HCV testing training for non-HCV-specialists in a tertiary hospital: change in attitudes and rates of HCV screening

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BACKGROUND
- Many HCV infected patients remain undiagnosed.
- National and international HCV testing guidelines are poorly known by non-HCV specialists.
- Awareness is essential to improve HCV screening.

OBJECTIVES
- Impact of a training session on HCV screening in:
  1. Attitudes and knowledge towards screening.
  2. Number of serologies ordered, positive and active infections.

METHODS

POPULATION
Prescribers of 31 departments: 17 medical departments (med) 14 surgical departments (surg)

DESIGN AND VARIABLES
Pre and post training, by department:
- Absolute number of HCV tests.
- Screening rate by 1000 attended patients.
- New HCV diagnoses.

INTERVENTION
- 1 hour Training session by HIV and HCV/HBV specialists.
- Between March and November 2019.
- Pre and post training questionnaires.

OUTCOMES
Paired analysis of:
- Questionnaire results
- Rate of HCV tests ordered.
- New diagnosis of active infection

RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HCV tests/10^4 patients</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>HCV Ab (+)/10^4 patients</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>HCV ag/PCR (+)/10^4 patients</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before-Training</td>
<td>After-Training</td>
<td>Before-Training</td>
<td>After-Training</td>
<td>Before-Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>All</td>
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<td>6.52</td>
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<td>19.39</td>
<td>22.45</td>
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<td>34.22</td>
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<td>4.72</td>
<td>0.725</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>0.564</td>
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CONCLUSIONS
- Non-HCV specialists reported poor knowledge of HCV screening guidelines, being worse in surgical departments.
- Directed training was considered useful and significantly improved predisposition for HCV screening in both medical and surgical departments.
- An improve in HCV screening was detected after the intervention, although concentrated only in medical departments.