

Exploring the use of peripherally-inserted central catheter lines in people who inject drugs who are admitted to hospital for infection in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Category: Oral Presentation

Abstract Body

Objectives: We aimed to: (a) quantify the frequency of peripherally-inserted central catheter (PICC) placement among people who inject drugs who are admitted to hospital with bacterial infections; (b) describe PICC-associated complications; (c) identify how often people who inject drugs with PICCs are offered substance use care, including withdrawal support, addiction treatment, and harm reduction strategies.

Methods: This is a retrospective case series of patients admitted to hospitals in Halifax, Nova Scotia, January 2017-March 2022. Participants were age 16-65 years; had discharge diagnoses consistent with substance use and injecting-related bacterial and fungal infections (e.g., skin and soft-tissue infections, endocarditis, osteomyelitis, etc.), and procedure codes for PICC placement. We are manually extracting data on: sociodemographic characteristics; substance use; severity of acute illness; use of PICC lines; access to substance use care in hospital; and indicators of unmet health, social, and community care needs.

Results: We identified 1,557 hospital admissions with severe infections where PICC lines were placed, and 134 (8.6%) also had diagnostic codes for opioid, cocaine, polysubstance use, and/or hepatitis C virus. Among this subsample of patients with substance use-related codes, 75 (56%) were female and mean age was 39.7 (SD 12.2) years. Eleven (8.2%) of these hospital admissions ended in premature discharge against medical advice and nine (6.7%) had in-hospital death. Data extraction on PICC line complications and access to substance use care is ongoing and the final presentation will include results from more participants.

Conclusions: People who inject drugs commonly have PICC lines placed during hospital admissions, to facilitate long-term intravenous antibiotics. This study will help to identify gaps in care and inform institutional responses to policy and clinical care to support people who inject drugs in hospital.

Key Words

- Medical Co-Morbidities
- Opioids/Opiates
- Policy
- Stigma
- Withdrawal Management

Learning Objective # 1

By the end of the presentation, attendees will be able to describe gaps in care that people who inject drugs requiring peripherally-inserted central catheter lines face.

Learning Objective # 2

By the end of the presentation, participants will know a few purposed strategies to improve care of people who inject drugs who require peripherally-inserted central catheters.

Reference # 1

Guta, A., Perri, M., Strike, C., Gagnon, M. & Carusone, S. C. “With a PICC line, you never miss”: The role of peripherally inserted central catheters in hospital care for people living with HIV/HCV who use drugs. *Int. J. Drug Policy* 96, 103438 (2021).

Reference # 2

Appa, A. & Barocas, J. A. Can I Safely Discharge a Patient with a Substance Use Disorder Home with a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter? *NEJM Evid. 1*, (2022).

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