

# Continuum of HCV Care in an Outreach Program for Intravenous Drug Users in Luxembourg

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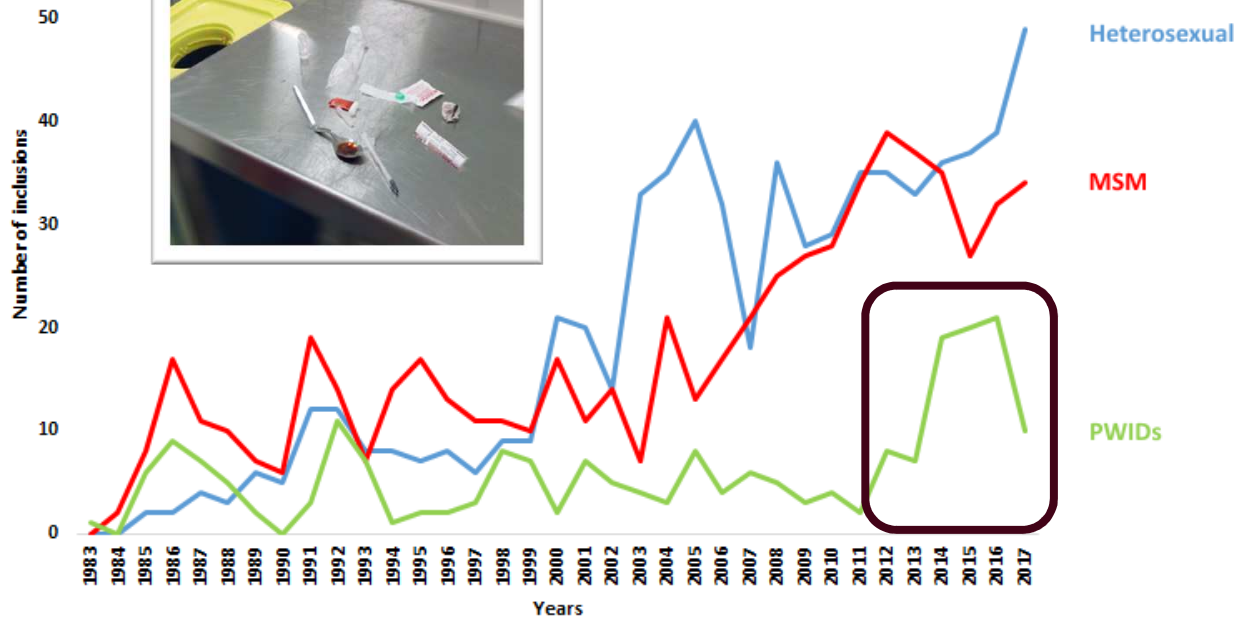
# The HCV-UD outreach program

*Expand screening and treatment among intravenous drug users*

- ✓ IVDU represent the majority of the new cases of HCV infection in Luxembourg



Dr Vic Arendt



HIV outbreak driven by cocaine injection

Kontakt 28 Abrisud  
jugend- an drogen**h**ëllef  
Fondation

**ABRIGADO**



## Aims and methodology

- ✓ To characterize the profiles and practices of active IVDU
- ✓ To provide testing and link to medical care
- ✓ To investigate the HCV continuum of care among IVDU
- ✓ To improve prevention initiatives and investigate the barriers

The cross-sectional study was conducted :

- At the national supervised drug consumption facility and in 3 different harm reduction sites from Luxembourg between November 2015 and December 2017
- Inclusion criteria: adults having consumed any drugs (IV or not)
- All participants provided written informed consent
- Blood drawing for HCV, HIV, HBV and syphilis serologies, viral load and liver biomarkers
- Fibroscan
- Interviews were conducted using a standardized questionnaire including demographic and social characteristics, drug use patterns, and risk and harm reduction behaviours.

