Pre-Conference Nurse's Course

in partnership with

Mr Joe Phillips

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS, London

What is the Impact of HIV/HCV Co-infection in the era of ChemSex?

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Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

GPS Apps

Pornography

Education

HCV

New HCV treatments

The gay scene/community

The 'era of ChemSex'

HIV

Condom fatigue

Dating

PrEP

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Gay men and drug use

- Significantly higher than in the wider population
- Higher levels of dependency
- Not widely recognised amongst substance misuse services
- Linked to riskier sexual behaviour
- (Buffins et al, 2012)

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Current trends in recreational drug use

* **Mephedrone** – psychosis, depression, injecting harms, arrhythmias
* **GHB/GBL** – severe dependence, withdrawal harms, overdose resulting in 'G sleep'
* **Crystal meth** – psychosis, depression, injecting harms, arrhythmias

Gay men, drug use & HIV

* "Party drugs linked to alarming rise in HIV amongst gay men"
* "London sees 20 per cent rise in infections as charities call for better sexual health services"

(www.independent.co.uk, 2013)

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Gay men, drug use & HIV (2)

* New trends in recreational drug use
* Often used during sex
* Increased rates of HIV transmission linked to –

  use of needles
  unprotected sex
  multiple partners
  longer sex sessions
  riskier sexual practices
  failure to take ART

National AIDS Trust: 2013. Stuart 2013

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Gay men, drug use, HIV and HCV

* 7% of HIV positive gay men are co-infected with hepatitis c (NAT: 2012)
* Increased rates of co-infection linked to
  Sexual activities which may cause bleeding
  Analgesic effect of some drugs
  Intravenous drug use
  Multiple partners
  Unprotected sex
  Knowledge and stigma

(Browne 2003, Danta et al 2007, NAT, 2012, Stuart 2013)

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"The Elephant in the Room"

Owen 2008

- Hepatitis c status is not being considered when 'serosorting' for sex.
- Awareness of transmission risk of hepatitis c.
- Hepatitis c is not 'owned' by the gay community
- Disclosure, fear of refusal, isolation are common features
  - (Owen, 2008)

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The current picture

- 'The ChemSex Study' Bourne et al 2014
- New HCV drugs
- PrEP
- Tailored services

antidote @friend

CODE

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What can be done?

- ChemSex training for HIV/GUM/Hep staff
- Questions on clinic proformas
- Regular hep c testing (Ab vs PCR/coreAg)
- Co-working between HIV/GUM/Hep services
- Co-working with outside agencies
- Clear referral pathways
- Needle exchange and education
- Wellbeing and community engagement
- Psychological support

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Thankyou!

Any Questions?

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