Thank You Hepatitis C Advocates

January 23, 2017 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

I haven't felt this riled up in a while. A nurse with hepatitis C contacted me. She was denied treatment by her insurance company because she doesn't have advanced liver disease. (Reason #1 that I am agitated.) She has appealed many times, and they won't budge. Her medical provider recommended that she get new insurance, so she applied for a job at a major, and I mean major well-known hospital. They asked her if she has ever had hepatitis. She was honest. They told her that if her viral load is too high, they won't hire her. Here is where I came unglued.

This is wrong on so many levels. But the part that gets me most is the arbitrary, unscientific use of viral load as the determinant factor. And the obvious ignorance and discrimination. This is a hospital for goodness sake. An institution that is required to follow universal precautions.

I don't know how to help this nurse, other than to keep fighting this sort of ignorance. I offered help for her fight. (See Hepatitis C Treatment: Getting It and Paying for It) She got my full undivided sympathy and this blog. But it is not enough. I will keep chipping away at this, just like many others are doing. Even if nothing changes, I know I have tried. Even more comforting, is that I am not doing this alone. Thank you hepatitis C advocates everywhere. We have our work cut out for us.

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