

Swiss Hepatitis C Association (SHCA)

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SHCA, Swiss Positive Council, Swiss Hepatitis Network

Background:

The SHCA was founded in 2016 by six hepatitis c patients and a medical expert, Dr P.Bruggmann. Oliver Wehrli is a co founder and a member of the board.

Description of model of care/intervention:

The SHCA helps all hepatitis c patients in Switzerland to get access to a therapy. It operates the website www.hepc.ch and maintains a personal hotline in four languages. Flyers about hep c are produced, distributed to treatment facilities and handed out on the streets in big Swiss cities for example on World Hepatitis Day. The SHCA represents the concerns of HCV patients very effectively in public and for this purpose is a member of important national and international organisations like Swiss-Hepatitis, WHA and ELPA.

Effectiveness:

The rationing of hepatitis C drugs in Switzerland was abolished in October 2017. For the first time, all patients could get access to a therapy regardless of the type of virus and disease progression. But still not all get treated, partly because of ignorance but also because of stubborn insurance companies. However all patients in Switzerland who have contacted the SHCA could be helped.

Conclusion and next steps:

In rural areas of Switzerland more than half of the OST patients are not properly tested for HCV while the prevalence is 53%. The SHCA would like to establish a self-help organization of OST patients to help PWID test, find a doctor and start a DAA therapy. In addition, the SHCA plans various actions with it's partners to increase public awareness and improve the training of GPs in 2018.

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