Few U.S. States Are on Track to Meet WHO Hep C Screening Targets

The World Health Organization wants to see 90 percent of the world's population screened for hepatitis C by 2030.

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The World Health Organization (WHO) has set a goal of getting 90 percent of the global population screened for hepatitis C virus (HCV) by 2030, but only a few U.S. states are on track to hit this target, according to a recent analysis.

Presenting their findings at the 52nd International Liver Congress in Paris, researchers reviewed medical claims data from Optum Clinformatics Data Mart covering 2010 to 2016 to analyze hep C testing patterns.

Researchers sought to analyze the effects of two key changes that took place in 2014: 1) the ushering in of the current era of highly effective, highly tolerable direct-acting antiviral (DAA) treatment for hep C; and 2) the implementation of new hep C screening policies by New York, California, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Colorado.

The researchers broke down their analysis into three mini-eras: 2010, 2011 to 2013, and 2014 to 2016.

Compared with the HCV testing rate in 2010, annual screening rates after 2014 increased by 19.9 percent in the U.S. overall. Together, the five states that passed the HCV screening laws saw an additional 6.4 percent increase in their testing rate after 2014. When researchers broke down the analysis by state, the researchers found that of those five states, just Massachusetts and Connecticut saw a significant increase in their testing rates associated with their new testing laws.

The study authors projected that New York and four other states that did not have hep C screening laws were on track to hit the WHO screening target by 2030. An additional eight states were on track to hit the target by 2040. However, 29 states would still not hit the target by

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