

# Hepatitis C (HCV) Treatment and Prevention in Louisiana: Project ECHO Hepatitis C Series

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July 2025

# Hepatitis C in Louisiana



# Chronic Hepatitis C Annual Summary - 2023

Louisiana

Chronic HCV Diagnoses

**3,589**

Chronic HCV Diagnosis Rate

**77.6**

per 100,000 population

Driven by HBV & HCV, Louisiana had the **3rd** highest rate of liver and bile duct cancers and **4th** highest rate of death from liver and bile duct cancers (2018).

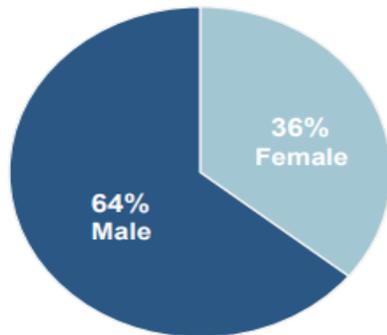
## Of the 3,589 new chronic HCV diagnoses in 2023:

Males comprised 64% of diagnoses.

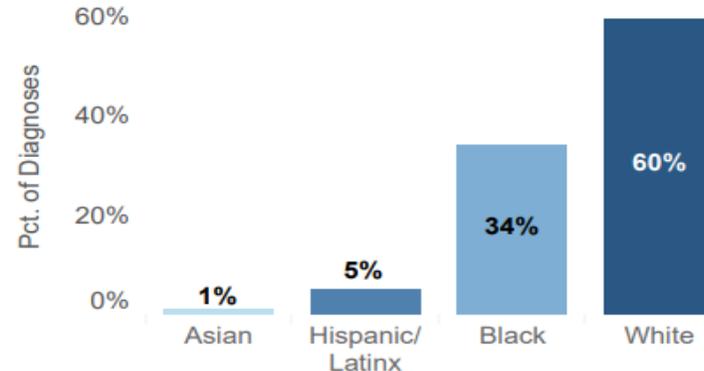
60% of diagnoses were among White people and 34% of diagnoses were among Black people

The highest percentage of diagnoses were among people 60-69 years old.

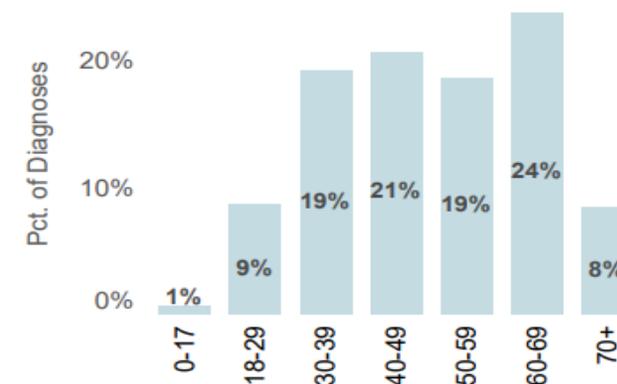
Birth Sex



Race/Ethnicity



Age at Diagnosis



## Affected Subpopulations

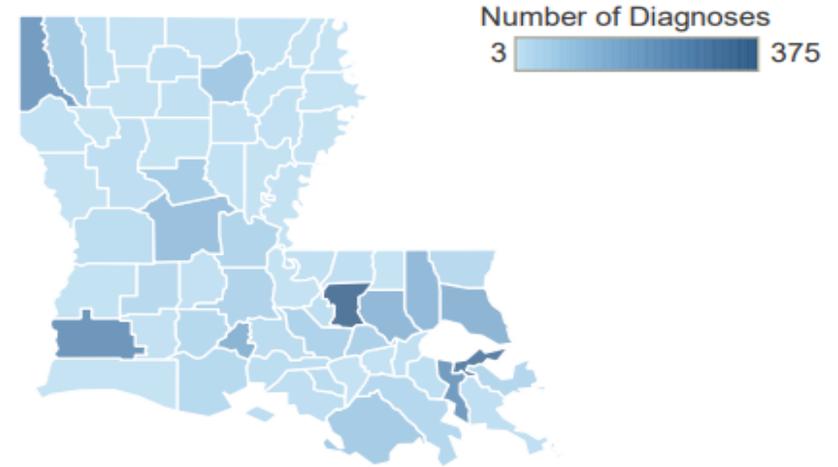
White males 40 to 49 years old and Black males 60 to 69 years old had the highest number of diagnoses.



