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# HCVAction

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Bringing you the latest hepatitis C news and events

February 2023

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## Next HCV Action webinar to be held on micro-elimination

The next [HCV Action](#) webinar will be on the theme of hepatitis C 'micro-elimination', taking an in-depth look at examples of services and areas that have managed to achieve the micro-elimination criteria.

Micro-elimination is the process of rapidly tackling HCV in a well-defined population, such as in a local geographic area or within a single prison facility or drug service. These benchmarks are 100% of clients in structured treatment being offered a hepatitis C test, 100% of those with a history of injecting being tested ever, 90% of current and previous injectors (at risk) having a hepatitis C test date within the last 12 months; and 90% of HCV positive patients having commenced treatment.

The webinar will be an opportunity to hear from speakers representing different types of services such as drug and prison services, and learn more about the concrete steps they have taken to achieve elimination and what measures they have put in place to ensure that elimination is maintained thereafter.

HCV Action will be sending out invitations to attend the webinar soon, so do watch your inbox.

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## HCV Action publishes report outlining how England is eliminating hepatitis C

### Taking the initiative:

how England is eliminating  
hepatitis C



[HCV Action](#) has launched a new report '[Taking the initiative: how England is eliminating hepatitis C](#)', which explores the development of England's hepatitis C elimination programme since 2019, its lessons, and next steps.

The report outlines how the unique programme came about in April 2019, when [NHS England](#) announced a deal that brought together NHS bodies; pharmaceutical industry partners [Gilead](#), [MSD](#), and [AbbVie](#); third sector organisations such as [The Hepatitis C Trust](#); and other partners. It outlines how the elimination initiatives have evolved so far, what lessons have been learned for combatting hepatitis C and other health challenges, and the next steps in the final period of the deal as it comes to an end in March 2024. After this point, a new arrangement will be required to continue the work of at least some of these initiatives and keep up momentum towards the goal of elimination by 2025.

The report also highlights remaining challenges to reaching elimination. Robust harm reduction measures such as needle and syringe programmes are needed to prevent new infections, alongside continued commitment to testing and treating those at risk.

Please feel free to share the report with your networks.

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**UKHSA publishes latest Hepatitis C in the UK report**

## Hepatitis C in the UK 2023

### Working to eliminate hepatitis C as a public health threat

Data to end of 2021

Produced in collaboration with:

Public Health Agency Northern Ireland

Public Health Scotland

Public Health Wales

The [UK Health Security Agency](#) (UKHSA) has published its latest hepatitis C report, '[Hepatitis C in the UK 2023: Working to eliminate hepatitis C as a public health threat](#)'. The report reviews the progress that has been made towards the WHO target of eliminating hepatitis C by 2030, based on data up to the end of 2021.

The report estimates that there are 92,900 people living with a chronic hepatitis C infection in the UK. This is a 47% decrease since 2015, and if the prevalence reduction continues at current rates, the UK is on track to achieve an 80% reduction in chronic HCV prevalence by 2030. Ninety per cent of those who were diagnosed with an infection and linked to care over the past five years have started treatment. In England in particular, hepatitis C-related deaths are down 30.8% and overall prevalence down 43.3% since 2015.

However, the report also highlights that some challenges remain. For example, almost three-quarters of those still living with chronic HCV remain unaware of their infection, and both testing and treatment have yet to fully recover from the impact of the pandemic. New infections and reinfections remain a priority area to address, highlighting the need for harm reduction measures.

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#### News and reports

\* HCV Action has joined LinkedIn! Follow our [new LinkedIn page](#) for the latest information about our work and to connect with other members of the hepatitis C professional community.

\* BBC News has [published](#) comments from Jason Evans, founder of the campaign group [Factor 8](#) that called for a public inquiry into the infected blood scandal. Marking the end of the inquiry, Evans called for the immediate implementation of the inquiry's recommendations.

\*[A paper tracking global HCV elimination progress](#) has been published in [The](#)

[Lancet Gastroenterology & Hepatology](#). It estimates that, in 2019, 57.8 million (0.8%) people were living with chronic hepatitis C virus infection globally. It also notes that an estimated 78.6% of HCV infections remain undiagnosed.

\* The [BMC Gastroenterology](#) has published a [paper outlining how Taiwanese doctors](#) conducted a 'call back program' to further elimination by finding those previously lost to follow-up care. They found the systematic review of thousands of electronic records to be a successful way of expanding reach and linking patients to treatment.

\* [Vanderbilt University Medical Centre](#) has [published findings](#) regarding a new approach to treating patients who have been co-infected with both HIV and hepatitis C. Researchers looked into 'cross-reactive' antibodies, and identified five such antibodies in a co-infected individual that exhibited both anti-HIV and anti-HCV activity.

\* The [World Health Organization](#) has outlined the ways in which it is supporting the Government of Nigeria in its national hepatitis response. Describing hepatitis as a "silent epidemic", the WHO notes in particular Nigeria's plans to develop a mass awareness programme for HCV and HBV, similar to the one the country has for HIV.

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## Share good practice

If you would like your service to be featured as a good practice case study on the HCV Action website, have any news to share with colleagues, or would be interested in being an [HCV Action Ambassador](#), please send an email to [hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk](mailto:hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk).



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The Hepatitis C Trust provides secretariat support to HCV Action.*

Please encourage colleagues to join HCV Action for free hepatitis C related updates and tools by emailing their full contact details to [hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk](mailto:hcvaction@hepctrust.org.uk).

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