

September 18, 2017

<Provider Name>  
<Provider Address 1>  
<Provider Address 2>  
<Provider City> <State> <zipcode5-zipcode4>

Dear Provider:

The purpose of this letter is to notify providers about covered services offered through Michigan Medicaid that are important to address hepatitis A virus infections. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), along with local health departments (LHDs), are currently investigating **an outbreak of hepatitis A in Southeast Michigan, including the City of Detroit, and Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair and Wayne Counties.**

Transmission of the virus appears to be through direct person-to-person contact and illicit drug use. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has performed testing on select specimens and determined that several very closely related strains of hepatitis A virus genotype 1b are the cause of the outbreak.

Hepatitis A is a highly contagious, vaccine-preventable liver infection. The infection is primarily spread from person-to-person through ingestion of food, water, or oral contact with objects (including hands) contaminated by feces of a hepatitis A-infected individual. Transmission occurs easily among sexual and close household contacts, and persons sharing needles and non-injection drugs. The incubation period is long (15-50 days) and people often develop symptoms of fever, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, appetite loss, jaundice, dark urine, pale stools and diarrhea. Hepatitis A infection may last a few weeks to several months. Some individuals, especially if co-infected with hepatitis B or C, may develop fulminant liver failure resulting in death.

In addition to good hand hygiene after using the restroom and before handling food, hepatitis A vaccination is the best way to prevent hepatitis A infection. The recommendation for routine hepatitis A vaccination is a two-dose series separated by six months. MDHHS is supporting the effort of LHDs to provide post-exposure prophylaxis to exposed contacts. Post-exposure prophylaxis can prevent infection in exposed persons if given within 14 days.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends routine hepatitis A vaccination of the following populations:

- Chronic liver disease patients (including hepatitis B/C and alcoholic cirrhosis).
- Recipients of clotting factor concentrates.
- Men who have sex with men.
- Users of injection and non-injection drugs.
- Employees who work with hepatitis A-infected primates or in a hepatitis A virus research laboratory.
- Travelers to countries with intermediate or high levels of endemic hepatitis A infection.

To end this outbreak, MDHHS is requesting your partnership to proactively increase vaccination among the highest risk individuals, including:

- People who use injection and non-injection illicit drugs.
- Individuals who have been recently incarcerated.
- People who are homeless or have transient housing situations.
- People who participate in commercial exchange of sexual practices.
- Staff of healthcare and community service centers and law enforcement agents.

Because of the large number of cases seen in this outbreak, LHDs have expanded the use of the hepatitis A vaccine and are offering it to all individuals wishing to be protected.

### Covered Services

Michigan Medicaid, MIChild and the Healthy Michigan Plan cover the following services to help address the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of hepatitis A and related health conditions, including Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services for children under 21 years of age.

#### **Preventive Services**

Hepatitis A vaccinations (pre-exposure and post-exposure) are a covered Medicaid benefit. Vaccination efforts should be supplemented by health education to improve sanitation, hygiene practices, clean needle practices, and food safety. MDHHS has developed a brochure with information about the outbreak in Southeast Michigan. The brochure is available at:

[www.michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs) >> Keeping Michigan Healthy >> Communicable and Chronic Diseases >> Communicable Disease Information and Resources.

#### **Diagnostic Services**

Medically necessary laboratory testing, including diagnostic testing for the hepatitis A virus, is covered.

## **Treatment**

The following services are covered to treat individuals with active hepatitis A infection:

- Practitioner visits and services.
- Prescribed drugs.
- Inpatient and outpatient hospital services.

Providers may check with the Medicaid Health Plans regarding additional services that may be covered for beneficiaries enrolled in a health plan.

## Additional Resources

Additional information and resources about hepatitis A infections are available at:

[www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/afaq.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hav/afaq.htm).

We encourage you to contact either your LHD or MDHHS at 517-335-8165 to provide updates, request support, or seek consultation during this outbreak.

Additional information about Medicaid-covered services can be found in the Michigan Medicaid Provider Manual at [www.michigan.gov/medicaidproviders](http://www.michigan.gov/medicaidproviders) >> Policy and Forms.

Sincerely,



Chris Priest, Director  
Medical Services Administration