Request for Public Comment: Recommendations for Hepatitis C Screening Among Adults – 2019

November 6, 2019 By HHS Viral Hepatitis Blog

Cross-posted from the HHS.gov Hepatitis blog

Federal Register Notice from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - 84 FR 57733

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announces the opening of a public docket to obtain public comment on proposed new recommendations for hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection screening for adults, including pregnant women. The new recommendations are intended for U.S. healthcare providers and will include supporting scientific evidence of the effectiveness and economic value of screening to diagnose current HCV infection among and pregnant women in the United States.

Written comments must be received on or before December 27, 2019.

For more information, visit the posting on the federal register or join CDC's Viral Hepatitis Program for a webinar on Thursday November 7, 2019 2:00 – 2:30 PM EST that will highlight information about the recommendations and discuss how stakeholders can review and comment on the draft recommendations.

Supplementary Information

Public Participation:

Interested persons or organizations are invited to participate by submitting written views, recommendations, and data. In addition, CDC invites comments specifically on the following questions:

- Based on the evidence presented in the full recommendations document (see the Supporting and Related Materials tab in the docket), do you agree with CDC's proposed recommendations for HCV infection screening? If not, please state the reason why and, if available, provide additional evidence for consideration.

- Are CDC’s recommendations (see Supporting and Related Materials) clear as written? If not, what changes do you propose to make them clearer?
- If implemented as proposed, do you believe these recommendations would result in a reduction in HCV infections and associated health and financial consequences in the United States? If not, please provide an explanation.

Please note that comments received, including attachments and other supporting materials, are part of the public record and are subject to public disclosure. Comments will be posted on regulations.gov.

CDC will carefully consider all comments submitted in preparation of the final recommendation and may revise as appropriate. Click here to review draft recommendations and submit comments.

Background and Brief Description:

Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) infection is the most commonly reported blood-borne infection in the United States (CDC Viral Hepatitis Surveillance, 2019; Rosenberg et al, 2018), and during 2013-2016 there were an estimated 2.4 million people in the nation (or 1.0% of the U.S. population) living with hepatitis C (Hofmeister et al, 2019). Percutaneous exposure (e.g., injection drug use, blood transfusion) is the most efficient mode of HCV transmission, and injection drug use is the primary risk factor for infection (CDC Viral Hepatitis Surveillance, 2017).

National surveillance data reveal an increase in reported cases of acute HCV infection every year from 2009 through 2017, the most recent year for which there is data. The highest rates of acute cases are among persons aged 20-39 years (CDC Viral Hepatitis Surveillance, 2017). As new HCV infections have risen among reproductive aged adults, rates of HCV infection nearly doubled from 2009-2014 among women with live births (Patrick et al, 2017). In 2015, 0.38% of live births were delivered by HCV-infected women (Schillie et al, 2018).

Given the current rate and trends of HCV infections, CDC has decided to augment the current guidelines to address the rise in HCV infections among adults in the United States.

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