An audit of HIV care provision for Immigration Removal Centre patients

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Introduction

• Background on Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs)
• IRCs linked to the Hillingdon Hospital
• BHIVA / NAT advice
• Audit methods, results, conclusions
• Challenges faced
• Recommendations

Immigration Removal Centres

• Applicants
  - refused
  - asylum
  - humanitarian protection
  - discretionary leave to remain
  - “at any point of an asylum application”

• 11 IRCs in the UK
Immigration Removal Centres

- Detention Centres Services Operating Standards Manual:
  - “must have available to them the same range and quality of services as the general public receives from the National Health Service”

Medical services in IRCs

- Medical services
  - 24h nurse
  - commissioned sessional GP service
- IRC guidelines
  - medical screening within 24h
  - management plan
  - facilitate specialist care
- Referral to HH Sexual Health Service
IRCs served by Hillingdon Hospital

- Harmondsworth
  - long-term centre
  - 259 beds
- Colnbrook
  - prison standards
  - 308 beds
- Men only
BHIVA / NAT advice

- Unbroken access to ARVs
- Availability of past medical information
- 3 main recommendation in preparation for removal of HIV positive detainees

BHIVA / NAT key advice for removal

3 key points
- **Letter** for future treating clinicians
- Three months contingency **supply of medication**
- **Contact details** of trusted HIV support organisations in their destination country
Audit

• To describe patient characteristics
• To compare practice against BHIVA/NAT advice for HIV care of detainees
• To compare practice against recommended clinical guidelines

Method

• All patients seen between January 2008 and January 2010
• Routine clinical data
Patient origins

- African: 7 (6%)
- Asia: 10 (9%)
- West Indies: 14 (12%)
- Middle Eastern: 16 (14%)
- Other: 10 (9%)

N=116

Reason for referral

- HIV related: 61%
- GUM: 53%
Removed prior to consultation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referred</th>
<th>116</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not seen</td>
<td>18 (16%)</td>
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50% HIV positive

HIV positive patients

- 60 HIV positive patients seen
  - 85% on ARV
  - prior care in 36 different UK centres
- Median age 33y (IQR: 28,41)
- Median of 5 visits (IQR: 2,6)

- Deported or released
- Transferred to another IRC
- Delays due to IRC regulations

Plus!
- Multiple phone calls by admin staff, HIV Specialist nurses
- Re-arranging frequent cancelled appointments
- Urgent demands on pharmacy
- Consultant letters
Outcome following detention

- Deported: 24 (39%)
- Released: 20 (33%)
- Still detained: 11 (18%)
- Unknown outcome: 6 (10%)

N = 60

Prior notice of removal

- Removed: 44
- Released: 20

Prior notice given:

- 1 week: 5
- 2 weeks: 2
- Dying patient: 1

8/44 (18%)
Preparation for removal

• **None** had full 3 month contingency supply
• **5/8 (63%)** received information about HIV support facilities in onward destination
• **4/8 (50%)** had a medical summary letter

“Black Holes”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Missed ARV doses at the time of arrest and detention</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment interruption after detention</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standards of medical care in detention</td>
<td>?</td>
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Conclusion

• Not able to meet BHIVA/NAT standards for detainees
• 82% of patients – prior notice NOT given
• When given – inadequate time to meet standards

Challenges faced

• Data collection
• Conflicting agendas
  - security measures
  - scheduling of appointments
  - transport
• Confidentiality and patient autonomy
  - IRC non-medical staff aware of status
  - not allowed to keep own treatment drugs
Recommendations

- Standardised data collection tool for all centres caring for asylum seekers
- National audit ★
- Greater advocacy efforts to make BHIVA/NAT advice binding
- Greater advocacy efforts to empower patients and medical staff
Acknowledgements

• All staff at the Hillingdon Hospital Sexual Health Centre especially Wendy Wheeler and Liz Green
• The patients whose experience has contributed to this presentation

Thank you!

“Freedom is what you do with what is done to you”
– Jean Paul Sartre