People With HIV Are Increasingly Missing Intake Appointments for Hep C Care

Factors associated with missing such initial medical appointments include having a mental health disorder and using drugs.

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HIV-positive individuals coinfected with hepatitis C virus (HCV) increasingly do not show up for intake into medical care for hep C, Infectious Disease Advisor reports.

Publishing their findings in Open Forum Infectious Diseases, researchers analyzed data regarding 202 people with HIV and HCV who among them were scheduled for 349 clinic appointments for hep C care. About half of the individuals were nonwhite, 80 percent had a fully suppressed viral load, 31.7 percent reported drug use, 32.8 percent reported consuming alcohol heavily and 37.8 percent had a mental health disorder.

During the four-year study period, 21.9 percent of those who were scheduled for a hep C intake appointment missed it. The proportion missing their intake appointment rose each year of the study, from 17.2 percent in 2014 to 25.4 percent in 2017.

Overall, 32.7 percent (66 people) of the study cohort missed their first appointment for HCV care. Of that group, 42.4 percent (28 people) never got into medical care for hep C.

Factors associated with missing a hep C intake appointment included having a history of a mental health disorder, having a CD4 count over 200, currently using drugs and being nonwhite. The factor most strongly associated with never making it into medical care for HCV was having a detectable HIV viral load.

To read the Infectious Disease Advisor article, click here.

To read the study, click here.

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