Primary Care Docs Clueless About Hep C Drugs

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About three out of four primary care physicians (PCPs) are unfamiliar with the new generation of hep C drugs: Janssen's Olysio (simeprevir) and Gilead Sciences' Sovaldi (sofosbuvir), which each received U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval at the end of 2013. The private health care research firm Decision Resources Group learned this when polling 100 PCPs, 44 gastroenterologists and 7 hepatologists for a report on how new medications will impact the role of PCPs in caring for people with hepatitis C virus (HCV).

More than half of the specialists polled said they were comfortable with having PCPs prescribe all-oral, interferon-free hep C regimens to patients who have minimal liver damage. But about a third of the PCPs said they anticipated always referring such patients to a specialist.

Decision Resources Group analyst Hannah E. Cummings, PhD, remarked, "Given that PCPs are well positioned to recognize patients at high risk of acquiring HCV infection, it will be essential to engage in continued efforts to educate PCPs on HCV-related risk factors and increase their familiarity with currently recommended HCV treatment regimens."

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