Hepatitis C Treatment: A question of access

April 16, 2018 By Greg Jefferys

Today I had two emails relating very contrasting stories.
The first one was from a guy who lives in the USA who ordered generic Harvoni through me last year and is now cured.
In the USA there is no problem for people with Hepatitis C to import generic Hep C medication. The US FDA has total discretionary power over the importation of medicines for personal use. The guidelines are that as long as not more than 12 weeks treatment is imported and that it is only for personal use, then there is no problem.
So for nearly three years now I have been assisting people in the USA to import generic versions of Sovaldi, Harvoni and Epclusa without and problems from the FDA or US Customs.
Warren in the USA is now cured thanks to the sensible and fair policy of the US FDA.

The other email was from a guy in Argentina who I also sent medication to, but whose story had a very different outcome. I sent him generic Epclusa and it reached Argentina without any problems. After the parcel was sitting for a couple of weeks in the Argentinian Customs' offices he was finally summoned to explain why he was importing a medicine for personal use.
He explained that he had Hepatitis C and that the medication he needed (Sofosbuvir + Velpatasvir) was not available in Argentina etc.
At this point in time he actually had the parcel containing the generic Epclusa in his hands. The cure he had been waiting to get was there in his grasp. But the Customs official took it back from him and then told him that he could not have it and that was that….
Can you imagine this man's frustration and anguish? Here he had the medication he needed right in his hands and some pompous official decides that he cannot have it.
I think I would have exploded!!!
He, on the other hand, remained calm and contacted me to work out other ways of getting the medicines to me.
Argentina, like Canada and Serbia, is unique in the world is as much as it strongly and actively blocks its citizens from acquiring life saving medicines. Like Serbia Argentina can not afford to offer its citizens free, or subsidized treatment for Hepatitis C. So you have this insane situation where a government prevents its people from accessing treatment for a potentially fatal disease without offering any alternative treatment options.

Click here to read Greg's blog in its entirety, including the emails detailing the contrasting experiences between the person in the United States and the Argentinean.

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