



Electronic Alerts for Hep C Testing Boost Baby Boomers' Screening

The prompts did not, however, get sufficient numbers of those born between 1945 and 1965 tested for the virus.

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Adding an electronic medical record (EMR) alert to test baby boomers for hepatitis C virus (HCV) dramatically increased testing rates by 10-fold in two recent studies, MedPage Today reports. Nevertheless, the ultimate testing rates were still insufficient compared with the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommendation that all those born between 1945 and 1965 receive HCV screening.

Researchers from the two studies presented their findings at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases in Washington, DC.

In one study, investigators analyzed HCV testing rates in 35 primary care clinics in eastern Nebraska and southwestern Iowa, looking at how the rates correlated to the introduction of an EMR prompt recommending screening to baby boomers. Specifically, they looked at August through November 2016, a period before the EMR prompt was introduced, and compared it with December 2016 through March 2017, during which the prompt was in effect.

The clinics saw 29,703 baby boomer patients during the first period and 29,913 such patients during the second. A respective 482 (1.62 percent) and 5,685 (19 percent) of the patients were tested for HCV during the pre- and post-EMR-prompt periods. A respective 20 (4.15 percent) and 107 (1.88 percent) of those tested during each period turned out to have hep C.

In another study, researchers analyzed records dating back a year prior as well as a year following the introduction of a similar EMR prompt at clinics in central Texas. The first period saw 2,500 tests and the second saw 28,000 tests, amounting to a respective 1.87 percent and 14.14 percent of baby boomer patients tested.

These successes notwithstanding, a mere fraction of the overall population of baby boomer patients at these clinics received testing—a far cry from the recommendation of universal, onetime screening for this group.

To read the MedPage Today article, [click here](#).

To read the conference abstract, [click here](#).

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