6th Annual NHCN Meeting Notes on Changes and Action Steps

The 6th Annual Meeting of the National Hepatitis Corrections (NHCN) network took place on Wednesday, March 20th, 2018 at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Houston, TX.

In attendance were 65 network partners from across the United States.

The goal of the meeting was “to provide a networking and collaborative space to discuss hepatitis C care in correctional setting that can be taken to improve hepatitis management in corrections.”

The meeting agenda, list of attendees, and copies of PowerPoint presentations can be found at the following page of NHCN website: http://www.hcvinprison.org/about/annualmeeting

For more information or to follow-up, please email: mandy@hepeduation.org.

Key notes from the meeting include:

- Michael Ninburg “An Update on Global Elimination Efforts”
  - An update on Global Elimination suggests response towards an increase of partnerships with government, civil society, the private sector and donors.
  - Elimination of hepatitis can be made affordable by radical reductions of treatment costs, global funding for hepatitis B and C, and ultimately working towards better drug pricing for the correctional space.

- Dana Gill and Aaron Pattillo “The HCV Drug Patent Problem”
  - “Innovation is important, but innovative medications don’t work if people can’t afford them.” -Dana Gill
  - Pharmaceutical patent problems are fueling high drug prices, reporting that over 85% of patients who are diagnosed with hepatitis C are not getting access to treatment each year.

- Erica Selig & Jack Beck “HCV & Prisons: A Look at the Legal Landscape”

- “Intersections of Opioid Crisis” Panel
  - “If you're talking about hepatitis C in corrections there's no way you can’ talk about the opioid crisis and harm reduction” -Laura Pegram
  - “A lot of advocacy is saying true things over and over again until it becomes normal” -Annette Gaudino
  - Creating syringe access programs in the prison system will not only help with the opioid crisis but will also prevent the spread of hepatitis C and other blood borne pathogens.
  - Harm reduction is a key component in the intersections of the opioid crisis because it is a useful approach on educating individuals to make their own decision in a truthful and honest manner.

- Barry Zack “Reentry Journey”
  - Reentry Journey suggests that linking people to resources months before they are being released is needed to provide a more holistic approach to supporting incarcerated individuals. Accessing medical visits and mental health services can start as early as 3-6 months post release.

- Jody Rich “MATs in Corrections”
- Matthew Akiyama “Linkage to Care Following Release from NYC Jail”
- Kristen Walsh and Maya Yoshida-Cervantes “HCV in Jails”
- Anne Spaulding & William von Oehsen “Counting the Costs of HCV Treatment”
  - HCV screenings in prison is difficult as people are in and out of the prison system and do not always stay in the same location.

- “Peer Education Program” Panel
  - “I think Peer Education is bitchin’. It rocks on every level” -Anne Chawkin
  - Peer Education not longer provides agency for people who are incarcerated, it also brings leadership, confidence, independence and hope. Skills learned in Peer Education programs as described by our panelist can be used outside of the prison. It provides self efficacy and empowerment to individuals.
  - It is difficult to collect measurable outcomes for Peer Education programs as there is no exit screening process, however program evaluations are helpful. A tool needs to be developed in order to analyze if these programs are working and to determine which populations of people in the system are not being reached.