



LIVER CANCER SURVEILLANCE: A PEER-LED, ENHANCED LIVER DISEASE SERVICE FOR PATIENTS FROM UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES



THE PROGRAMME

The HELIXR programme is a National Health Service (NHS) pilot underway in three hospital trusts in Wessex, England.

The programme utilises hospital-based navigators and a team of three mobile outreach workers with lived experience from the Hep C Trust.

The team offer support to patients with cirrhosis and a history of non-attendance, to help them engage in the liver surveillance care pathway, including regular monitoring for liver cancer.

PATIENT FEEDBACK



BARRIERS

POOR MOBILITY
ISOLATION
LACK OF INFORMATION
SOCIAL ANXIETY
FEAR OF HOSPITALS
LITERACY/DYSLEXIA
HOMELESSNESS
DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE
"WHAT'S THE POINT?"
FEELING JUDGED
PHYSICAL HEALTH
LACK OF TRUST IN SERVICES
STIGMA/SHAME
NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES
MENTAL HEALTH
"I DON'T WANT TO BOTHER PEOPLE"

OUTCOMES

In 15 months, 151 patients have been referred for peer support.

First contact made: 126 patients (83%)

Ultrasounds attended: 123 appointments attended after peer intervention.

Secondary appointments attended: 33 (Dexa scans, clinic appointments, MRI's ect)

"The support from our liver health champions has transformed access to care for our most vulnerable patients. Patients who we hadn't seen for years are now attending appointments and engaging with tests and treatments that aim to stop them dying from complications of liver disease."

Dr Ryan Buchanan, Liver Medicine Consultant and Researcher

"NHS England's Liver Cancer Early Detection programme is one of the most successful cancer programmes delivered in the last 5 years"

Stuart Smith, Director of Community Services, Hepatitis C Trust.

"I never realised how important my liver was until I met Tanya.

I did not engage with hospital as I did not feel comfortable, but meeting and spending time with Tanya has in fact changed my life.

I find it really good trusting someone that has my best interest at heart. Today I am reasonably healthy at 59 years old.

Thank you Tanya for your commitment to me & for knowing that I have a problem going to appointments, and fear of going out. The kindness and understanding that Tanya continues to show me, gives me hope for the future. I would really like to get to a place where I am going to do things for others also."

-Lisa.

"Thank you so very much for the support that you are giving me. I need to kick this illness once and for all... after speaking with you I see a light now.

I must also humbly thank all of the care, kindness and professionalism of the members of the liver team. You're walking angels"

-John

CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS

The HELIXR peer led approach has resulted in greatly improved hospital attendance among patients who struggle to attend appointments.

The range of additional secondary appointments required demonstrate the broad needs of this population, people who often have multiple health needs and struggle to access care.

This model has the potential to substantially increase engagement with liver health care for underserved patients and reduce inequalities for liver disease outcomes.

Research funding is being sought to extend and develop this model and others using peer support in liver cancer prevention.