## Participant's characteristics

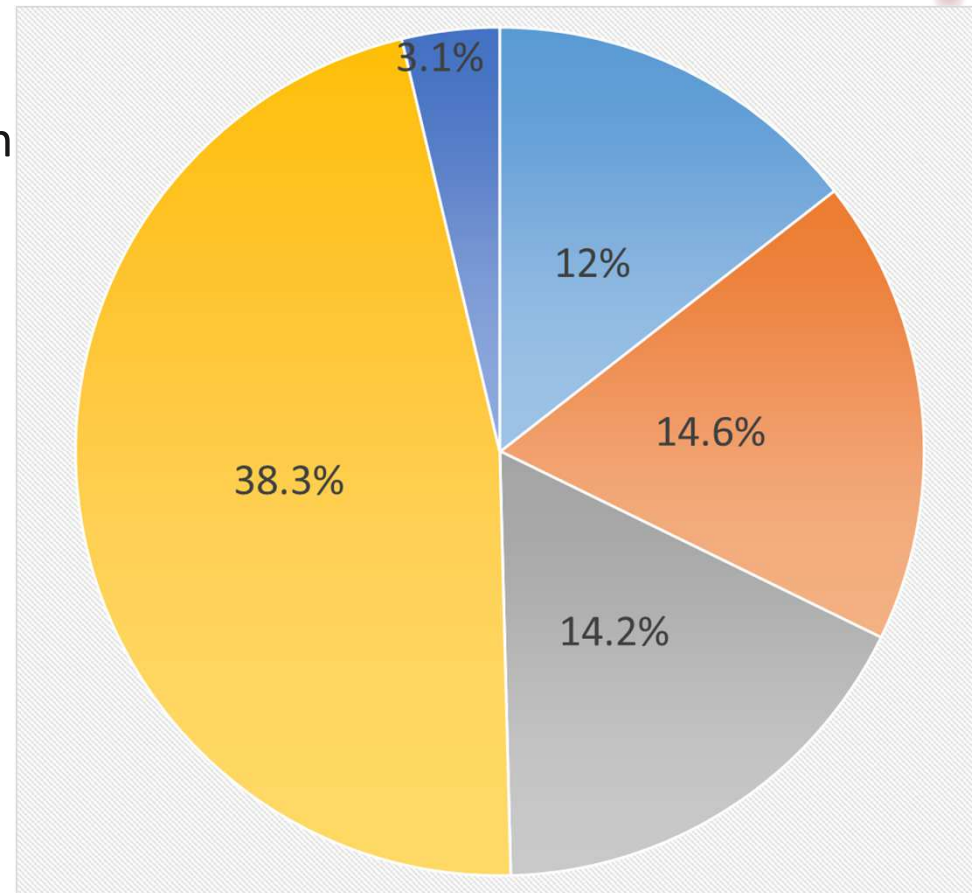
		Number	Pourcentage
Number of participants	<b>Mean age of 38.7 years</b>	295	
Gender	Male	212	71.2%
	Female	82	28%
Country of origin	Luxembourg	149	50.5%
	Portugal	50	17.0
	Other countries in Europe	59	20.0
	Western Europe	36	12.2
	Eastern Europe	23	7.8
	Asia	14	4.8
	Africa	14	4.8
	South America	1	0.3
Social insurance	With «Caisse Nationale de Maladie»	211	71.5
	Without «Caisse Nationale de Maladie»	77	26.1

## Participant's characteristics

		Number	Pourcentage
Housing	Stable	207	70.1
	Alone	98	33.2
	Relative/friends	94	31.9
	Homeless	81	27.5
	No answer	7	7.3
Education	Stop school before the age of 15 years	165	55.9
	Secondary level	92	31.2
	University	22	7.5
Current Activity	Under work contract	28	9.5
	Occasional job	5	1.7
	Unemployment/social incomes	148	50.2
	Prostitution	31	10.5
	Professional training	2	0.7
	Without activity, no income	77	26.1
Prison		115	39

