Hepatitis C Research in Prisons
The Durham and Chester-le-Street Perspective

By Jason Wigham
Hepatitis C Project Development Nurse
HMP Durham
Aim

♦ To encourage clinically based staff to become more actively involved in all topics of research within the custodial justice system.
Learning Outcomes

- The delegates will have a greater understanding of Hepatitis C Research in Prisons
- Gain a comprehension of the challenges, pitfalls as well as the rewards of balancing both a research and clinical role.
The Hepatitis C Project
Development Nurse Role

- This post was developed as part of a National Treatment Agency funded research project.
- It was to support and complement academic research being undertaken by the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne under the supervision of Dr Fu-Meng Khaw.
- The academic research undertaken was “Understanding the barriers to the uptake Hepatitis C testing in Prisons”
- My post is both developmental and clinically interactive with my time spent 50 percent clinical and 50 percent research.
Current Progress To Date

♦ Post became active on 12/09/05 and the interview phase of Research Project ended on 23/09/05
♦ All four key locations have been visited and evaluation/mapping assessments performed.
♦ HCV Pathway Audit tool was designed and implemented after an initial trial period.
♦ Hepatitis C Referral and Discharge proforma were developed and are now in clinical use.
♦ Tasks completed for both the Hepatitis C Project Steering Group and the Durham and Chester-le-Street Hepatitis C Pathway Steering Group.
Challenges of the role

♦ Working across four key establishments.
♦ Evaluation and process mapping of the service provision in the key establishments.
♦ Development and establishing pathways of care equal to the wider NHS community
♦ Liaison with internal and external partners
♦ Promotion of risk reduction and harm minimisation
♦ Provision of educational & practical support and resources for clients and colleagues
Pitfalls of the role

- Defining your role across four different establishments and interlinking with current services.
- Clash of cultures academia versus clinical/prison.
- Unrealistic expectations of both clinical and academic staff.
- Ignorance of role from prisoners, prison staff and clinical staff.
- On a lighter note “the two T’s typing and travelling”!!
Rewards of the role

♦ Working across different Prisons.
♦ Working autonomously as well as being part of a team.
♦ Knowledge that the standard of care for prisoners with Hepatitis C has improved.
♦ Finally a simple thing of a prisoner stating “thanks boss for everything you’ve done, I really appreciate it”
Finally

- The Hepatitis C Information line can be accessed via the PIN Telephone system, its number is 0800 451451.
- An electronic copy of Understanding the barriers to the uptake of Hepatitis C Testing in Prisons is available on line at

Questions???

Thank you for listening