



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES
Bureau for Public Health
Commissioner's Office


Bill J. Crouch
Cabinet Secretary

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Commissioner
State Health Officer

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 29, 2018

TO: West Virginia Board of Pharmacy

FROM: Loretta Haddy, PhD, MS
State Epidemiologist 

RE: Partnership with Public Health for Hepatitis A Vaccinations and Covered Services through West Virginia Medicaid

The purpose of this memorandum is to notify the West Virginia Board of Pharmacy about covered services offered through West Virginia Medicaid that are important to address hepatitis A virus infections. The West Virginia Bureau for Public Health (BPH) and local public health officials continue to investigate and respond to an ongoing outbreak of hepatitis A. As of September 28, 2018, 1,395 outbreak associated cases have been reported with a hospitalization rate of 51.7%. While 62% of the cases have primarily been in Kanawha and Cabell counties, this outbreak has now spread to 33 West Virginia counties. This outbreak has been challenging to public health officials because of the mobile nature of cases.

Hepatitis A vaccination is the best way to prevent hepatitis A infection. BPH is requesting your support with patient referral to their local health departments when requesting hepatitis A vaccination and the cost of the vaccine prohibits them from getting vaccinated at pharmacies. Routine vaccination for hepatitis A is a two-dose series separated by six months. In outbreak situations the use of a single dose of hepatitis A vaccination is recommended for individuals with hepatitis A exposure risk. **A single dose of hepatitis A vaccine has been shown to successfully control outbreaks of hepatitis A.**

To end this outbreak, BPH is requesting your partnership to proactively increase vaccination among the highest risk individuals that includes:

- Persons who use injection or non-injection illicit drugs
- Men who have sex with men (MSM)
- Persons who are homeless or in transient living situations
- Persons who have been incarcerated
- Persons with acute or chronic liver disease, including those with hepatitis B virus (HBV) and/or hepatitis C virus (HCV)
- Persons with ongoing exposure to a group listed above

A screening tool for high risk populations needing or seeking vaccination is attached.

West Virginia Medicaid covers the following services to help address the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of hepatitis A and related health conditions:

- **Prevention Services**
West Virginia Medicaid covers hepatitis A vaccine and immune globulin when indicated for preventive treatment,
- **Diagnostic and Treatment Services**
West Virginia Medicaid covers the full range of diagnostic and treatment options. There are no medically necessary services that require special prior authorization.

Thank you for your partnership as we continue to work together to stop this outbreak that is significantly impacting the State of West Virginia.

Additional information and resources about the hepatitis A outbreak occurring in West Virginia can be found at: www.hepawarewv.org.

For more information, please contact the Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services, Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at 1 (800) 423-1271, ext.1 or (304) 558-5358, ext. 1.

Attachment