

ROLE OF AOD WORKERS IN FACILITATING ACCESS TO HEPATITIS C CARE

Wiggins N

Introduction / Issues: Consumers routinely encounter a number of barriers in accessing health services with stigma and discrimination being a familiar and common feature that make up these barriers. AIVL works with the aim of reducing stigma and discrimination for consumers and this presentation explores this topic broadly along with providing specific outcomes of recent consultations and surveys conducted with consumers, where they relayed their experiences with health care professional in relation to their hepatitis C.

Method / Approach: A current project being undertaken by AIVL is the Hepatitis C Awareness Project (HAP) where a number of consultations and surveys have been conducted in order to gain insight into the consumer experience of the health care sector in relation to their hepatitis C health care needs with a focus on testing, monitoring and treatment.

Key Findings: The experience of consumers will be presented and reveals that stigma and discrimination plays a critical role in consumer access to health care services in relation to their hepatitis C health care needs. The broader implications of the findings exposes a direct relationship between accessing hepatitis C care via or in the context of AOD services.

Discussions and Conclusions: The discussion highlights the role of the AOD sector in assisting PWID to access hepatitis C testing, monitoring and treatments. Factors that create barriers and enablers can be addressed by AOD workers to ensure that all PWID living with hepatitis C are able to access the appropriate and up to date treatment and care.