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**Title: Treatment Disparities Among Minorities Living with Hepatitis C in Los Angeles County**

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**Background and Objectives:**

Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) infection is curable with oral medication. However, despite federal initiatives to promote treatment, only a small proportion of infected individuals are treated. While national treatment trends are well-documented, this does not capture differences in awareness and management among minority populations. In April 2023, the University of Southern California partnered with the Los Angeles County (LA) Department of Public Health and developed a program to contact and link-to-treatment LA residents living with HCV infection reported to the county between 2021 – 2022.

**Methods:**

Individuals living with HCV infection were identified using a database of positive HCV RNA tests reported to the LA County Department of Public Health. Trained volunteers contacted eligible (i.e. not deceased, or incarcerated) individuals by telephone and collected demographic information, health insurance coverage, awareness of infection status, treatment outcomes and barriers to care.

**Results:**

Of 5160 LA County residents with a reported positive HCV RNA test, as of August 8, 2023, staff called 1920; 17% (330) were successfully surveyed. Of survey respondents, 54.2% (179) reported minority heritage.

Among self-identified minority groups, 55.3% (99) reported being publicly insured, and 3.91% (7) uninsured. This contrasts with non-minority claimant groups, of which 47.7% (72) reported as publicly insured, and 3.97% (6) uninsured. Seventeen percent (30) of minority individuals were not aware of their positive test result, compared to 11.9% (18) of non-minority-claiming individuals. Seventy-five percent (134) of minority respondents had not been treated, compared to 68.2% (103) of non-minority respondents.

**Conclusion:**

A new program to link people living with HCV infection to treatment found disparities in awareness of HCV infection, and treatment status by minority group. Most individuals living with HCV infection in LA County belong to a minority group, which illustrates the need for increased community awareness and accelerated hepatitis C treatment efforts.

**Total words**: 299/300 words