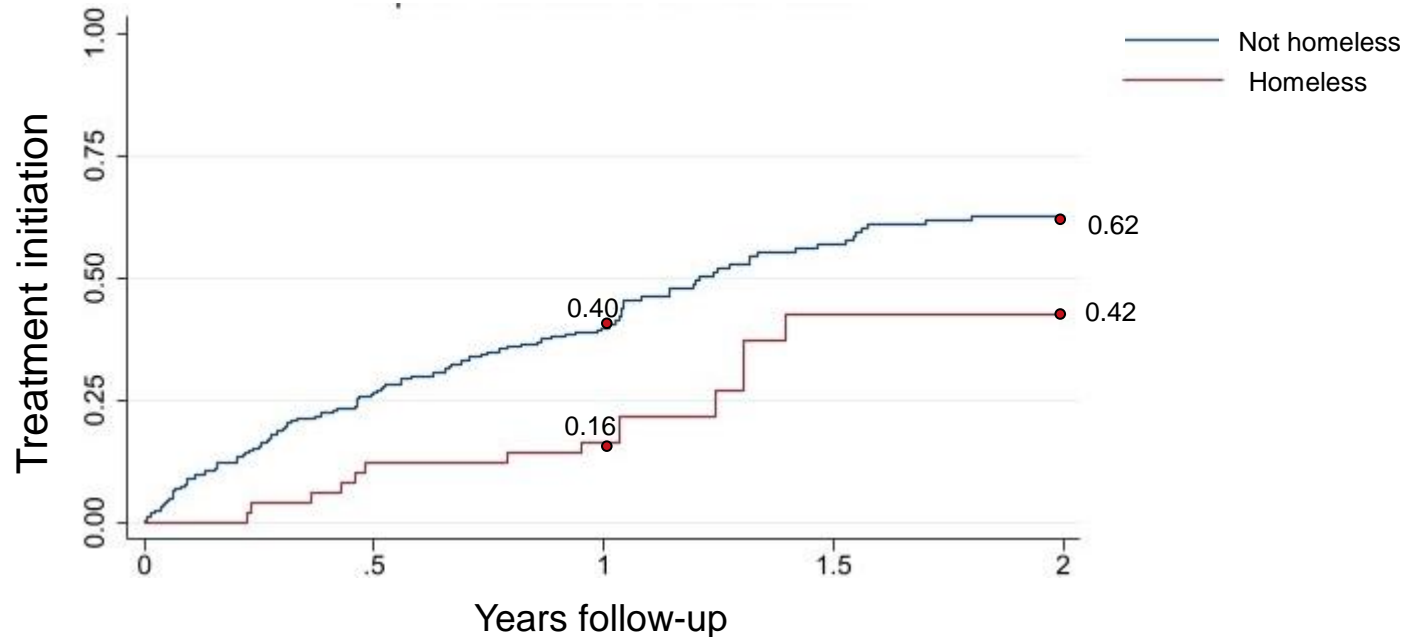
Results: HCV treatment initiation

Overall



Results: HCV treatment initiation

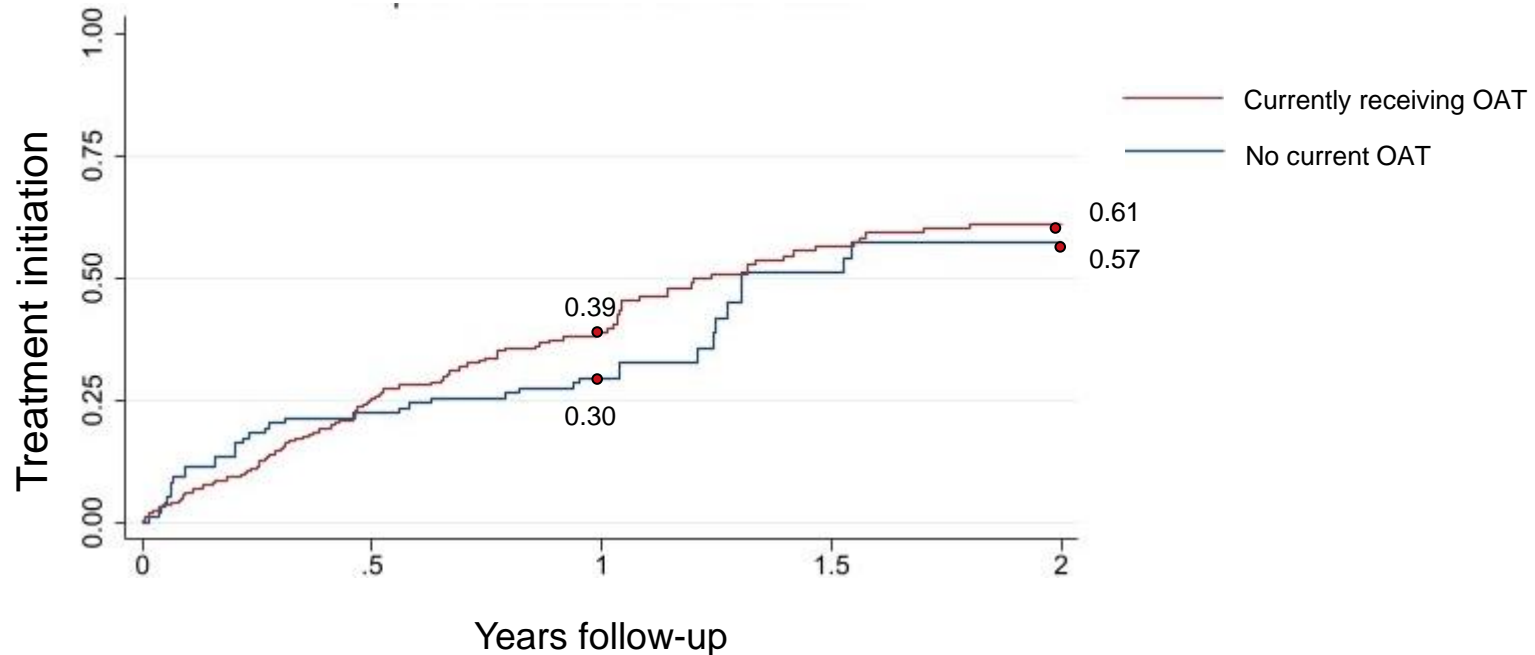
By homelessness



Log-rank test
 $P=0.004$

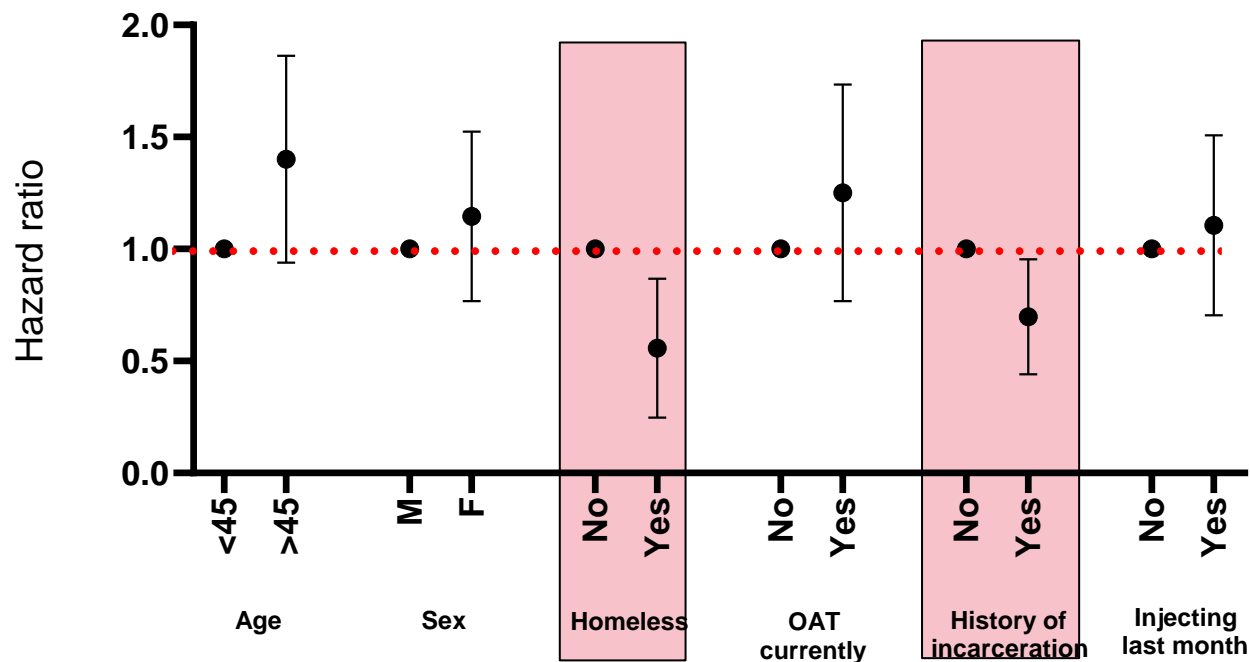
Results: HCV treatment initiation

By current OAT



ETHOS Engage Results: HCV treatment uptake

Cox proportional hazards model



Conclusions

- Co-locating HCV testing and drug treatment services can be an effective way to improve access to HCV treatment
- 36% and 47% of people with positive HCV RNA result in ETHOS Engage Wave 1 had initiated treatment by one and two years respectively
- Homelessness and history of incarceration are associated with decreased treatment initiation
- Same day test and treat models needed to reduce gaps in treatment initiation

ETHOS Engage: Current & future direction



ETHOS ENGAGE

- Second wave complete
- TGA approval of Cepheid point of care test machine enabled results to be provided to clinic an hour after testing



- Third wave will begin 2021
- Third wave "one stop shop" model

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