Pharmacists Can Oversee Hep C Treatment

Pharmacist-driven hep C treatment sees good cure rates

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People with hepatitis C virus (HCV) can successfully receive direct-acting antiviral (DAA) treatment from pharmacists.

Researchers enrolled 1,253 people with HCV in a study in which pharmacists oversaw the participants' treatment for the virus, with help from an interdisciplinary team.

Forty percent of the participants had cirrhosis (severe liver scarring), one third had mental illness, 24% had diabetes and 18% had HIV coinfection.

Among the 1,134 people who completed treatment, 95% were cured. Among all participants, including the 95 lost to follow-up and the 24 who discontinued treatment, 86% were cured. Those who missed any doses of their medication had a cure rate of 75%, compared with a cure rate of 90% among those who fully adhered to their regimen.

"We must increase access to HCV treatment in order to achieve our nation's HCV elimination goals," says the study's lead author, Michelle Martin, PharmD, a clinical associate professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago's College of Pharmacy. "Trained clinical pharmacists have demonstrated high HCV cure rates and are accessible members of the health care team."

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