



**LAC DPH Health Advisory:
Hepatitis C Associated with Outpatient
Clinic in Los Angeles**
February 21, 2019



*This message is intended for primary care, internal medicine, family medicine, urgent care, and emergency medicine.
Please distribute as appropriate.*

Key Messages

- The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LAC DPH) has identified six cases of acute hepatitis C infection among patients treated at the Westside Multispecialty Medical Group.
- LAC DPH is attempting to notify all patients who received care at this clinic to recommend testing for hepatitis C, hepatitis B, and HIV. Free testing is available through LAC DPH.
- We are asking providers to call LAC DPH at 213-288-8787 within 24 hours if they identify patients who received care at this clinic and, if the patient requests testing, to follow the guidance in this document.

Situation

LAC DPH is investigating potential healthcare-associated transmission of hepatitis C among patients who received care at Westside Multispecialty Medical Group (6200 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 1212, Los Angeles, CA 90048). To date, LAC DPH has identified six cases of acute hepatitis C infection in patients who received injections, infusions, or procedures at this clinic between January 2016 and December 2018. The clinic has voluntarily closed since December 2018.

The incidence of acute hepatitis C among patients of this clinic is substantially higher than would be expected in the general population, and those with acute hepatitis C did not report other traditional risk factors. LAC DPH is concerned about healthcare-associated transmission of hepatitis C and is notifying patients who received care at this clinic about their potential exposure to hepatitis C. The exact source of these infections has not yet been identified and the investigation is ongoing.

Notification letters have been mailed to approximately 500 patients known to have been treated at the clinic between January 2016 and December 2018. The letter informs patients about their potential exposure to hepatitis C. In addition to getting tested for hepatitis C, the letter recommends that patients get tested for hepatitis B and HIV because these infections could also be transmitted by breaches in infection control

procedures. We have not identified any acute hepatitis B or HIV infections among patients who received care this clinic.

Actions Requested of Providers

All patients who received treatment at the Westside Multispecialty Medical Group between January 2016 and December 2018 should be considered potentially exposed to hepatitis C and other bloodborne pathogens. If a patient presents to you with this history, please do the following:

- Call LAC DPH within 24 hours at 213-288-8787 to report the patient.
- Refer the patient to free bloodborne pathogen testing by LAC DPH (see information below) or conduct testing through your usual clinical laboratory. Note: LAC DPH is unable to pay for testing costs unless the patient is tested at the LAC DPH clinic.
- If the patient requests testing at your site, please order the following tests and fax the results (**positive AND negative**) to the LAC DPH-Acute Communicable Disease Control at 213-482-4856:
 - Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg)
 - Hepatitis B surface antibody (anti-HBs)
 - Hepatitis B total core antibody (total anti-HBc)
 - Hepatitis C antibody with reflex to quantitative PCR
 - HIV-1/2 antigen and antibodies, fourth generation.

LAC DPH Clinic Testing

Public Health is providing free testing for patients of the Westside Multispecialty Medical Group at the Hollywood-Wilshire Health Center (5205 Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90038). Patients can schedule an appointment by calling 213-288-8787.

Reporting

Los Angeles County DPH Acute Communicable Disease Control:

- Dedicated Hepatitis C Investigation Hotline: 213-288-8787.
- General Weekdays 8:30 AM – 5 PM: call 213-240-7941.
- After-hours: call 213-974-1234 and ask for the physician on call.

Additional Resources:

- LAC DPH Hepatitis C Investigation Information for Providers
<http://ph.lacounty.gov/acd/RespondHepC/>
- LAC DPH Hepatitis C
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/Diseases/HepC.htm>
- CDC Hepatitis C for Providers
<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/hcvfaq.htm>
- CDC Guide to Infection Prevention for Outpatient Settings: Minimum Expectations for Safe Care

- <https://www.cdc.gov/hai/settings/outpatient/outpatient-care-guidelines.html>
- CDC Hepatitis C Questions and Answers for the Public
<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/cfaq.htm>
- CDC Injection Safety FAQs
https://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/providers/provider_faqs.html
- APIC Position Statement
https://www.apic.org/Resource_/TinyMceFileManager/Position_Statement_s/2016APICSIPPositionPaper.pdf
- One and Only Campaign: a resource on safe injection practices for patients and providers
<http://www.oneandonlycampaign.org/>

This Health Advisory was sent by Dr. Sharon Balter, Director, Division of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

To view this and other communications or to sign-up to receive LAHANs, please visit <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/lahan>