

Updated guidance for healthcare workers with HIV, hepatitis

October 14 2020

In light of the low rate of transmission and advances in treatments for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV, the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America today released updated guidance for healthcare personnel living with these bloodborne pathogens based on the latest available science. The SHEA White Paper, "Management of Healthcare Personnel Living with Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, or Human Immunodeficiency Virus in United States Healthcare Institutions," was published online in the journal *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology*. SHEA has been at the forefront of this issue since its initial set of recommendations was issued in 1990.

"Experience and evidence accumulated over the last decade, which have made it necessary to revise the [guidance](#). The guidance protects the privacy and health of both healthcare workers and patients," said David K. Henderson, MD, current SHEA President, and co-chair of the multidisciplinary panel that developed the white paper. "Advances in care have reduced the risk for transmission of these bloodborne infections, making it safer for patients and healthcare personnel. Still, appropriate oversight and training remain foundational."

The recommendations, which update SHEA's 2010 guideline, reflect experience that underscores the low risk of transmission from healthcare personnel to patients. The updated guidance also considers interventions that reduce risk for occupational exposures and injuries, as well as advances in antiviral therapy and treatments that cure hepatitis C and reduce circulating HIV to undetectable levels in nearly all individuals

living with the disease.

The document clarifies the methods of oversight for healthcare personnel living with HIV or hepatitis, especially those responsible for carrying out exposure-prone procedures. It reflects many facilities' and schools' existing policies, while aligning with the overall principles contained in recent guidelines from Canada and Australia.

More information: David K. Henderson et al, Management of healthcare personnel living with hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or human immunodeficiency virus in US healthcare institutions, *Infection Control & Hospital Epidemiology* (2020). [DOI: 10.1017/ice.2020.458](https://doi.org/10.1017/ice.2020.458)

Provided by Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America

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