

January 2018

*HCV Action brings together hepatitis C health professionals from across the patient pathway with the pharmaceutical industry and patient representatives to share expertise and good practice.*

### News & reports...

\* The [Hepatitis C Coalition](#)'s second 'Report on the Operational Delivery Networks' is now available in the [HCV Action](#) resource library. The report was produced following a series of meetings between the [Hepatitis C Coalition](#) secretariat and a selection of the 22 ODNs over the course of 2017. Based on these conversations, the report sets out findings on how ODNs perceive their work, where the system is considered to be working well and what challenges there are to overcome. The report can be accessed [here](#).

\* [Public Health England](#) has released its annual report, 'Shooting Up: Infections among people who inject drugs in the UK', providing data for 2016. The report reveals that hepatitis C remains the most common blood-borne infection among people who inject drugs (PWID), and that approximately half (48%) of hepatitis C infections among PWID remain undiagnosed. Of those who were unaware of their infection, 22% reported that they had never been tested, and of those unaware but tested, 44% reported that their last test had been more than two years earlier. The report can be accessed in the [HCV Action](#) resource library [here](#).

\*The [Scottish Government](#) has announced it will increase its yearly hepatitis C treatment target to 2,000 initiations for the next financial year (2018/19), up from 1,800 this year. There will be an increase to 2,500 in the subsequent year (2019/20) and a further increase to 3,000 per year in

**Have you been inspired to make changes to your service based on an example of good practice highlighted by HCV Action? We'd love to hear from you so we can highlight your work. You can email us at [hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk](mailto:hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk).**

## NHS England announces negotiations on industry funding deal



NHS England this month announced it will begin negotiations with the pharmaceutical industry to reach a new funding arrangement for hepatitis C treatments. The proposed new funding arrangement is intended to support the elimination of hepatitis C in England by 2025, five years earlier than the World Health Organisation goal of eliminating the virus by 2030.

An element of the new deal will be establishing a role for the pharmaceutical

industry in finding currently undiagnosed patients and enrolling them into treatment. With an estimated half of the 160,000 people with hepatitis C in England still undiagnosed, diagnosing more patients is essential if elimination is to be achieved. Negotiations are aimed at securing a new funding deal to begin in October 2018.

Responding to the announcement, Charles Gore, Chief Executive of [The Hepatitis C Trust](#) and [HCV Action](#) Steering Group member, said: "This is wonderful news. It is exactly what is needed. The proposed deal will galvanise the action we must take to find all those living with hepatitis C who have not yet been diagnosed so that we can cure them. It will prevent the liver cancer that hepatitis C causes. It will save lives. In the current environment we applaud NHS England's ambition to be a world leader." The [NHS England](#) announcement can be read [here](#).

Earlier in the month, [NHS England](#) published a blog providing an update on the hepatitis C treatment programme in England, written by Professor Graham Foster, Professor of Hepatology at [Queen Mary University of London](#) and National Clinical Chair for Hepatitis C at [NHS England](#), and Peter Huskinson, [NHS England](#) National Commercial Director of Specialised Commissioning. The blog highlights the upcoming milestone of 25,000 patients having been treated with direct acting antiviral (DAA) medicines and the rise in planned annual treatment rates to 13,000 from April 2018. The authors note that an ongoing challenge for ODNs will be engaging those with less advanced disease in treatment, many of whom are not yet diagnosed. The full blog can be read [here](#).

2020/21. This follows a set of recommendations put forward by the expert advisory Treatment and Therapies Group, which included the recommendation to increase the treatment target to 3,000 per year immediately, given that the cost of treating 3,000 individuals in 2018/19 will be considerably less than the cost of treating just over 1,700 individuals in 2016/17.

\* [NAT](#) (the National AIDS Trust) has released a new report, '[Tackling Blood-Borne Viruses: A framework for prisons in the UK](#)', featuring guidance and case studies on tackling BBVs, including hepatitis C, in prisons. The report is aimed primarily at healthcare staff based in prisons but is of relevance to anyone involved in the management of prisons and the health and wellbeing of people in prison. The report can be accessed in the [HCV Action](#) resource library [here](#).

\* Dr Andrew Ustianowski, Consultant in Infectious Diseases at [North Manchester General Hospital](#) and Clinical Lead for the Greater Manchester HCV Elimination Programme, has written an article for [PharmaTimes](#) making the case for a national hepatitis C elimination strategy in England and access to treatment for all who need it. The article is available [here](#).

\* NHS Medical Director Sir Bruce Keogh, forecast a 10% reduction in hepatitis C deaths in the next two years in a [Guardian](#) article reflecting on the NHS in its 70<sup>th</sup> year. The full article can be read [here](#).

\* The Scottish Parliament's [Health and Sport Committee](#) this month held an oral evidence session on the preventative agenda, including preventing new hepatitis C infections. Among those giving evidence were Professor David Goldberg, Consultant Epidemiologist at [Health Protection Scotland](#), Petra Wright, Scottish Officer for [The Hepatitis C Trust](#) and Professor John Dillon, Consultant Hepatologist at [NHS Tayside](#), who spoke about the

## Presentation slides and summary report from HCV Action Cardiff action week now available



HCV Action held its final hepatitis C 'action week' of 2017 in Cardiff last month, centred around a good practice roadshow event held in partnership with [Public Health Wales](#) and attended by clinicians, nurses, drug service professionals, third sector workers and others from across Wales.

