

National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR)

Tina Broder, MSW, MPH
Interim Executive Director

Our mission:

Working together to eliminate hepatitis B and C in the United States

Our vision:

A healthier world without hepatitis B and C.



Policy Department Priority Initiatives

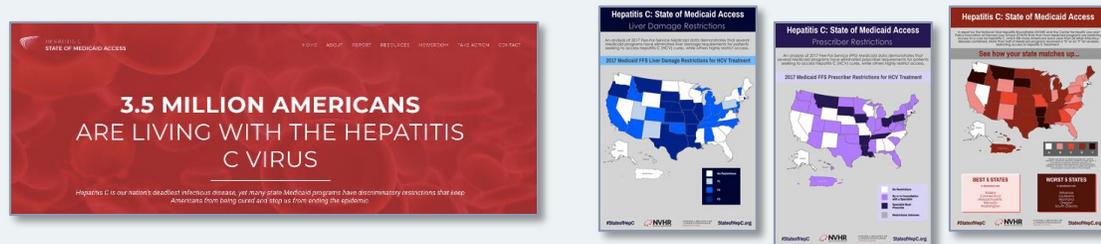
NVHR advocates at the federal and state levels for increased access to hepatitis B and C prevention, testing, treatment, and care. Our priority public policy initiatives include:

- Lift all restrictions on access to HCV treatment in the criminal justice system, including developing policy solutions to address the high cost of treatment in state prisons.
- Expand access to syringe service programs, to link people who use drugs with HBV/HCV screening/testing and treatment.
- Increased funding for CDC/DVH to coordinate with community groups on the ground to implement screening and prevention programs, and conduct surveillance efforts via the Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator Program.
- Protect Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act and urge states to expand Medicaid where needed.
- More information about NVHR's Policy department: www.nvhr.org/policy

State Medicaid Access to HCV Cures

NVHR partnered with the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School (CHLPI) to create the first-ever comprehensive assessment of state Medicaid restrictions on hepatitis C cures.

- *Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access*, which grades all 50 state Medicaid programs, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico according to **access to curative treatments for hepatitis C**, is the culmination of nearly two years of research, including:
 - ✓ Fee-For-Service (FFS) and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) access restrictions around liver damage, sobriety, and prescriber requirements
 - ✓ Surveys of Medicaid Directors, audit of Medicaid websites, and an in-depth review of prior authorization forms
- The interactive report is available at www.stateofhepC.org featuring all 52 state-by-state report cards, advocacy resources and materials, and a petition urging widespread access to a cure.



- Since we launched the report, **16 states** have announced less restrictive HCV treatment policies.

Program Department Overview

- Capacity-Building & Technical Assistance
 - ✓ Support for groups conducting screening in community-based settings
 - ✓ Templates and support for implementing routine screening
- Webinars, Fact Sheets & Online Resources
- Working Groups for HCV Treaters & Pharmacists
- Hepatitis C – it's about More than Liver Disease
- Community Stakeholder Engagement in PCORI Studies
- Mini-Grants
 - ✓ Technical assistance and \$10K of financial support

HEALTH EFFECTS OF HEPATITIS C OUTSIDE OF THE LIVER
Hepatitis C: It's About More than Liver Disease

The effects of the hepatitis C virus (HCV) on the liver are well-known. For example, chronic HCV infection can lead to long-term liver damage and increased risk of liver cancer.

But up to **74%** of HCV-infected patients have symptoms outside the liver.¹

It is important to recognize these health effects because they may play a role in diagnosis, treatment, and the overall wellbeing of an infected individual.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON EFFECTS OF HCV OUTSIDE OF THE LIVER?

Depression and anxiety
Heart disease
Diabetes
Skin conditions
Kidney disease
Cancer
Pain and fatigue

Dry eyes and mouth
Thyroid conditions
Immune, lymphatic, and vascular system disorder
Nausea or itching
Reproductive health issues

Health effects of HCV can appear in many parts of the body. Some have distinct features that are easy to identify, while others are hard to diagnose and often get overlooked. It can be difficult to recognize that these symptoms are associated with HCV.

HOW DOES HCV AFFECT OTHER PARTS OF THE BODY?

HCV can live in the body for many years, causing long-term inflammation and constant stress on the immune system. Over time, this produces problems across multiple body systems.

The virus invades cells in the body other than liver cells. Even though HCV usually infects liver cells, there is also evidence that it attacks other cell types including those found in the brain and immune system.^{2,3}

Some health conditions are associated with HCV, but the reasons are unknown. For example, the risk of heart disease is higher among HCV patients than the general population, and researchers are still working to understand why.^{4,5}

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

HCV-related effects on other parts of the body can be an early indicator of HCV infection. Chronic HCV infection may not have noticeable impacts on the liver for many years. However, patients may experience other symptoms in other parts of the body that could be related to HCV.

HCV treatment improves many health conditions. Clearing HCV from the body can relieve health conditions affecting multiple parts of the body, in addition to the liver.^{6,7}

When HCV means conditions that may appear outside the liver.

Health conditions outside the liver can lead to early HCV diagnosis and may be indicators for HCV treatment.

COORDINATE care so that providers across specialties can work together.

WHAT SHOULD I TAKE?

Providers

- ASK that HCV is the disease that the whole body.
- ASK that HCV is the disease that the whole body.
- ASK that HCV is the disease that the whole body.

Advocates

- EDUCATE others about the effects of HCV beyond the liver.
- EMPHASIZE policymakers to endorse strategies that increase access to HCV treatment.
- INCREASE awareness about the rising clinical needs of HCV patients.
- DEMAND that HCV be recognized as a systemic health condition deserving of more attention and resources.

NVHR
National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable

For information about specific HCV conditions outside of the liver, visit: www.nvhr.org/HCVMorethanLiverDisease

More than Tested, Cured

A Novel Project to Meaningfully Engage Drug Users in HCV Work

- Key Accomplishments in Year One:
 - Engaging individuals who use drugs in defining the solution
 - Developing and disseminating culturally appropriate HCV education materials
 - Expanding Access to HCV Services for Individuals Who Use Drugs:
 - Expanding Services available at Syringe Exchange Sites
 - Reducing Stigma and Barriers for Specialists to Treat Active Users
 - Strengthening the National Network