Number of Diagnoses

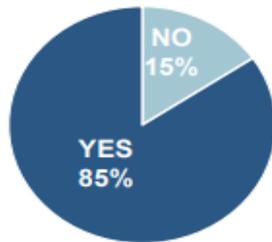
## Geographic Distribution

East Baton Rouge, Orleans, and Calcasieu Parish had the highest number of diagnoses.

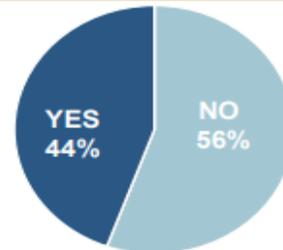


## Hepatitis C Testing and Treatment

In 2023, 85% of individuals with positive diagnostic tests also had confirmatory testing done.



As of December 2023, 44% of individuals with confirmed HCV have evidence of an HCV negative lab and have cleared the virus.

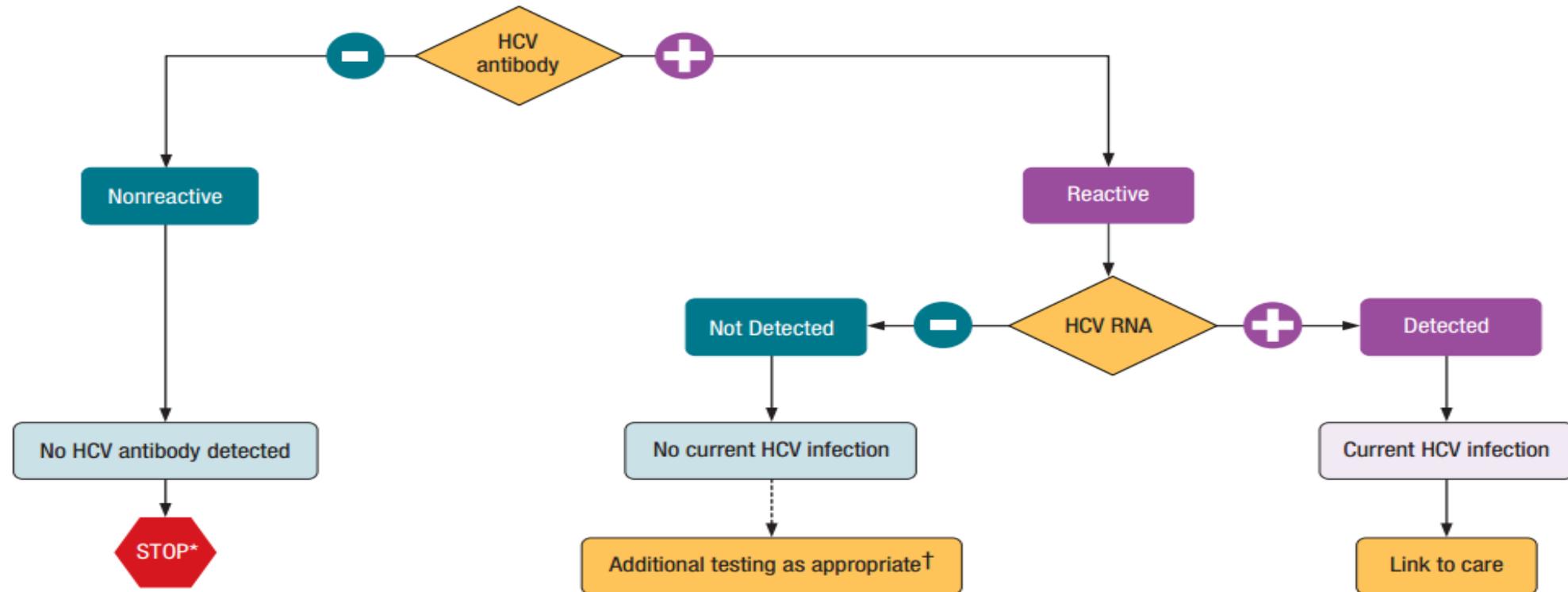


HCV antibody testing with reflex to confirmatory testing, HCV RNA test, should be utilized to ensure complete diagnostic testing. Doing so, reduces the number of required healthcare visits and streamlines treatment.

A safe and effective treatment is available to cure hepatitis C. Treatment for hepatitis C is available at no cost for everyone enrolled in Medicaid and people who are incarcerated in Louisiana. Visit [louisianahealthhub.org](https://louisianahealthhub.org) to find out more.