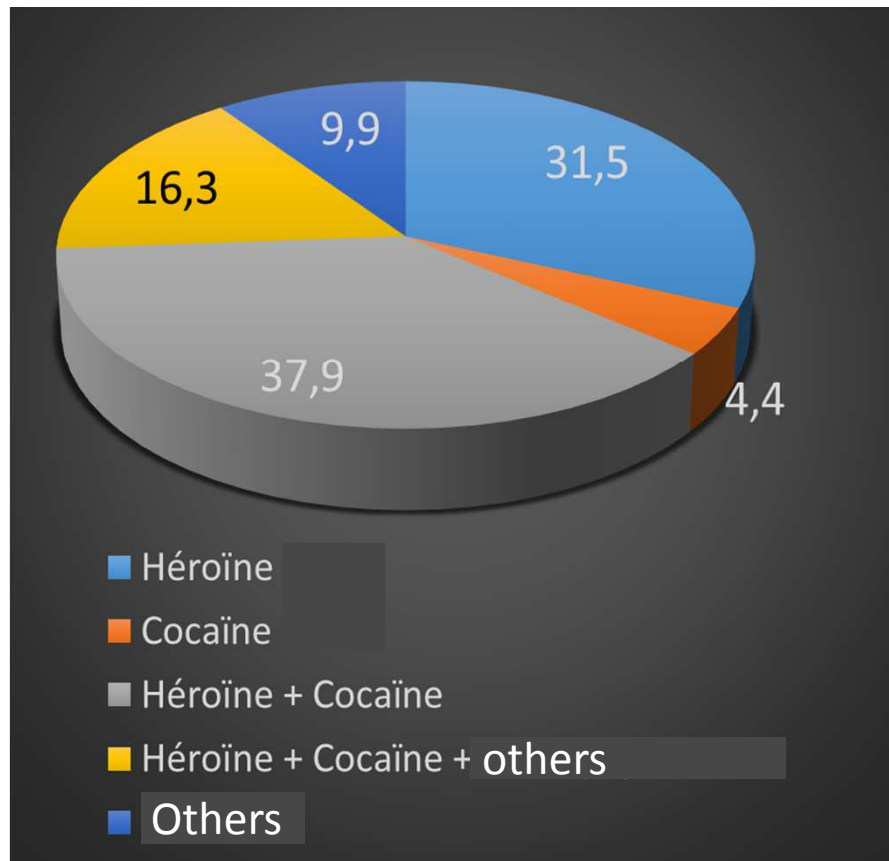
## Frequency of consumption

- No consumption the last month
- Once a week
- Several times a week
- Once a day
- Several times a day



- ✓ 84% are active drug users
- ✓ 82% are currently injecting
- ✓ 52% are injecting at least once a day
- ✓ Mean age of first injection: 27 years

