

Abstract

Background: Hepatitis C kills more Americans than from all other reportable infectious diseases combined. People who engage in drug use put themselves at high risk for contracting hepatitis C, and at least 60 percent of Hepatitis C cases are transmitted through injection drug use. Without proper identification and treatment, this can lead to serious medical complications, liver failure, and death.

Methods: This QI project aimed to improve hepatitis C screening referrals in an outpatient chemical dependency program by implementing a hepatitis C risk workflow and increasing behavioral health professionals' knowledge of hepatitis C. This project utilized a pretest-posttest design and an intervention and control group design.

Results: A total of 13 behavioral health professional participants were enrolled, and all participants were available for the final assessment and completed the entire study. Results showed statistical significance in improving hepatitis knowledge and completion of risk assessments.

Conclusion: The data showed improvement in the completion of risk assessments after providing education and implementing a workflow that was in line with previous studies. The study shows the importance of providing education to increase knowledge and having a well-defined workflow within the department

Keywords: Hepatitis C, HCV, Education, Risk Assessment, Substance Use, Substance Abuse, Behavioral Health Professionals, Substance Use Treatment, Chemical Dependency Treatment