Free Hepatitis C Medicine

February 24, 2020 By Greg Jefferys

Today in my Facebook hepatitis C support group, Hepatitis C Treatment Cure and Community, a new member posted this simple question: “Is there free treatment for hepatitis C?”

Is There Such a Thing as Free Hepatitis C Medicine?

This is actually an interesting question that caused me to go off on a tangent.

This is because there is really no “free” Hep C treatment: Someone always pays.

If a person lives in Australia or the UK or some other country where treatment is subsidized by a National Health Service, or if a person has Health Insurance in the USA then either the taxpayer or the policyholders pay for the Hep C medicine.

It’s not “free”.

Because HCV medicine prices are so outrageous, this means that in countries with health services the health budget suffers and people with other health needs miss out.

Big Pharma and its advocacy groups, such as the World Hepatitis Alliance, lobby and influence health service bureaucrats and politicians to get them to shift health funds to buying expensive hep C medication. Health funding is always under pressure, and when billions are spent on hep C medication other areas of health that do not have powerful lobby groups suffer — for example, emergency and maternity services.

In the USA, the high HCV med prices put the health insurance premiums up, making it more difficult for people to afford health insurance.

The high prices for hep C medication also means that co-payments are higher and qualification for treatment is more difficult.

In both cases the winner is Big Pharma, which is making record profits out of HCV meds.

The losers are people with hep C, the national health services and the health insurance

policyholders.

The RIGHT thing is when the price of medicine is a real price that is determined by the free market.

Hepatitis C Medicine in a Free Market Economy

Capitalism and free markets are not the same thing. In places like the USA and Europe, people and companies with massive amounts of capital use their wealth to influence decision-makers to give themselves unfair advantages and put competitors at a disadvantage.

In a true free-market economy a price reflects the cost of manufacture (including research) plus a fair profit and is determined by a free interaction between suppliers and consumers.

So the REAL price for hep C meds should be somewhere between US$500 and US$1,000 per treatment.

The idea of free hepatitis C medicine is a myth. What should exist is hepatitis medicines available at a fair price determined by a free market.

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http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/free-hepatitis-c-medicine