



Dear Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Colleagues:

During the month of May, HRSA's HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) recognizes Hepatitis Awareness Month and Hepatitis Testing Day, which is on May 19, 2021.

HRSA HAB is raising awareness about the impact of the hepatitis C virus (HCV) among people with HIV, and encouraging those with HIV to get tested for HCV. People with HIV are disproportionately affected by both the hepatitis B virus and HCV, and coinfection with chronic hepatitis may complicate their HIV treatment. Coinfection also puts them at greater risk for liver-related problems including liver cancer and death.

As part of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) [Part F Special Projects of National Significance \(SPNS\) Program](#), HRSA HAB implemented several initiatives to increase the capacity to provide comprehensive screening, care, and treatment of HIV/HCV coinfection among people of color, with a goal to increase the number of HIV/HCV coinfecting people of color diagnosed, treated, and cured of HCV infection.

Through these initiatives, HRSA HAB recognizes how important it is for health care providers to be knowledgeable of HCV and exercise cultural humility—so they can build trust with patients and counsel them to get tested for HCV when indicated. We also know there is some hesitancy from people with HIV to get tested for HCV due to potential added stigma and lack of understanding of improved treatment options.

We have several resources available to help health care providers treating people who have or are at risk for HIV/HCV coinfection, including:

- RWHAP AIDS Education and Training Centers Program HIV/HCV coinfection [trainings](#) and [resources](#).
- [National HIV/HCV Coinfection Curriculum](#), which aims to increase health care provider knowledge of HIV and HCV coinfection among people of color in the U.S. and its territories.
- [Hepatitis C Prescriber Toolkit](#), a directory of state-specific resources to help providers navigate health coverage requirements, which impact the prescription of HCV treatment.
- [Implementation Guide, Case Studies of Evidence-Informed Interventions, and a Pocket Guide](#) for health care provider sites and community partners with an interest in HCV treatment for their patients coinfecting with HIV.

We are also working with Yale University on a [SPNS Initiative](#) that aims to link people with HCV and HIV within the RWHAP to care by leveraging existing public health surveillance with clinical data systems. We look forward to sharing the results of this initiative.

I encourage you to take a look at these resources, and share them with your colleagues.

Lastly, I would like to thank you for your ongoing work providing HIV-related services to more than half a million people with HIV across the country.

Sincerely,

/Laura W. Cheever/

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