



Hepatitis Therapy Access Physicians Working Group

2022 Meeting Summary

The Alliance for Patient Access hosted a meeting of the Hepatitis Therapy Access Physicians Working Group on May 10, 2022. Clinicians, advocates and other stakeholders discussed state-level efforts to reduce and eliminate hepatitis infections and to improve screening.

State Elimination Plans

A presentation from Andrew Talal, MD, MPH, of the University of Buffalo, detailed the strategies being used in state elimination plans. Dr. Talal highlighted findings from his own study on using telemedicine to improve treatment outcomes for hepatitis C patients and reducing infections by linking methadone treatment programs with liver clinics.

The presentation also noted system and policy changes that have occurred in the state of New York because of the study's findings. Changes include the altering of prior authorizations and enhanced public awareness initiatives about hepatitis C screening and treatment.

These pilot programs should expand to rural areas, one clinician noted, where opioid-related hepatitis infections can be common. Telemedicine delays treatment for hepatitis, another clinician noted, because a blood sample is still required. This same clinician stated that low revenue streams might also present challenges to the care model presented by Dr. Talal. The presenter agreed that focus should now be broadening clinicians' abilities to bill Medicaid.

The group discussed the accuracy of infection statistics for hepatitis C. There was general consensus that actual infections are higher than the number reported by the CDC. One clinician asked if education initiatives about hepatitis elimination had been targeted at providers in the corrections system, where infection rates can be high.

Rapid Testing

The group discussed a recent move by the Food and Drug Administration to move the hepatitis C diagnostic test from class III to class II. This year, the presenting clinician noted, the hepatitis B diagnostic test is also expected to be moved from class III to class II testing. The presenting clinician overviewed innovative tests currently in development.

Clinician Advocacy Opportunities

AfPA staff explained the ways clinician members can become involved in advocacy to improve hepatitis awareness and treatment access. Working group members discussed potential advocacy opportunities around the corrections system, state elimination plans and testing.

To learn more about AfPA's Hepatitis Therapy Access Physicians Working Group, contact Casey McPherson at cmcpherson@allianceforpatientaccess.org.



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