



Organisation and Project overview

The Hepatitis C Trust

The Hepatitis C Trust (HCT) is the national UK charity for hepatitis C. Established in 2000, it is a patient-led and patient-run organization. HCT is dedicated to making a difference to people affected by hepatitis C by providing up to date information, advocacy and support to enable them to meet their hepatitis C and health related needs. HCT also educates the public and policy makers about hepatitis C with the aim to improve services and education within the NHS and to put pressure on the government to push hepatitis C further up their agenda and improve patient care, diagnosis and treatment.

Peer to Peer project

The Hepatitis C Trust has run a peer-to-peer education (P2P) programme since August 2010. The programme provides key messages about hepatitis C prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care to people attending drug services.

Peer educators are trained to deliver a peer message regarding the importance of testing and attending hospital appointments. This will increase the likelihood of diagnosed patients going on to access liver damage assessment and, where appropriate, treatment.

Since the peer programme began, we have engaged with over 25,000 people. Today, our peers work across the UK both in the community and the prison estate to reach an average of 107 people every day. Through coordination and training, this extensive volunteer network will replicate this work nationally and reach many more individuals who are deemed at risk.

Follow Me Peer Education and Support programme

The Follow Me Peer Education and Support Programme has been developed utilising learning from previous peer education programs in particular suggestions from peers themselves. With an increase in access to oral treatments that have a 97% cure rate, it is imperative that we find all those affected by hepatitis C and support them where necessary to access treatment. We are delighted to have the opportunity to expand our Follow Me Peer Education and Support programme across the Bristol & Severn area at such an important time.

The programme will work in partnership with the NHS local Operational Delivery Network (ODN) overseeing the treatment of hepatitis C treatment.

The Peer Support Lead will develop a network of peers that will reach into the community of PWID's and other vulnerable groups across the Bristol & Severn area. They will deliver core hepatitis C (HCV) messages about the importance of testing, the urgency of linking with care for liver assessment and the availability of new treatments. Peers will deliver workshops across the region, using their own story as a platform to encourage testing and identify potential patients for treatment. Peers will be able to directly link HCV+ patients to both HCV outreach clinics often established within the main hub of local drug and alcohol services and local hospitals. In addition, previous HCV patients known to local drug services who may have disengaged from the service or have not attended HCV clinic appointments will be linked to the expanding Follow Me programme.