

# Peer to Peer networking in Identifying Hepatitis C infections among people who inject drugs (PWID) in an urban city, Sri Lanka.

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## Background

- ❖ **Peer Led approach is evidenced as one of the best strategy to reach Key Populations in HIV programs globally.**
- ❖ **Peer led approach have been helping to reach people who experience barriers to access Services in Sri Lanka.**

### Model of care

1. A team of an outreach worker and peer educators enrolled.
2. This team was trained well on prevention of HIV and hepatitis
3. Outreach worker plays a role as a team leader.
4. Outreach worker was trained on performing point of care tests.
5. Advocacy program were conducted to key personal in the community such as police, community leaders.
6. Community awareness on prevention and practicing harm reductions were conducted.
7. Outreach worker and Peer Educators identify potentials areas of focus (mapping)
8. Outreach were continuously mentored and monitored
9. Outreach work data was analyzed the work progressively expand with the evidence gathered.



## Field work & Services

- Various approaches were used to identify networks; tracing the known networks, Identifying new networks from known networks, identifying new networks through reaching out communities, environmental police, & local court members.
- These identified People Who inject drugs were educated on safer drug use, safe injections, harm reductions and prevention of HIV, & hepatitis.
- Needles Syringes Exchange Services were offered to people who are in need.
- People who inject drugs were offered test for HIV, Hepatitis C, and Syphilis using point of Care tests.
- They then referred to the community center or outreach Hepatitis C treatment team for further management.



## Effectiveness

Peer led approach works well in identifying People infected with hepatitis C by penetrating the networks

From January 2023 to August 2023 total of 236 People who inject drugs were newly registered by Peer led model. Of this 227 (96%) were males. Nearly 317 people were enrolled for Needle Syringe Exchange Services during the period. Of this 5 (1.5%) were females.

Two hundred and twenty nine (229) people who inject drugs underwent Hepatitis C rapid test. The outreach worker performed this point of care test in the community. Of this 88 (39%) were identified as reactive for hepatitis C. They were referred to the treatment team.

## Conclusions

1. This ongoing intervention show cases high yield in identifying PWID and detecting hepatitis C within the networks.
2. Strengthening and expansion of this model is recommended

