HIV/HCV co-infection in our cohort. The majority of drug related deaths which suggests the need for further work on prescribing management of those with HIV/HCV co-infection. HIV viral load as a predictor of death in the drug related causes demonstrates chaotic lifestyles and lack of adherence to ARVs in this group.

In this study, drug overdoses were the most common cause of death (31%). The majority of these involved methadone (93%). Heroin was only implicated in one death. Infections were accountable for 7 (16%) deaths with HIV/AIDS as the main cause of death in 2 cases. Liver disease was a cause of death in 3 (7%) patients but may have contributed to more, particularly drug overdose.

Comparison of death vs surviving patients

HIV markers

CD4 count (most recently available) and HIV viral load (PCR) were significantly different between the dead and surviving patients [Table 1]. HIV viral load was not found to be significant, however, for most of the dead individuals this data was not available. Liver markers

Table 1 also shows that most recent albumin and INR were significantly different between groups.

Further analysis (Table 2) found albumin to be consistently the best predictor of all-cause death. When deaths were separated between opiate/overdose related and other causes, HIV viral load became the best predictor for death.

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