New Round of Hep C Testing at New Hampshire Hospital

August 8, 2012

As part of the investigation into the ongoing hepatitis C outbreak at New Hampshire's Exeter County Hospital, state health officials are asking more than 3,300 additional patients to come in for hepatitis C testing. Whereas original calls for testing focused on patients who received care at the hospital's cardiac catheterization lab, the expanded screening initiative now includes Exeter patients who had surgery or entered intensive care between April 1, 2011, and May 25, 2012—areas which David Kwiatkowski, the former medical technician allegedly responsible for the outbreak, had limited access to during that interval.

Kwiatkowski is the suspected source of hepatitis C diagnosed in 30 Exeter County patients thus far. He allegedly injected himself with drugs meant for patients—a scheme known as drug diversion—and then used the same syringes to give the patients a substitute substance. Between 2003 and 2011, he had worked in at least 17 other hospitals in Arizona, Georgia, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania. Those states are currently investigating the link, and some have already begun hepatitis C testing.

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