New Guide Explains How Best to Integrate HIV and Hepatitis C Testing

The tool kit walks health departments through the process of coordinating care step-by-step.

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Good news for health departments looking to ramp up their HIV and hepatitis C virus (HCV) testing efforts! The National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) has published a new guide explaining how public health workers can best integrate screening initiatives for both viruses, a recent NASTAD press release reports.

Developed in partnership with the Association for Public Health Laboratories, the guide takes health departments step-by-step through the process of integrating their testing services and enhancing collaboration between their existing HIV and hepatitis C programs. It also explains to local health workers how best to navigate these coordinated efforts through the public health laboratories they work with.

In addition to providing the latest info on HIV and HCV testing technologies and guidelines, the handbook also describes the factors health departments should consider when trying to boost their combined screening efforts. For example, taking into account the need for increased surveillance in their communities or identifying other sources of data to help identify gaps in their services. The guide also urges public health departments to leverage the capabilities of local stakeholders, including community health centers and local syringe exchanges.

According to NASTAD, the guide was created in response to a growing need for new strategies to improve the productivity of HIV testing and linkage programs as well as the immediate need for expanding the availability and access to hepatitis C testing across the country. The guide also addresses the ongoing opioid epidemic and the importance of serving high-risk communities, including people who inject drugs and men who have sex with men.

Click here to download a pdf version of the complete testing guide.

Click here to access an annotated set of slides NASTAD created to accompany the guide.

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