

REFERRALS

When a blood sample is sent to the laboratory for hepatitis C testing, the results of that test could be positive (reactive) or negative (nonreactive). If the antibody test is positive, the laboratory automatically reflexes to nucleic acid testing (NAT) to determine the presence of HCV RNA in that sample. If the confirmatory NAT test is positive, it means that the individual being tested has a current hepatitis infection and needs to be linked to care, treatment and further testing. The provision of a low-barrier, trauma-informed, stigma-reducing, non-judgmental harm reduction approach is integral in providing hepatitis C services including delivering results and linkage of client care and other resources or services.

Hepatitis C medication may be covered for clients on SoonerCare (Oklahoma's Medicaid). If a client is eligible for Medicaid and there are services within your clinic that can help them get enrolled, making that connection is part of the linkage to care effort. Linkage to care in rural areas can be difficult; appendix A contains a list of hepatitis providers in Oklahoma, which will be used as a guide to refer clients to care. Clients can also be referred to their primary care provider for follow-up and treatment.

Persons who have been diagnosed with hepatitis C should also be vaccinated against hepatitis A and B. At county health departments, the communicable disease nurse is able to request SHHRS Twinrix Vaccines for the vaccination of these clients at no cost. These requests can be made by emailing testkitrequest@health.ok.gov.