

Updates on UK Outbreaks

EMCDDA DRID Meeting 24-25 September 2018

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on behalf of UK DRID expert group.

Two recent blood borne viral infection outbreaks

In addition to issues with bacterial infections, there have been two recent blood borne virus outbreaks among people who inject drugs in the UK.

- 1. Hepatitis C in Belfast**
- 2. HIV in Glasgow**

Both have previously been presented at DRID meetings.

HCV in Belfast 1

Lucy Jessop, 2017 DRID meeting

- Three cases of acute HCV infection were diagnosed within one week in one town during the summer of 2016, this was very unusual.
- The cases were all in people who injected drugs and were homeless.
- In response, the homeless nursing team initiated outreach work to trace contacts and provide information and advice.

HCV in Belfast 2

Outbreak description

Number of people in the cohort tested between July 2016 and December 2017 – n=156 (107 male)

	n	%
Cases	45	29
Male sex	31	69
Median age in years (range)	29 (19-54)	
Status of cases as of Dec 2017		
Acute or recent infections	20	44
Past resolved infections*	4	9
Deceased*	2	4
Lost to follow-up	4	9
Known chronic or now chronic	24	53
Co-infection with HIV	2	4.4

*12 past resolved and 5 deceased in whole cohort

Public Health Agency

Responses included:

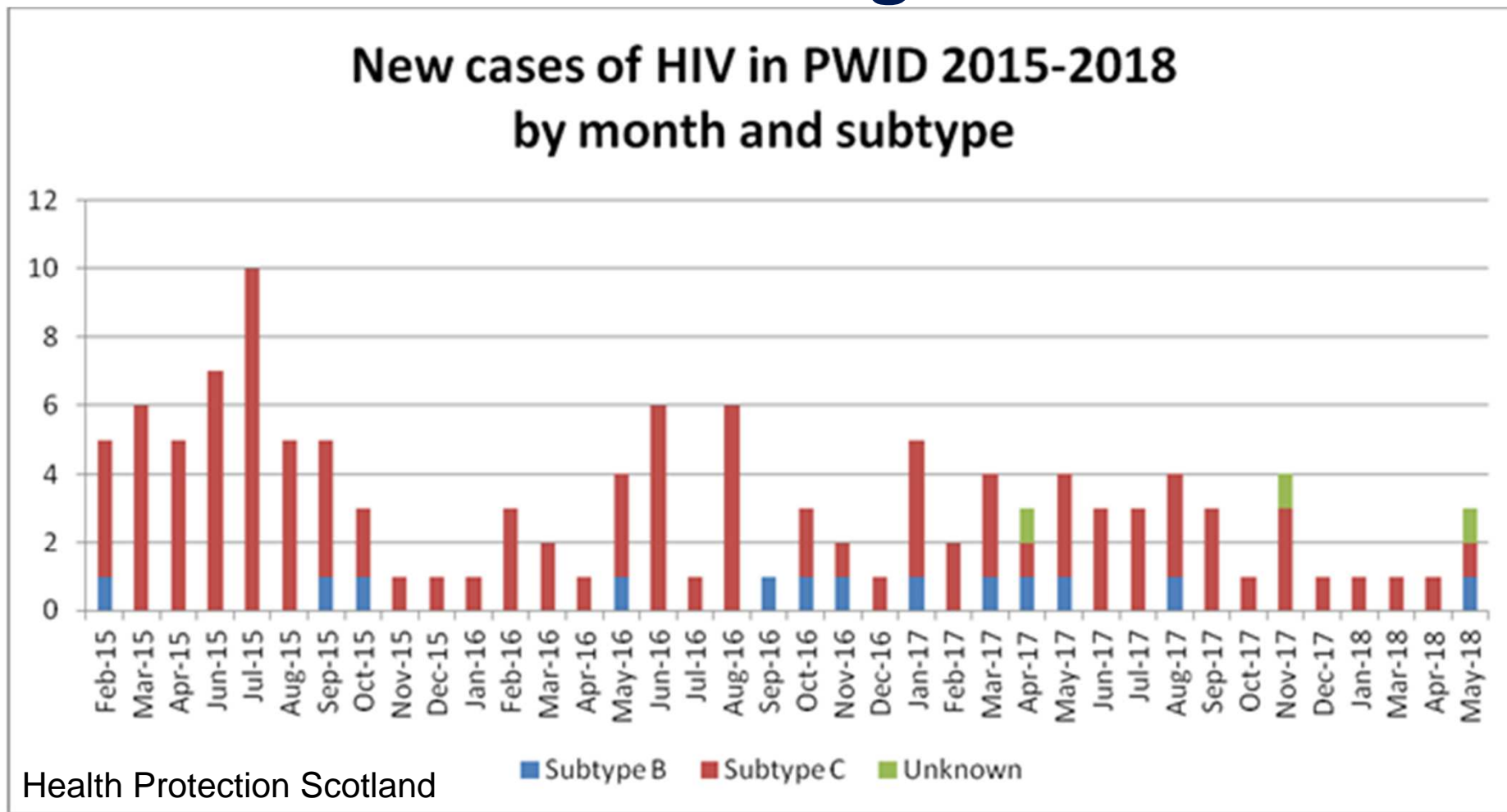
- advice, information posters and leaflets;
- extending NSP provision;
- offering hepatitis B vaccination;
- referrals for drug treatment assessment;
- diagnostic testing offered every 3 months, the use of dried blood spot testing was expanded; and
- those with chronic infection were referred for hepatitis C treatment.

HIV in Glasgow 1

Louise Carroll, 2016 DRID meeting

- There was a marked increase in new HIV diagnoses reported among people who inject drugs in Glasgow during 2015; with 47 new diagnoses in 2015, compared with ≤ 10 annually in preceding years.
- Factors that have been associated with the outbreak include: low HIV risk awareness; uptake of HIV testing; poverty and homelessness; cocaine injecting and injecting practices.

HIV in Glasgow 2



HIV in Glasgow 3

The ongoing multi-disciplinary response includes:

- HIV specific education to those at-risk and service providers;
- increased availability of HIV testing; improved provision of NSP; and
- an enhanced HIV model of care involving outreach nursing and community prescribing of anti-retroviral therapy (ART).

HIV in Glasgow 4

The response has also been hampered by the closure of the city's largest NSP service in September 2017 (it had opened in July 2016).

In addition, senior officials from Glasgow's health and social care services had approved proposals to introduce a drug consumption room (DCR) and heroin assisted treatment (HAT).

DCRs cannot legally operate in UK, so DCR not yet implemented. HAT is legal, and a service is scheduled to open soon.

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Thank you