

LINKAGE TO HCV CARE AND TREATMENT AMONG PEOPLE WHO USE OR INJECT DRUGS

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Background: India, the third highest HCV prevalence country in the world with 6-8 million chronically infected. Indian Government recently addressed and responded to this issue after The Delhi Network of Positive People (DNP+) demand their “Right to Healthcare” to the Indian Government. More than decade, DNP+ contributes to elimination of HCV by 2030 through- (i) Advocacy campaign to the Government, healthcare providers etc., and (ii) providing service among PWIDs.

Description of model of care/intervention: Years ago, DNP+ provided support to PWIDs and concentrate on HCV treatment advocacy. From grant received from Unitaid, Coalition Internationale Sida provides financial supports to DNP+ for HCV advocacy campaign with a goal. So, in 2017, project DAWN was implemented wherein during that time, HCV diagnostic, care and treatment was ignored by Government. Through this project, DNP+ recognized that PWIDs legal and policy provisions are not in place to protect their “Right to Healthcare”, so DNP+ intervened and filed Public Interest Litigation to High Court to push government to provide Free HCV diagnostic and treatment for all in India.

Effectiveness:

1. In 28th July 2018, due to the unbreakable efforts of DNP+ with other NGOs and CBOs, Indian Government launched the National Viral Hepatitis Program with three guidelines.
2. Through Support Group Meetings, strong and effective HCV community existed where they support and educate each other on HCV, adherences, nutrition etc.

Conclusion and next steps: The project is highly effective in raising awareness and increasing knowledge on HCV care and treatment among PWIDs, and if it replicates in other areas, the community itself believes that it will extensively contribute in elimination of HCV by 2030.

Next step includes-1. Constant meeting with concern authority to ensure better forecasting and procurement system to prevent stockouts. 2. To investigate why PWIDs despite knowledge gained, would go ahead and engaged in risk behavior.