

## **1812 Hepatitis C Awareness**

passed 3 December 15

Proposer: Louise Rudd (Postgraduate SU Committee)

Seconder: Liam McCafferty (Postgraduate Education Officer)

Union Notes:

1. A campaign called "Going Viral" found that hepatitis C prevalence figures for the tested population were 4.5 times higher than the reported prevalence for hepatitis C for the UK and six times the national average in the in 25-55 year age group.
2. Hepatitis C is a blood born virus which remains active in blood outside the body for several weeks, therefore it can be transmitted through sharing personal items such as tooth brushes or razors, through intra nasal drug use as well as intravenous drug use, tattooing and piercing and through medical treatment carried out in developing countries.
3. Up to 500,000 people in the UK have Hepatitis C, but only about 20% have been diagnosed.
4. There is no vaccine, but there is effective treatment available. The sooner it is treated the better the outcome.
5. Left untreated Hepatitis C can cause liver fibrosis, cirrhosis and cancer. <sup>1</sup>

Union Believes:

1. Hepatitis C is a hidden epidemic that, because of its links to drug use, remains taboo.
2. The various means of catching the virus, and the lack of knowledge about it means that the virus is a potential hidden threat to the student population.
3. Knowledge is power. This life threatening virus can be cured so testing it vital for anyone who thinks they may have been exposed to it.
4. Prevention is better than the cure. Students need to be taught how to keep themselves safe from the virus.
5. That we have a responsibility to inform all students about Hepatitis C.

Union Resolves:

1. To mandate the Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer to run a Hepatitis C awareness campaign across campus and for the Union to publicise the dangers of Hepatitis C and the treatments available to students on an ongoing basis.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hepctrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Are%20you%20at%20risk%20leaflet%20-%20June%202011.pdf>