**Interpreting the Data:** Please note that 2023 data may still be impacted from the COVID-19 pandemic.

# HCV Screening and Diagnosing HCV



\* For persons who might have been exposed to HCV within the past 6 months, testing for HCV RNA or follow-up testing for HCV antibody is recommended. For persons who are immunocompromised, testing for HCV RNA can be considered.

† To differentiate past, resolved HCV infection from biologic false positivity for HCV antibody, testing with another HCV antibody assay can be considered. Repeat HCV RNA testing if the person tested is suspected to have had HCV exposure within the past 6 months or has clinical evidence of HCV disease, or if there is concern regarding the handling or storage of the test specimen.

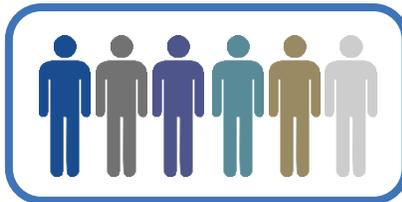
Source: CDC. Testing for HCV infection: An update of guidance for clinicians and laboratorians. *MMWR* 2013;62(18).

# AG Epclusa (sofosbuvir/velpatasvir)

## Direct Acting Antiviral (DAA)

Sofosbuvir/Velpatasvir  
 400mg/100mg tablets

Used for the treatment of adults and children with chronic HCV infection genotypes 1-6, noncirrhotic (NC\*), compensated cirrhotic (CC\*\*), treatment experienced or treatment naïve. Decompensated cirrhotic patients require the addition of ribavirin. **No renal function limitation.**



PANGENOTYPIC  
 (GT 1-6)



PANFIBROTIC  
 (F0-F4)



TREATMENT HISTORY  
 (TN/TE\*\*\*)



ANY RENAL  
 FUNCTION

\*NC: Noncirrhotic

\*\*CC: Compensated cirrhotic

\*\*\*TN: Treatment naïve, TE: Treatment experienced

# Provider Resources

# PROVIDER RESOURCES:

## Hepatitis C Elimination/HHARM ECHO

If you are a **prescriber** and are interested in adding **screening, linkage to care, and/or treatment for hepatitis C**, or **expanding your current services**, we offer several *free* educational training opportunities that may be of help.

Please reach out to our clinical team:

**Dr. Gia Tyson**, [Gia.Landry@gmail.com](mailto:Gia.Landry@gmail.com) and  
**Lawrencia Gougisha**, Statewide Nurse Educator-SHHP  
[Lawrencia.Gougisha@la.gov](mailto:Lawrencia.Gougisha@la.gov)

Well-Ahead Louisiana and the Louisiana Department of Health STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program's (SHHP) Hep C Elimination ECHO is a monthly virtual learning series to increase the number of hepatitis C virus (HCV) providers through training and collaboration in urban and rural communities.

The learning model includes a combination of testing and treatment options used to target Louisianans with probable or confirmed cases of hepatitis C.

### ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

- Primary care providers
- Nurses
- Advanced practitioners
- RHC and FQHC providers in *rural areas* are especially encouraged to join!

### YOU ARE THE KEY TO THE CURE





**SHHP PROVIDER CONSULTATION WARM LINE**

*Provider Consultation/Treatment and  
Laboratory Information*

**M-F 8:30AM - 4:30PM**

STIquestions@LA.GOV  
225.846.2158

## How it works

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1. A **provider** with clinical consultation needs or questions calls or emails the line.
2. The **SHHP Nurse Educator** receives the inquiry and provides clinical consultation in collaboration with the SHHP Medical Director/clinical leads.
3. SHHP logs the questions and provider information for data tracking.

## What we provide

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- Clinical consultation needs
- Historical laboratory and treatment information
- Client resources

## Our goals

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- Increasing collaboration between providers and the program
- Improving access to treatment
- Ensuring adequate staging and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV, hepatitis C and congenital syphilis
- Improving linkage to care
- Improving client resource attainment

Project ECHO: HCV Series in Louisiana  
Hepatitis C/HHARM ECHO®  
Housing insecurity, Hepatitis,  
Addiction, and stigma Reduction in  
Medicine

## Topics:

- See curriculum in next slide
- Speakers consist of hub team specialists
- Other subject-matter experts were former participants of previously offered ECHO sessions



