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Assessing Patient Activation in Veterans with Chronic Liver Disease

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Introduction

- Chronic liver disease (CLD) is a significant cause of morbidity and mortality
- Patient activation is the individual's ability and willingness to partake in the management of their health and health care
- No studies have examined the level of activation in Veterans with CLD.



VA Population

- The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) provides care to more individuals with HCV than any other health care system in the United States



Antiviral Therapy

- New, very effective all oral antiviral therapies are available for HCV. The new therapies are expensive and adherence is essential to ensure safety and efficacy.
- Successful antiviral treatment can improve health outcomes, significantly reducing the risk of disease progression to cirrhosis, liver cancer, liver failure, and death.



Background

- Patient Activation Measure (PAM) is a well validated survey instrument that was designed to assess a person's knowledge, skills, and confidence in the management of their health and health care

(Hibbard & Cunningham, 2008; Hibbard et al., 2004)



Background: PAM

- 13 questions
- Scored on a 0-100 scale and categorized into a level (level 1-4)
- Level 1 is the least activated and level 4 is the most activated

(Hibbard & Greene, 2013)



Background: Highly Activated Individuals

- Those who are more activated are:
 - more likely to engage in healthy behaviors (e.g. exercise, healthy diet, etc.),
 - more likely to be engaged in disease-specific self-management behaviors (e.g. monitoring blood pressure or blood glucose, medication adherence, etc.),
 - report medication adherence
 - obtain preventative care services (e.g. health screenings, immunizations, etc.)
 - Participate more in decisions about their health

(Greene & Hibbard, 2011; Fowles et al., 2009; Hibbard et al., 2007)



Aim of Study

- The aim of this study was to examine the distribution of PAM scores in two groups:
 1. Veterans with CLD
 2. Veterans with HCV preparing to start antiviral therapy



Methods

- A cross-sectional survey study
- Convenience sample of 212 Veterans seen in outpatient hepatology clinic
- Verbal consent was obtained
- Surveys were distributed by providers at routine hepatology visits.
- Patient activation was determined using the PAM



Results

- Both groups had high activation levels.
- The 157 Veterans with CLD had a mean PAM of 60.6(14.5 SD), and the 55 Veterans starting antiviral therapy had a mean PAM of 67(17.0 SD) . Both mean PAM scores were at a level 3.
- There was a significant difference in the distribution of activation levels between the two groups $X^2=8.84$, $p=.03$.



