

February 14, 2018

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

Dear Pharmacy Provider:

The purpose of this letter is to notify providers about certain pharmacy-based services covered by Michigan Medicaid to address the prevention of 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.

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 have been exposed to someone with the hepatitis A infection.
- People who use injection and non-injection illegal drugs.
- Individuals who are incarcerated or have been recently incarcerated.
- Men who have sex with men.
- People who are homeless or have transient housing situations.
- People who participate in commercial exchange of sexual practices.
- People with chronic liver disease.
- People with clotting factor disorders.
- Staff of healthcare and community service centers and law enforcement agents.

Covered Services

Medicaid Fee-for-Service (FFS) and Medicaid Health Plans (MHPs) cover pharmacist administration of the hepatitis A vaccine for Michigan Medicaid, MIChild, Maternity Outpatient Medical Services, and Healthy Michigan Plan beneficiaries. For additional information on coverage of pharmacist-administered vaccines, refer to the Pharmacy chapter of the Medicaid Provider Manual at www.michigan.gov/medicaidproviders >> Policy, Letters & Forms >> Medicaid Provider Manual.

In addition, counseling on the prevention of contracting hepatitis A may be covered as a Medication Therapy Management (MTM) consultation. These services are paid through the FFS program for beneficiaries enrolled either in FFS or in a MHP. For more information regarding coverage of MTM services, refer to the Pharmacy chapter of the Medicaid Provider Manual, as well as MDHHS Medical Services Administration Provider Bulletin MSA 17-09 available at www.Michigan.gov/MedicaidProviders >> Policy, Letters & Forms >> Michigan Medicaid Approved Policy Bulletins.

Additional Resources

For information on the hepatitis A outbreak in Southeast Michigan and resources for providers, please visit www.michigan.gov/hepatitisAoutbreak.

Contact MDHHSPharmacyServices@michigan.gov for pharmacy operation inquiries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Stiffler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".

Kathy Stiffler, Acting Director
Medical Services Administration