

HIV/HCV PROJECT: AWARENESS, EARLIER AND EASIER DIAGNOSIS OF HIV AND HCV INFECTIONS IN THE METROPOLITAN CITY OF TURIN

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It is estimated that 15,000 PLWHA in Italy are unaware of the disease (1,200 in Piedmont) and 20% of people living with hepC have been diagnosed in an advanced stage.

OBJECTIVES

1) to promote the HIV/HCV testing service in the Metropolitan city of Turin through the involvement of general practitioners (GPs), outpatient consultants (OCs) and pharmacists, to build easier access to testing service and close link to the relevant Infectious Diseases Department.



2) to increase people's demand for tests through information campaigns for the general population.



METHODS

1a) GPs and OCs have been trained on:
- HIV indicator conditions
- HIV/HCV testing procedures
and involved in annual symposium;
Local pharmacists have been trained on the rapid HIV tests available in pharmacies (procedures and counseling).

1b) The HIV/HCVFree Project has joined all the editions of European Testing Week from November 2021 and it is an amplifier of the national hepC eradication plan.

2) The website www.HIVHCVfree.it and the most popular social media profiles have been created to spread easy-access and non-institutional information about HIV and HCV infections to the general population.

RESULTS

1a) An active network has been formed with about 300 GPs and OCs involved;
771 subjects underwent a salivary HIV testing.
The overall prevalence rate of HIV infection was 0.4%.

1b) During the European Testing Weeks rapid response HIV/HCV tests have been advertised in some GPs and OSs practices, and 250 tests have been performed with great participation and acceptance by doctors and patients. All tests were negative.

CONCLUSIONS

Dialogue with GPs and OCs demonstrated the importance of training on HIV-indicator-conditions-driven testing to remove the need for risk assessment and to resolve critical issues.

Normalization of HIV/HCV testing and alternative complementary services are the key steps in diagnosing the unknown and promoting awareness to the general population.

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