### 2024 Hep C Elimination ECHO Curriculum

SESSION	DATE	DIDACTIC TOPIC	SPEAKER
<b>Session 1</b>	August 9, 2024	<i>Hepatitis C epidemiology and outcomes: Focus on PWIDs</i>	Dr. Gia Landry
<b>Session 2</b>	September 13, 2024	Staging liver disease: The different staging modalities	Dr. Gia Landry
<b>Session 3</b>	October 11, 2024	Cirrhosis: Recognizing cirrhosis and its complications	Dr. Gia Landry
<b>Session 4</b>	November 8, 2024	<i>Principles of HARM reduction</i>	Charlotte Wilcox
<b>Session 5</b>	December 13, 2024	Prognostic systems for patients with cirrhosis	Dr. Gia Landry
<b>Session 6</b>	January 10, 2024	HCV treatment with Authorized Generic Epclusa	Cindy Park, NP
<b>Session 7</b>	February 14, 2025	Authorized Generic Epclusa drug-drug interactions	Claire Ozoral
<b>Session 8</b>	March 14, 2025	<i>Authorized Generic Epclusa in special populations: Focus on PWIDs, incarcerated and caring for those with housing insecurity</i>	Dr. Gia Landry and Cindy Park, NP
<b>**Session 9 Canceled</b>	April 11, 2025	<del>Hepatitis C algorithm and resource review</del>	<del>Dr. Gia Landry</del>
<b>Session 10</b>	May 9, 2025	Hepatitis C algorithm and Hepatitis C treatment interruption and compliance	Dr. Gia Landry
<b>Session 11</b>	June 13, 2025	<i>Harm Reduction in PWIDs: Focus on Medication Assisted Therapy</i>	Dr. Susan Julius
<b>Session 12</b>	July 11, 2025	Hepatitis C Year End Review	Dr. Gia Landry

**\*\* Session canceled by Hub Team Facilitator- Dr. Gia Landry**

## History:

This ECHO served as a continuum of provider education offered through Ochsner Health at the initiation of the Epclusa Subscription model also known as the Hep C elimination plan. HHARM strategies were incorporated for relevance of Hep C to substance use disorder and housing insecurity.

## Purpose:

To inform healthcare providers and advanced practitioners of the current Hepatitis C (HCV) Elimination Plan coordinated by the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) that involves removing treatment barriers and offering training to more primary care providers to cure HCV and create the development of best practices for destigmatizing drug use all while integrating Harm Reduction services in un-housed populations. The training is a combination of testing and treatment options used to target Louisianans with a probable or confirmed cases.

**Monthly, hour long** session with continuing education at no cost  
**Target Audience:** MDs, DOs, NPs, PAs and clinical staff interested in creating a “Hepatitis C Free Louisiana”.

**Total # of Sessions held: 10**

**Total # of attendees: 106**

**Avg # of attendees: 10.6**

**# of unique attendees/session: 6**

## Hub Team Members:

- Hepatitis C Specialist, Gia Landry
- Nurse practitioner, Cynthia Park, Department of Corrections
- SHHP support, Lawrencina Gougisha
- Well-Ahead Louisiana, ECHO Hub staff (Chrisey Smith, Terri Roberts)

# Next Steps: Beyond the Project ECHO Hepatitis C Series

## *Next Steps.....Beyond the ECHO Series*

- Project ECHO Hepatitis C Series will conclude July 2025 for its 5 year cycle
- WellAhead will assist SHHP with its own Project ECHO Series, each with a new topic and speaker/SME
  - **STIs**-This ECHO will feature a deep dive on STIs in Louisiana. We will discuss statewide morbidity, screening, treatment and resources.
  - **HIV/HIV Prevention**-This ECHO will feature a comprehensive overview of HIV and HIV prevention efforts.
  - **Syphilis**-This ECHO will feature a comprehensive overview of Syphilis in Louisiana. We will discuss statewide morbidity, screening, staging, treatment, and available resources.
  - **Congenital Syphilis**-This ECHO will feature a comprehensive overview of Congenital Syphilis. The goal of this ECHO is to ensure pediatric providers are provided the necessary information to appropriately screen and treat CS.
  - **HHARM Reduction and SUDs**-This ECHO will review HHARM reduction measures and SUDs in Louisiana.
  - **Hepatitis C**-This ECHO will mirror the HEP C series providing a comprehensive over of HCV including morbidity, screening, treatment and resources
  - **PrEP/Doxy PEP/TelePrEP**-This ECHO will overview STI prevention efforts available in our state.

# THANK YOU

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