Advocacy for hepatitis testing & linkage to care

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HCV in North Carolina

According to North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), in NC:

- HCV is the most common blood-borne infection and accounts for prevalence of over 110,000 infections in NC.

- Approximately 25% of people with HIV are co-infected with HCV.

- Approximately 75% of people living with with HCV are unaware that they are living with the virus.

- Reported cases of HCV have tripled during 2010-2014.
Advocacy for HCV

- Six regional advocacy trainings
- Sustained education by contract lobbyist
- Advocacy Day at the General Assembly
  - HCV testing provided in a public setting to increase visibility
Funding Allocation

- Two year funding of $600,000 per year ($1.2 million total).
- $400,000 was allocated to the State Laboratory and $200,000 was allocated to the Communicable Disease Branch per year.
Outcomes

- Increase of 15% in total hepatitis C testing and a 92.8% increase in the total number of positive patients identified from 2016 to 2017

- Preliminarily, we are seeing a similar increase in utilization and positivity rates in 2018

- Bridge counselors were placed in Buncombe and New Hanover counties
  - In the first quarter of the Buncombe based position, 12 HCV positive patients were referred, and 3 started treatment.

Data from NC DHHS
Increased access to labs

- To adjust for a delay in startup for bridge counselor positions, counties received prorated funding. The excess funding was awarded to two counties to provide pre-treatment labs to uninsured HCV patients within their regions.

- While we are awaiting final data, at least 48 patients received the required labs for treatment. These patients would not have been able to receive treatment due to these lab costs without this valuable funding.
Thanks

- Christina Adeleke, Matt Martin, and John Thompson with the NC AIDS Action Network
- NC Division of Public Health, Communicable Disease Branch
- AIDS United
- Elton John AIDS Foundation
- Cone Health Foundation
Questions?

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