



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

NICK LYON
DIRECTOR

November 13, 2017

Dear Hospital Chief Medical Officer:

Public health officials are continuing to see an elevated number of hepatitis A cases, specifically related to the hepatitis A outbreak that originated in Southeast Michigan. To help prevent the spread of this outbreak, MDHHS is encouraging all healthcare providers, including hospital emergency departments, to 1) report all suspect and confirmed cases of hepatitis A infection to local public health within 12 hours of identification, 2) screen patients for possible high-risk behaviors related to hepatitis A, and 3) maintain a high index of suspicion for hepatitis A infection in high-risk individuals with elevated liver function tests and jaundice. Patients should be evaluated for inclusion in these high-risk groups, and offered hepatitis A vaccine if not currently infected with hepatitis A:

- Persons with a history of substance abuse
- Persons currently homeless or in transient living
- Men who have sex with men (MSM)
- Correctional facility inmates
- Persons with underlying liver disease

In addition, food handlers, healthcare personnel with direct patient care, and persons who are in close contact with any of the above risk groups are considered high risk, and should consider receiving the hepatitis A vaccine.

There have been 486 confirmed cases resulting in more than 409 hospitalizations (84.2%), and 19 deaths between August 1, 2016-November 3, 2017. The vast majority of the cases associated with this outbreak have been identified in the City of Detroit, Macomb, Oakland and Wayne Counties. Additional cases have been identified in Calhoun, Clare, Genesee, Hillsdale, Huron, Ingham, Isabella, Jackson, Lapeer, Livingston, Monroe, Sanilac, St. Clair, and Washtenaw Counties.

This hepatitis A outbreak continues to be a public health threat to vulnerable populations in Michigan. MDHHS and local public health agencies need the entire medical community to help prevent the spread of this disease. Healthcare organizations play a crucial role in screening, vaccinating, treating where appropriate, and reporting cases to public health.

More information about the hepatitis A outbreak in Michigan and current recommendations are available at www.mi.gov/hepatitisAoutbreak. Please contact your local health department or MDHHS at 517-335-8165 with any questions or to seek consultation during this outbreak.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eden V. Wells".

Eden V. Wells, MD, MPH, FACPM
Chief Medical Executive
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)