



## Department of Health

**ANDREW M. CUOMO**  
Governor

**HOWARD A. ZUCKER, M.D., J.D.**  
Commissioner

**SALLY DRESLIN, M.S., R.N.**  
Executive Deputy Commissioner

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Dear Colleague:

In 2018, Governor Cuomo announced the nation's first state-level hepatitis C elimination strategy. While the majority of people living with hepatitis C are baby boomers, born from 1945 to 1965, New York State has seen an increasing proportion of newly diagnosed hepatitis C cases among young adults aged 20-39. This shift is tied to the opioid epidemic as a growing number of young people who inject drugs (PWID) become infected by sharing needles, syringes and drug preparation equipment contaminated with hepatitis C. Article 28 facilities are on the front lines of this epidemic and play an important role in improving health outcomes for patients with hepatitis C, an issue that has become more pressing as opioid and injection drug use increase.

The new direct-acting anti-viral therapies make the treatment and cure of hepatitis C easier than ever. Simplification of the treatment regimen expands the number of health care professionals who are able to prescribe hepatitis C treatment, thus paving the way to increase the number of persons treated. Increasing the number of persons treated and cured of hepatitis C, especially among PWID, aligns with the NYS Hepatitis C Elimination Plan. However, with the use of effective hepatitis C treatments, there remains a need to adopt key quality of care practices.

This letter announces the availability of a hepatitis C quality of care assessment tool. eHEPQUAL, a web-based application designed to capture data and generate reports, enables health care providers to assess the quality of care provided to their patients living with hepatitis C. In use since 2016, the application focuses on indicators developed by health care providers on the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute Quality of Care Advisory Committee.

Providers utilizing the eHEPQUAL application submit data annually on a sample of eligible patients. On-demand summary reports and care cascades describe the patient population and help identify strengths and areas for improvement in care and treatment. Building on strengths and addressing areas in need of improvement can improve the quality of care provided to patients with hepatitis C and increase the number of patients who are cured of their disease. Following each annual review cycle, aggregate results from all eHEPQUAL participants are provided as a benchmark against which individual programs can compare their outcomes.

The eHEPQUAL application is available, free of charge, to health care providers across New York. Interested providers are encouraged to email [ehepqual@health.ny.gov](mailto:ehepqual@health.ny.gov) for more information.

Sincerely,

Johanne E. Morne, MS  
Director, AIDS Institute

Charles Gonzalez, M.D.  
Medical Director, AIDS Institute

## **Resources**

Governor Cuomo's announcement of the strategy to eliminate hepatitis C can be found at: <https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-first-nation-strategy-eliminate-hepatitis-c>

Materials describing the hepatitis C quality of care indicators and eHEPQUAL procedures can be found at: <https://www.ehepqual.org>

Hepatitis C treatment guidelines can be found at: <https://www.hivguidelines.org/hepatitis-care/treatment-with-daa/>

Additional information on hepatitis C prevention, screening, care and treatment can be found at: [www.health.ny.gov/hepatitis](http://www.health.ny.gov/hepatitis)