

SF 17 A bill for an act relating to the coverage of direct-acting antiviral drugs for Medicaid beneficiaries living with a chronic hepatitis C viral infection.

Hepatitis C is a viral infection that can be acute or chronic. Today, hepatitis C is most commonly transmitted when people share needles, syringes or other equipment to prepare or inject drugs. Hepatitis C can stay dormant in the body for many years without the host developing any signs or symptoms. This causes an increase in transmission due to the individual's lack of knowledge that they have an infection. Antiviral drugs can now cure hepatitis C and will help control the viral crisis that we are currently experiencing.

- An estimated 2.4 million people in the United States are living with chronic hepatitis C virus infection. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/hcvfaq.htm>
- Chronic hepatitis C left untreated, can cause serious health problems, including liver damage, cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), liver cancer, and even death. <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/cfaq.htm>
- 75%-85% of people with hepatitis C virus will develop chronic infection <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/cfaq.htm#B2>
- 10%-20% will develop cirrhosis over 20-30 years <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/cfaq.htm#B2>
- With each passing year 3% to 6% will develop liver failure and 1%-5% will develop liver cancer <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/cfaq.htm#B2>
- The lifetime cost for an individual with hepatitis C virus infection in 2013 was estimated to be \$64,694. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4049256/>
- Antiviral medicines can cure more than 95% of persons with hepatitis C infection, thereby reducing the risk of death from liver cancer and cirrhosis. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/hepatitis-c>