



# NIH Seeks Applications For HIV and Viral Hepatitis Co-Infection Research Funding

A senior official from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services overviews a new funding opportunity for researchers looking into HIV and viral hepatitis co-infection.

June 25, 2014 By Ron Valdiserri



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[The National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#) recently released two funding opportunity announcements (FOAs) to support multidisciplinary studies of HIV and viral hepatitis co-infection. The opportunities were issued under NIH's R01 or Research Project Grant program and R21 or Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant program. NIH notes that the FOAs were informed by priority areas in the [Action Plan for the Prevention, Care, and Treatment of Viral Hepatitis](#), which also calls for advancing research that will facilitate viral hepatitis prevention and enhance care and treatment for infected persons.

In the U.S., an estimated 3.5-5.3 million people are living with viral hepatitis infection and 1.1 million people are living with HIV infection. Because HIV, hepatitis B virus (HBV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV) share common modes of transmission, approximately one-third of HIV-infected persons are co-infected with HBV or HCV; among some groups, the rates of co-infection are even higher. Because the progression of viral hepatitis is accelerated among persons with HIV, persons who are co-infected experience greater risk of viral persistence, advanced liver fibrosis, cirrhosis, end-stage liver disease, hepatocellular carcinoma, and liver-related death compared to persons without HIV. In an effort to avert these consequences, particularly for persons living with HIV, the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#) has released a [Funding Opportunity Announcement \(FOA\)](#) to explore "(a) the interactions between HIV and hepatitis viruses, (b) co-morbidities associated with HIV/hepatitis virus co-infection, and (c) the effectiveness of interferon-free, direct-acting antiviral drug regimens to treat HIV/HCV co-infection."



Six institutes within the NIH are participating in the FOAs: the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases ([NIAID](#)); the National Cancer Institute ([NCI](#)), the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism ([NIAAA](#)), the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases ([NIDDK](#)), the National Institute on Drug Abuse ([NIDA](#)), and the National Institute of Mental Health ([NIMH](#)). The FOAs note that research should focus on HIV-infected adults, pregnant/postpartum women, adolescents, children, infants, and sub-populations at highest risk for HBV or HCV co-infection. Examples of specific

areas of research interest for each institute are detailed in the FOAs.

Now is a critical time to act on opportunities to improve our understanding of HIV and viral hepatitis comorbidities and improve related care.

Read the [R01 FOA here](#); read the [R21 FOA here](#).

Read more about [HIV-viral hepatitis co-infection](#).

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<http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/NIH-funding-hiv-hcv-coinfection-research-25823-192442943>