

Medicare will cover primary care-ordered HCV testing

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Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

(HealthDay)—Medicare will cover primary care provider-ordered hepatitis C virus testing for adults, according to a statement released by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and discussed in an article published online June 3 in *Medical Economics*.

The author of the article, Donna Marbury, writes that CMS testing will include a single screening for adults born between 1945 and 1965 and repeat screenings for high-risk adults. Disabled adults younger than 65 years are also eligible for testing. The tests must be ordered by a primary care provider. Settings that are not considered primary care settings include emergency departments, inpatient hospital settings, and independent diagnostic testing facilities.

According to Marbury, increased attention to hepatitis C virus testing

began after the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommended that all Baby Boomers be tested, irrespective of risk factors. However, the high cost of hepatitis C virus treatments has become an issue for debate, with many questioning whether the high cost of treatment is worth it.

"As preventive services gain recognition of their potential to improve the health status of the individual, we believe the [primary care](#) provider is in the unique position to provide a comprehensive and coordinated approach to Medicare beneficiaries' health care and this coordinated approach will help ensure the best outcomes for these services," CMS said in response to comments questioning whether testing should be expanded to other practitioners and medical settings, according to the *Medical Economics* article.

More information: [More Information](#)

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