

HEPCURE™ HCV MODEL OF CARE – SUCCESSES AND LEARNINGS FROM OUR COLLECTIVE EFFORTS IN SCREENING AND LINKAGE TO CARE ACTIVITIES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Background:

COVID-19 impacted HCV elimination programs worldwide. Suspension of HCV services and limited access has rendered engagement of the most marginalized patients particularly challenging.

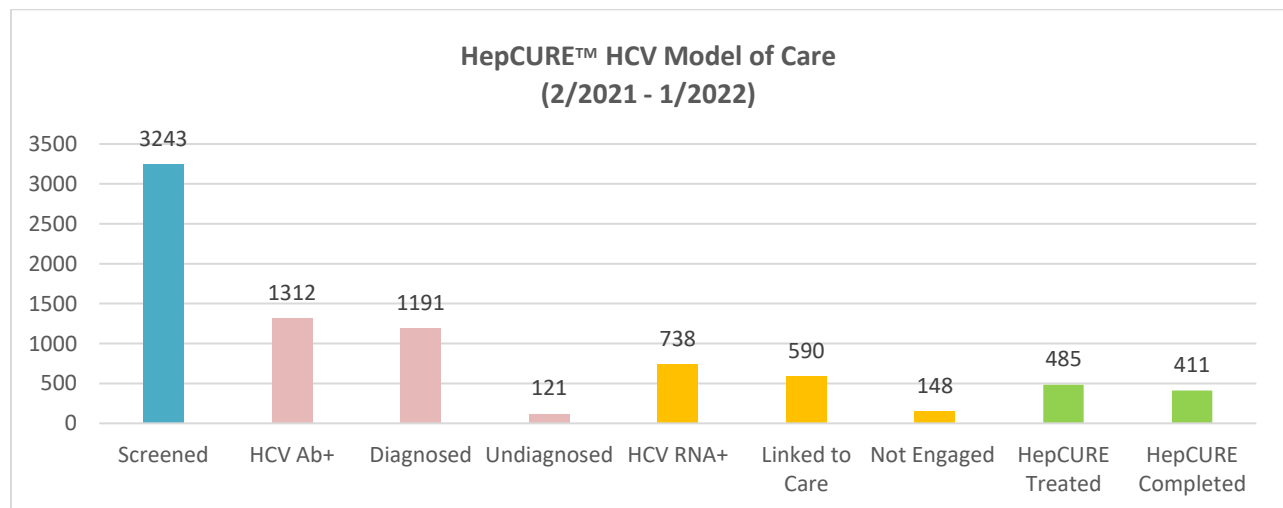
Description of model of care/intervention:

HepCURE™ is a Canadian non-profit established in 2019. Our multidisciplinary team consists of clinicians, nurses, phlebotomists, pharmacists and frontline workers. To maximize participation engagement, we offer “community-based” point-of-care testing and phlebotomy service, program incentives (meal vouchers, cell phones), SMS/phone appointment/adherence reminders, transportation, treatment delivery services and 24/7 telephone support. To address the challenges posed by the pandemic, we developed several initiatives:

- Three community-based clinics, and two mobile outreach units to screen participants in marginalized settings across 20 cities in Ontario
- Use of geo-mapping to identify 500+ social support programs accessed by marginalized people and 30+ pharmacies as partners to further support screening efforts and medication adherence
- HepCURE™ Patient Registry, an e-platform using informed verbal and/or photo consent to identify at-risk patients, ensure linkage to treatment and monitor their clinical progress in real-time

Effectiveness:

Over 12 months (2/2021-2/2022), we screened 3243 participants; 67% were male. (46%, mobile units; 29%, community-based clinics; 22%, pharmacies). The number of HCV Ab+, diagnosed, undiagnosed, viremic, and linked to care patients are shown below.



- 40% (1312/3243) HCV Ab+
- 91% (1191/1312) Diagnosed (results shared with participants)
- 9% (121/1312) Undiagnosed (only completed point-of-care testing)
- 56% (738/1312) Confirmed viremia – HCV RNA+
- 80% (590/738) Linked to care (with HepCURE™, 540/590 – 92%)
- 20% (148/738) Not engaged with treatment
- 90% (485/540) Treated by HepCURE™
- 85% (411/485) Treatment completion

Conclusion and next steps:

Our program was effective in diagnosing 91% of HCV Ab+ participants and linking 80% of treatment-eligible patients to care. We've implemented new workflow processes and programmatic changes to further improve patient retention. We're currently replicating our program in another province to demonstrate feasibility of a countrywide elimination model.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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