Project Connect: Linkage-to-Care Outcomes for Hepatitis C Patients in Los Angeles County

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BACKGROUND

- Hepatitis C Virus is a major cause of cirrhosis, liver cancer, and hepatitis-related deaths
- Project Connect is a linkage-to-care initiative developed with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Hepatitis Unit
- Program combines a diagnosed cases registry with volunteer case management staff to support patient education and treatment access
- **Goal:** Evaluate Project Connect's linkage-to-cure outcomes

METHODS

Figure 1. Project HCV Connect Overview of

Linkage-to-Care Referral Protocol

Case Outreach
- 3 outreach attempts (on separate days):
  - Phone call
  - Voicemail
  - Follow-up text message

Inform, assess, and educate
- Disclose Hepatitis C infection status
- Assess awareness of treatment
- Conduct education of Hepatitis C

Linkage-to-Care
- Treatment pathway determined based on insurance, housing, and transportation needs
- Referred to primary care provider, Bienestar, AIDS Health Foundation, or telehealth provider

2-month Follow-Up Outreach
- Verify treatment Initiation
- Offer relinkage (if necessary)

Project Connect displayed effectiveness by linking 52% to Hepatitis C Care.

Expanded patient navigation and simplifying treatment access are needed to increase treatment uptake.

RESULTS

Figure 2. Project HCV Connect Linkage to Treatment Cascade of Los Angeles County January 2023-December 2025

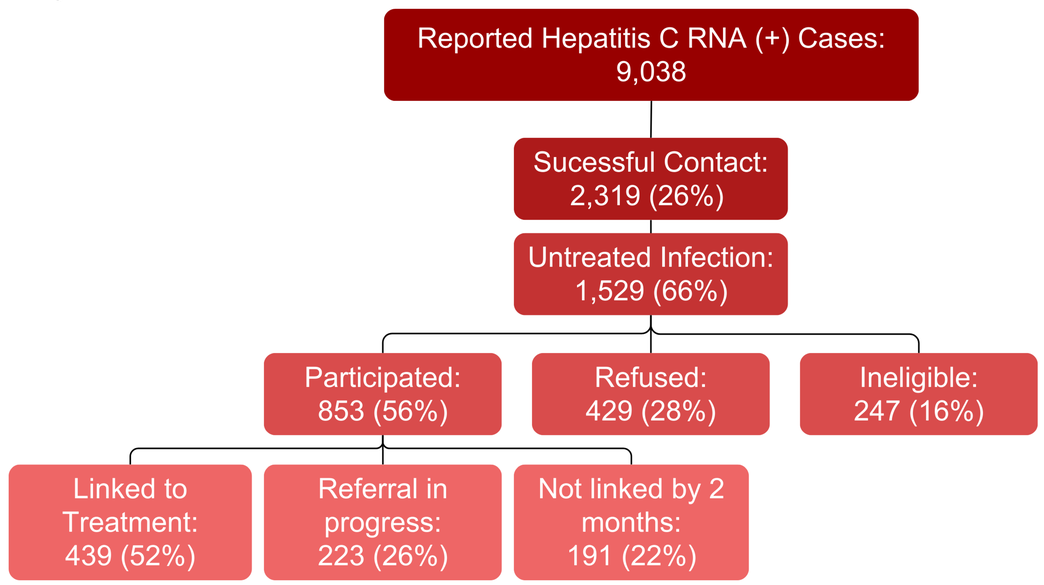
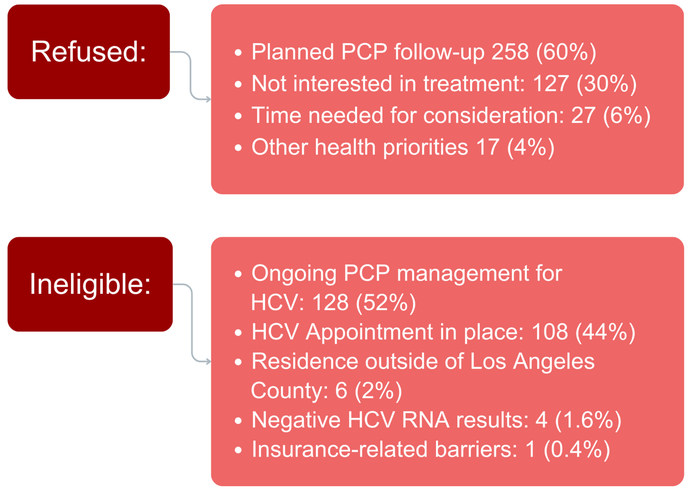


Figure 3. Reasons for Refusal or Ineligibility of Hepatitis C Treatment Uptake *(PCP: Primary care Physician)*



CONCLUSIONS

- There is a need for community outreach programs to contact individuals untreated for HCV
- Volunteer-led outreach can identify untreated cases, initiate referrals and connect individuals with treatment
- However, there is a strong need for streamlined patient contact and further expanded service capacity

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