

HEPATITIS C

Case Definition

Confirmed Case (*does not distinguish acute from chronic infection*):

- Detection of anti-hepatitis C antibodies (positive anti-HCV tests should be confirmed by a second manufacturer's EIA, immunoblot or NAT for HCV RNA).

OR

- Detection of hepatitis C virus RNA.

Laboratory comments regarding testing in infants:

Anti-HCV testing should not be performed in infants < 18 months of age as the anti-HCV may represent passive maternal antibody. As most infections occur at the time of childbirth, if testing for HCV RNA is considered, it should be delayed beyond 4 to 12 weeks to avoid false-negative HCV RNA test results. Cord blood should not be used because of potential cross-contamination with maternal antibody.

Clinical Evidence

- Acute clinical illness is characterized by a discrete onset of symptoms and jaundice or elevated serum aminotransferase levels.
- Chronic infections may present with disease flares with similar symptoms and signs.

Reporting Requirements

- Report confirmed cases to DHW Surveillance Team via Panorama.

Additional Forms

None.

Data Entry

Complete data entry in Panorama.