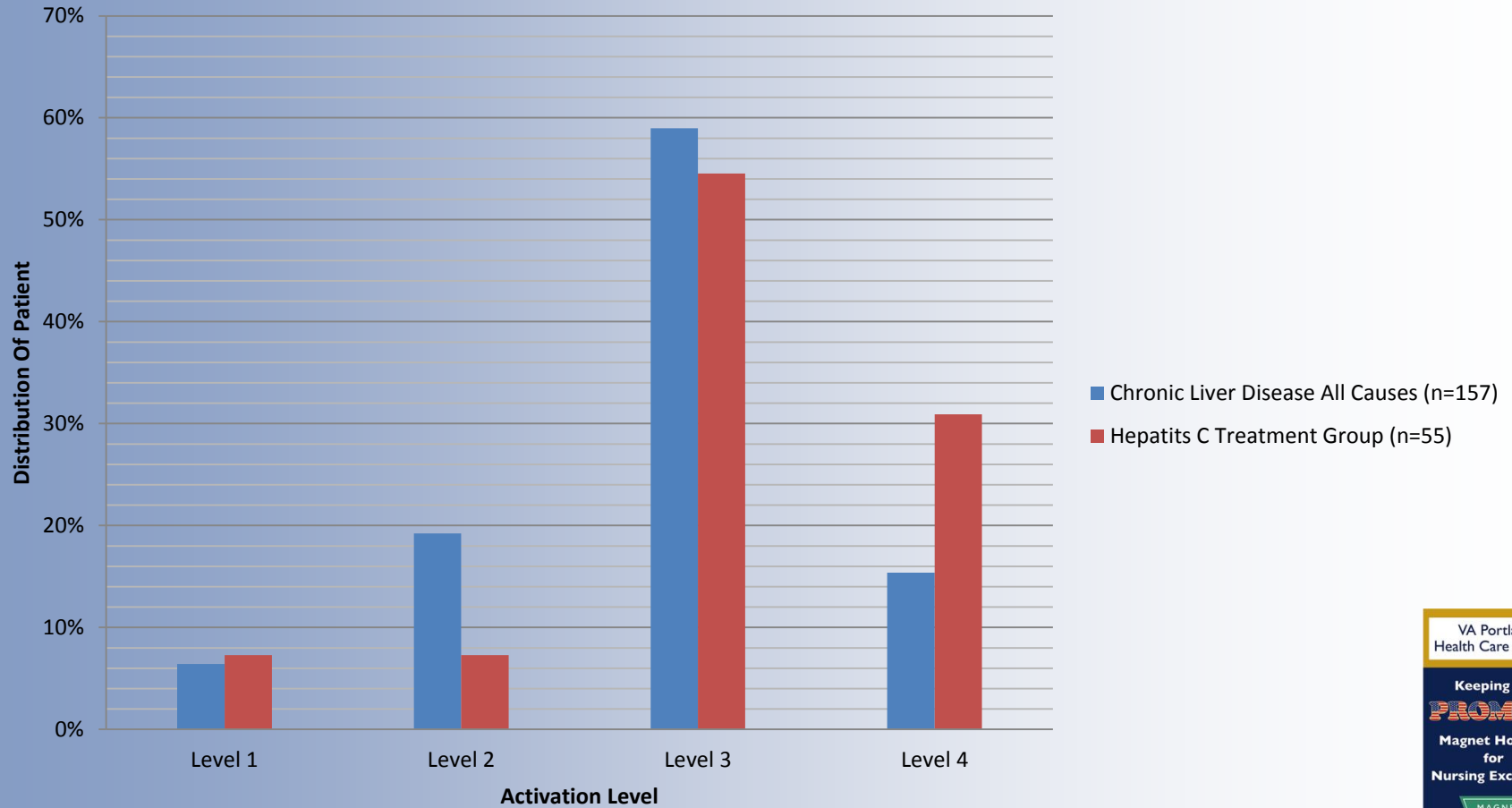
Results

General Hepatology, N=157	
Characteristics	Number (%)
Age (mean, SD)	62 (6.8%)
Male	149 (95%)
White	140 (89%)
Education Level- HS or Less	46 (29%)
Married	65 (41%)
Employed	28 (18%)
Income > \$30,000	94 (60%)
Cirrhosis Present	75 (48%)

Treatment Group, N=55	
Characteristic	Number (%)
Age (mean, SD)	62 (4.7)
Male	53 (96%)
White	48 (87%)
Education level- HS or less	13 (24%)
Married	21 (38%)
Employed	9 (16%)
Income > \$30,000	31 (56%)
Cirrhosis present	38 (69%)



Results



Discussion

- Those in the treatment group had a higher level of activation
- It was not unexpected that the patients in the HCV treatment group were more activated



Recommendations

- There is a need to develop interventions for Veterans with CLD at lower activation levels in order to increase their willingness and ability to take actions to manage their health.
- These pilot data will be the basis for future studies designed to test targeted interventions based on Veterans' levels of activation



Increasing Patient Activation

- Tailoring interventions to the individual's level of activation (e.g. support, patient education, and communication strategies) is a useful and likely effective way to help an individual improve their ability to manage their own health

(Hibbard & Mahoney, 2010 & Hibbard & Cunningham, 2008)



Increasing Patient Activation

- Ways to increase activation
 - Skill development
 - Build Confidence
 - Work with patient on problem solving
 - Peer support
 - Tailoring support to the person's activation level

(Hibbard & Greene, 2013; Hendriks & Randemakers, 2014; Hibbard, Greene, & Overton, 2013)



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