Presentations at the roadshow included Dr Brendan Healy, Consultant in Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, [Cardiff and Vale University Health Board](#) and Chair of the Welsh Viral Hepatitis Subgroup, on treatment for hepatitis C and possibilities for elimination; Hilary Ryan,

Hepatology Clinical Nurse Specialist, [Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board](#), on primary care case finding; and Delyth Tomkinson, Clinical Nurse Specialist, [Cardiff and Vale University Health Board](#) and Joanne Hughes, Community Nurse, [Aneurin Bevan University Health Board](#), presenting on examples of good practice in hepatitis C care in Wales.

The event also featured a patient perspective talk and afternoon workshops on the work of the Welsh Viral Hepatitis Subgroup, awareness and testing in drug services and hepatitis C in prisons, concluding with attendees writing down pledges for action in tackling hepatitis C (with a selection pictured above). The presentation slides from the roadshow are available in the [HCV Action](#) resource library [here](#), along with a summary report [here](#).

As part of the wider 'action week', [The Hepatitis C Trust's](#) South Asian Officer Shabana Begum delivered an awareness-raising talk on hepatitis C at the Masjid Abu Bakr Mosque in Cardiff and [Welsh Hepatitis C Assembly Champion](#) Dr Dai Lloyd visited a local service to meet health professionals delivering hepatitis C care and discuss ways to support their work.

## Final few places available for HCV Action/NHS England Midlands & East ODN event



A small number of places are still available for the HCV Action and NHS England Midlands & East Hepatitis C ODN Educational Event 2018, taking place on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March in Nottingham.

The event is aimed at health professionals, commissioners and drug service workers in the West Midlands, East Midlands and East of England and is free to attend. Presentations and discussions will focus on enhancing local service provision, exploring challenges faced by ODNs in

the region and seizing the opportunity for progress provided by DAA hepatitis C treatments.

Talks will be delivered by representatives from all four local ODNs (West Midlands Hep C ODN; East Midlands Hep C ODN; Eastern Hep C ODN; and

'treatment as prevention' model for hepatitis C, as reported [here](#). A video recording of the Health and Sport Committee session is available to view [here](#) and a transcript of the session can be accessed [here](#).

\* [NICE](#) has published guidance on glecaprevir-pibrentasvir (Maviret), recommending the drug for treating chronic hepatitis C in adults, where approved by multi-disciplinary teams in ODNs. The guidance notes that the drug is suitable for all genotypes and has a shorter treatment duration than most other direct-acting antiviral treatments. Read the full guidance [here](#).

\* The contribution of community pharmacies to tackling hepatitis C in Scotland is highlighted in a letter published in [The Pharmaceutical Journal](#) this month. Written by clinical pharmacists representing the Scottish Viral Hepatitis Pharmacy Specialist Interest Group, the letter notes the crucial role community pharmacies can play in delivering hepatitis C treatment to patients less likely to be accessing other services, as well as testing and diagnosing patients. The letter can be read [here](#).

\* New research published in the [AIDS](#) journal reveals that treatment for hepatitis C using DAAs is highly effective and safe for harder-to-treat people with HIV coinfection. Among participants in the Spanish real-life study, a sustained virological response (SVR) was observed in 93% of people, with only 0.4% stopping treatment because of adverse events. The full journal article can be accessed [here](#), with a summary news report available [here](#).

Share your good practice...

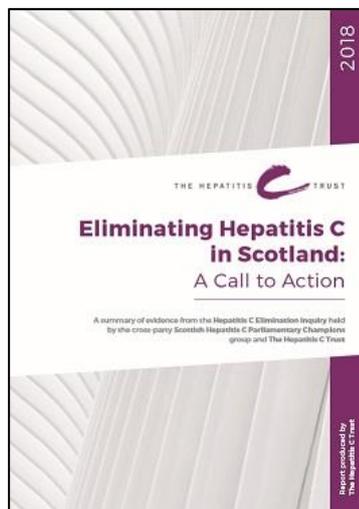
*If you would like your service to be featured as a good practice case study on the HCV Action website, please send an email to [hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk](mailto:hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk).*

We want to keep HCV Action's membership updated on news and events from across the country.

Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire ODN) discussing the opportunities and challenges of the ODN system. The event will also feature other expert speakers, including Professor Graham Foster providing a national hepatitis C update as National Clinical Chair for Hepatitis C at [NHS England](#); Charles Gore, Chief Executive of [The Hepatitis C Trust](#), on how the global commitment to elimination was achieved; and Claire Foreman, Senior Programme of Care Manager – Blood and Infections, at [NHS England](#), on the development of the hepatitis C CQUIN (Commissioning for Quality and Innovation) payment scheme's aims and objectives.

Remaining places are very limited, but the final few can be booked [here](#).

## 'Eliminating Hepatitis C in Scotland' report available in HCV Action resource library



The Hepatitis C Trust's new report, 'Eliminating Hepatitis C in Scotland: A Call to Action', is now available in the [HCV Action](#) resource library. The report, which examines Scotland's progress towards achieving hepatitis C elimination and makes a series of recommendations for further action, was launched earlier this month at an event in the Scottish Parliament.

The report follows an inquiry conducted by [The Hepatitis C Trust](#) and the cross-party [Scottish Hepatitis C Parliamentary Champions](#) group over the course of 2017. The inquiry consisted of oral evidence sessions and the submission of written evidence by patients, individuals and

organisations working across the hepatitis C care pathway.

The report calls on the Scottish Government to produce a dedicated hepatitis C elimination strategy with ambitious targets to decrease national incidence, mortality and overall prevalence. Additional recommendations on awareness-raising, prevention, testing and diagnosis, linkage to care, access to treatment and funding are contained in the report, which can be accessed in the [HCV Action](#) resource library [here](#).

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If you have any news you would like to share with colleagues or would like to publicise an event please email details to [hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk](mailto:hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk).