

THE DEVELOPMENT AND 6 MONTH REVIEW OF A NURSE PRACTITIONER CLINIC FOR HEPATITIS C TREATMENT IN RURAL VICTORIA.

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Background/Purpose:

Since November 2016 GPs have been able to prescribe treatment for non-cirrhotic patients (HCV) infection but in this rural location few have chosen to take advantage of this opportunity to treat.

Patients with HCV were being treated by the visiting Gastroenterologists to Goulburn Valley Health (GVH), with patients waiting 6-12 months to be seen to receive treatment with in excess of 100 patients on the wait list.

From June 1st 2017 the Victorian government approved authorised Nurse Practitioners (NPs) to be able to prescribe under the PBS General Schedule (s85) medications for the treatment of HCV.

Approach:

Establishment of a NP and Clinical Nurse Consultant (CNC) Hepatology HCV treatment clinic. Business improvement proposal and engagement with Clinical Directors for support.

Outcomes/Impact:

- Non-cirrhotic and uncomplicated HCV patients are able to be seen and treated more quickly
- HCV patients who are seen and managed by the NP do not need to be seen by the Gastroenterologist
- A reduction in the Gastroenterology / Hepatology waiting lists
- A reduction to the overall waiting time to see the Gastroenterologist at GV Health.
- The medical staff are able to concentrate on the patients who will benefit from an earlier appointment and who are more unwell
- Creation of further HCV management networks outside the immediate organisation
- Increase in the profile of HCV treatment in the Goulburn Valley
- Permits a timely response and short time to treatment for new client referrals
- Opportunistic access to fibroscan examination
- Currently managing 30 clients on treatment

Significance:

Demonstration of a nurse-led and managed HCV treatment service that is acceptable to clients, specialists and local GPs.

The clinic runs alongside the visiting Gastroenterologist, thus enabling supervision and access to senior consultation as required.

Increased networking with GP clinics in the community aims to support increased community treatment prescribing.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

Goulburn Valley Health is a Victorian, Australia, public hospital and no grants or monies have been received in relation to this clinic. As such there is no disclosure of interest to be made.