

HIV+HEP
POLICY INSTITUTE
PRESS RELEASE

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**CDC Data Shows Only One-Third of People Diagnosed with
Hepatitis C Access Treatment**
Prescription Drug Access Restrictions Must be Lifted

Washington DC... Today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released disturbing [data](#) that shows that only one-third of people diagnosed with hepatitis C who have healthcare coverage are being treated with curative medications within one year of diagnosis.

“Despite having health coverage and cost-effective drugs that can cure hepatitis C in as little as 8-12 weeks, our healthcare system is failing to provide the treatment people with hepatitis C need and is required to end this potentially deadly infectious disease,” commented **Carl Schmid, executive director** of the **HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute**. “There are many reasons why people are not accessing hepatitis C drugs. However, the CDC identifies eligibility restrictions and preauthorization requirements private insurers, Medicare, and especially Medicaid impose that make it difficult for people to access hepatitis C drugs. We agree with the CDC that these hurdles must be lifted.”

While private insurers block access through high cost-sharing, prior authorizations, and pharmacy network requirements, the CDC singles out Medicaid as having the worst treatment access (only 23 percent of people diagnosed with hepatitis C access timely treatment) and in the states with Medicaid access restrictions, people are 23 percent less likely to access treatment than those without them.

“We applaud the CDC for releasing this data and calling attention to the shortfalls in our healthcare system as it relates to hepatitis C treatment,” continued **Schmid**. “While payers need to lift access restrictions, the CDC also needs more resources to adequately ensure people and providers are educated about hepatitis and that testing and linkage to curative treatments occurs.”

President Biden, as part of his Fiscal Year 2023 budget, proposed to increase CDC’s hepatitis division funding from \$41 million to \$54.5 million. Both the House and Senate have proposed to support this \$13.5 million increase. However, it is far short of what is needed for the entire country to address, let alone, end all forms of hepatitis.

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“In order to implement the [*Viral Hepatitis National Strategic Plan for the United States: A Roadmap to Elimination 2021-2025*](#) significant funding will be necessary. We look forward to working with the Biden administration and the Congress to ensure our nation has the resources to implement a hepatitis C elimination program,” concluded **Schmid**.

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The **HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute** is a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to promote quality and affordable healthcare for people living with or at risk of HIV, hepatitis, and other serious and chronic health conditions.