# Drug consumption



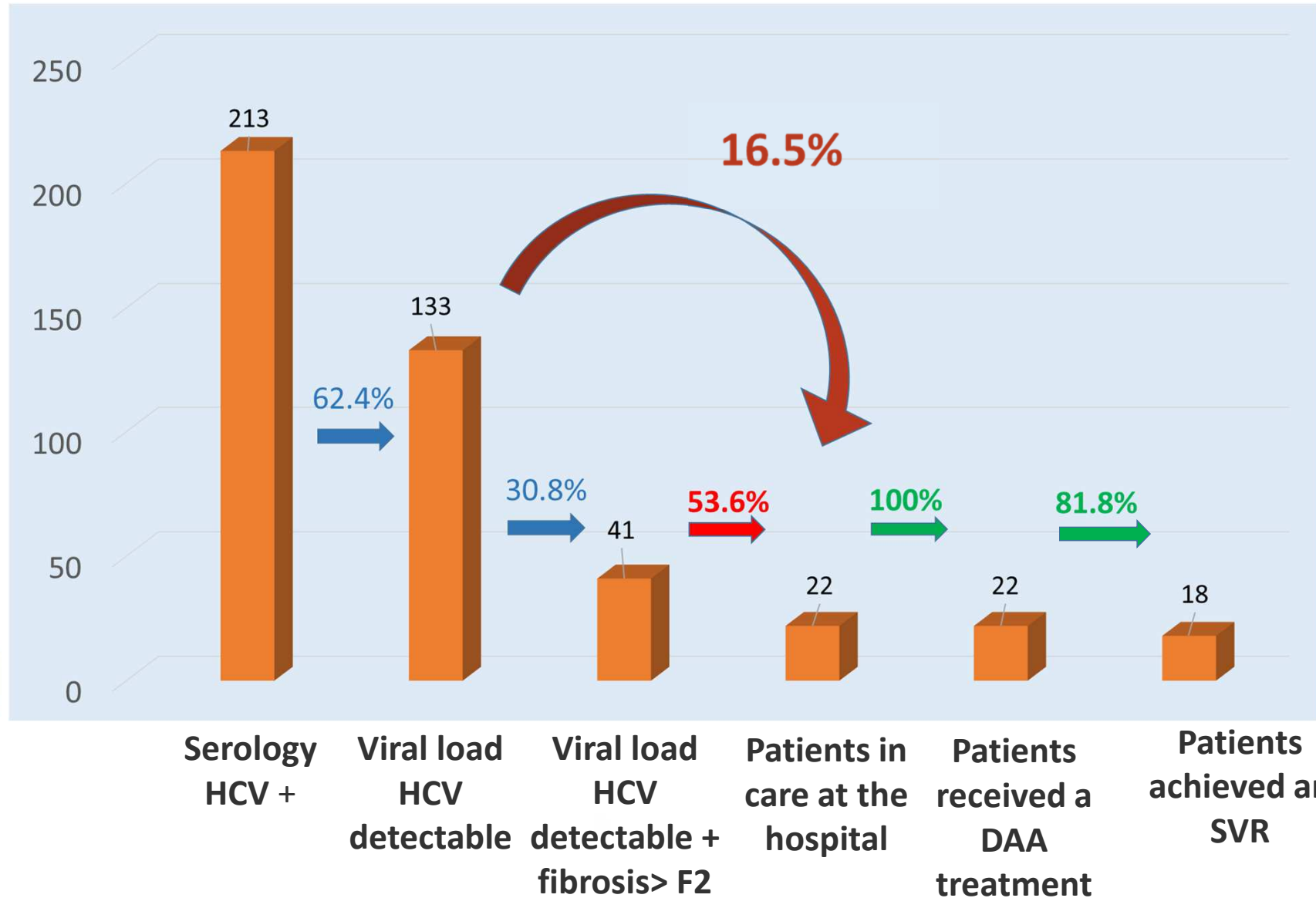
- The majority is consuming heroin, and 59 % cocaine
- Poly-use of drugs
- 57.3% of participants belong to a substitution program
- 25% describe sharing of syringes
- 30% describe sharing of drugs

## Screening for HCV and HIV

- ✓ 62 % of IVDU have a detectable HCV viral load
- ✓ 71% of IVDU are F0/F1
- ✓ 8% are co-infected with HIV

	n	%
Serology HCV +	213	<b>72.2</b>
HCV viral load detectable	133	62.4
Genotype	1a	<b>43.0</b>
	1b	8.5
	2	0.7
	3a	<b>37.3</b>
	4	7.7
Fibrosis score (Fibroscan)	F0/F1	70.9
	F2	10.8
	F3	9.9
	F4	7.5
Serology HIV +	23	<b>7.8</b>
Co-infection HCV/HIV	22	7.4

# Continuum of HCV care



- ✓ A high level of casualization associated with cocaine injection and no knowledge of HCV infection is a barrier for HCV testing
- ✓ Only 16.5% of drug users with a detectable viral load benefit of treatment although there is no restriction for DAA use
- ✓ 53.6 % of drug users in need of treatment (viral load detectable + F2) came back to the hospital to receive DAA
- ✓ Eligibility of treatment is a barrier to accept the HCV test
- ✓ 2-3 weeks of delay to receive the results of the viral load and eligibility of treatment
- ✓ Between 85% and 90% of SVR with DAA among active IVDU in drug settings or in prison

- ✓ DAA are now provided in the harm reduction centres and at the drug consumption facility with a nurse in charge of the follow-up of the patients
- ✓ The program is available in prison and has been expanded in in a center taking care of homeless (Stemm von de stross), in Médecins du Monde, and in doctors prescribing methadone
- ✓ Viral load available in the centers to provide the results the same day and eligibility of treatment (point of care HCV viral load)
- ✓ Peers are lacking to explain the treatment process with DAA, drug use, consumption of alcohol ...
- ✓ A good environment with psychological support has to be created

Thank you for your attention

## Acknowledgements



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Dr Arendt