

*[P-79D] Development and implementation of a hepatitis C clinic*

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*The focus of this project is the development and implementation of a hepatitis C clinic at the Veterans Administration Chicago Health Care System. Hepatitis C virus (HCV) is emerging as a major health care problem throughout the United States with significant morbidity and mortality. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recognized the need to address this problem due to its prevalence in the VA service population. Current management for HCV is expensive with variable success rate. To address this need, a hepatitis C clinic is being developed and implemented. A pharmacist and a nurse will run the clinic with close interaction with the gastroenterology clinic. The goal of this clinic is to follow all HCV positive patients identified through the primary care clinics. The first purpose of the clinic is to provide education to all infected patients regarding hepatitis C, including risk factors, transmission, treatment available, effects on disease progression and general health maintenance. The second purpose of the clinic is to implement the VA Treatment Criteria Guidelines to enhance success rates and to decrease the potential complications of treatment. It is anticipated that this clinic will result in increased treatment success rates, decreased potential serious side effects of treatment and significantly decreased total cost to the VA due to careful patient selection. This clinic will also enhance compliance to VA guidelines and increase the quality of care by providing patient education and disease management.*