Injecting Related Injury Presentations at a Primary Health Service for People who Inject Drugs

Kaspian Fitzpatrick – Community Health Worker
Emily Carey – Community Health Nurse

Plan:
- wound types
- clinical responses to wounds
- impact of psychosocial factors
- how Health Works offers support
- case studies
- reflection

Tuesday 23 July 2013
Health Works (HW)

- Innovative Primary Health Care Centre for people who inject drugs in the Western suburbs of Melbourne
- Western Region Health Centre (WRHC)
- Consists of:
  - Health Care Team
  - NSP & Education Team

Most common wounds:

- acute traumatic
  - accidental injury (eg. cut), trauma injury (eg. stab)
- chronic ulcer/abscess
  - injecting related with or without cardiovascular disease
- surgical wound
  - surgical debridement of abscess
Clinical responses to wounds
- can come in again in a short period?
  - topical antimicrobial
  - simple dressing (cost effectiveness)
- not sure when will be able to return?
  - oral antibiotic course
  - waterproof dressing

Psychosocial factors that impact
- nutrition status
- exercise/lifestyle
- housing status
- harm reduction education re: injecting techniques/equipment
- self management of wound
- ABI/mental health issues
- fear of stigma and discrimination
How HW can support

- brokerage for scripts
- small supply of dressings
- transportation to HW
- a non-judgemental clinical response
- referral and transportation to specialist services

Case Studies

- osteomyelitis
  - cellulitis
  - transported to ED
  - fasciotomy + vancomycin beads
  - HW dressings every second day
  - supported through recovery
Case Studies (cont’d)
- repeated venous ulcers/abscess
  - past Hx ABI
  - injecting methadone, poor vein access
  - brought to HW by RDNS for dressings
  - initial issues with infection control
  - ‘taught’ to assist with dressings

Reflection
- avoid blame language
- bring psychosocial picture into clinical picture
- emphasis on client’s own ability to manage and resolve
- education
QUESTIONS??

Acknowledgements:
Department of Health and Ageing
Health Works’ clients
Health Works’ staff

References:
- Cruz, Baudrier, Azevedo: Uncommon causes of leg ulcers: Investigative approach and therapeutics. Dermatology Online Journal 17 (9): 6

kaspian@wrhc.com.au
emilyc@wrhc.com.au