

PROGRESS REPORT ON HEPATITIS C & PRISONER RE-ENTRY INITIATIVE WITH CORRECTIONS

(FY2009 Appropriation Bill - Public Act 246 of 2008)

April 1, 2009

Section 804: The department, in conjunction with efforts to implement the Michigan prisoner reentry initiative, shall cooperate with the department of corrections to share data and information as they relate to prisoners being released who are HIV positive or positive for the hepatitis C antibody. By April 1 of the current fiscal year, the department shall report to the senate and house appropriations subcommittees on community health, the senate and house fiscal agencies, and the state budget director on the progress and results of its work as permitted under federal law and the potential outcomes from its work with the department of corrections under this section.

*Michigan Department
of Community Health*



**Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor
Janet Olszewski, Director**

2008 Progress Report on Hepatitis C And Corrections/Prisoner Re-Entry Initiatives

Studies of hepatitis C in correctional populations have estimated that 23 to 43 percent of prisoners have ever been infected with the hepatitis C virus. These prevalence rates are 14 to 17 times greater than the estimated prevalence rate for the general population. In addition, many other prisoners are at high-risk for infection with the virus that causes hepatitis C. As a result, providing hepatitis C services to individuals who come in contact with the correctional system is critical to effectively addressing this disease.

The following provides a brief overview of efforts made by the Michigan Department of Community Health to increase knowledge about hepatitis C in correctional populations and to facilitate the delivery of hepatitis-related services to this group.

- Statewide Hepatitis C Task Force: The 10-member Hepatitis C Task Force, which as appointed by the Governor, includes representation from the Michigan Department of Community Health, as well as from a correctional association. Task Force members were invited to and provided with a complimentary registration to the conference, "Hepatitis C: From Silence to Solutions," which was held in December of 2007. At that conference, Task Force members had an opportunity to attend sessions that provided them with information about hepatitis C and the impact on injection drugs users and correctional populations.

The Task Force met four times in 2008. The June meeting focused on hepatitis C in correctional populations. A Michigan Department of Community Health representative opened the meeting with a presentation providing background on the issue of hepatitis C in correctional settings. This was followed by two presentations provided by the Michigan Department of Corrections. The first focused on hepatitis C-related services currently being provided within the Michigan Department of Corrections. The second provided information on the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative.

Subsequent to that meeting, the Task Force contacted the Michigan Department of Corrections and requested additional data/information about hepatitis C-related services being provided by the Michigan Department of Corrections, including a copy of the Michigan Department of Corrections hepatitis C testing and treatment protocols. This information was requested with a goal of looking at possible ways the Task Force, the Michigan Department of Community Health, and the Michigan Department of Corrections could work together to make sure that the hepatitis C-related needs of those who have contact with the correctional system are met.

A meeting is in the process of being scheduled with the Michigan Department of Community Health's infectious disease specialist to discuss the hepatitis C testing and treatment protocols. Additional follow-up with the Michigan Department of Corrections is planned.

- HIV and Hepatitis C Presentation at Deerfield Correctional Facility: In December 2008, the Michigan Department of Community Health, in conjunction with representatives from the Gospel Against AIDS/GREATNESS, a group that is also represented on the Task Force and that regularly does HIV/AIDS outreach to correctional populations, provided a presentation on HIV and hepatitis C at the Deerfield Correctional Facility in Ionia. Approximately seventy-five inmates were in attendance.
- Hepatitis C Technical Assistance for the Michigan Department of Corrections: During 2008, the Michigan Department of Community Health also provided technical assistance to Michigan Department of Corrections nursing and infection control staff in several areas including: 1) how to report cases of hepatitis C among Michigan Department of Corrections inmates and 2) how to notify prisoners of their hepatitis C test results should they be released from prison before test results are available.

The Michigan Department of Community Health will continue to develop relationships and to pursue ways to build collaborations that will result in hepatitis C being effectively addressed in correctional populations.