



FLORIDA

1. Plan Development

Florida has not yet published an updated viral hepatitis elimination plan. The state is expected to publish a plan by 2025 in accordance with CDC PS21-2103. If Florida has not already done so, the state should convene a group of multi-disciplinary stakeholders to guide these efforts, which will ultimately improve its viral hepatitis strategies and outcomes.

2. Harm Reduction Laws

Syringe Services Program Legality, Syringe Exchange Specifications, Medical Emergency Laws, and “Works” Possession Laws and Syringe Exemption

Although SSPs are authorized by statute in Florida and there is an exemption in place for the possession of syringes from SSPs, the exchange of syringes is restricted to a 1-for-1 exchange. A needs-based SSP policy would broaden the efficacy of these programs to reduce transmission of hepatitis, HIV, and other diseases.

3. Budget Allocation

Specific Funds Allocated for Plan Implementation, State Budget, and State Corrections Budget

There is no mention of viral hepatitis in Florida’s general budget allocations or the state’s corrections budget allocations either for FY23-24.

4. Improving Viral Hepatitis Prevention, Treatment, and Outcomes

Educational and Perinatal Information for the Public, Provider Training, and Medicaid Expansion

Florida provides educational information to the public regarding viral hepatitis and specifically perinatal HBV and HCV; the state also offers hepatitis training to providers through the Florida TRAIN program. However, Florida is not a Medicaid expansion state, which limits the number of persons who have access to viral hepatitis prevention, treatment, and care.

Standard of Care for HCV in State Corrections

Florida corrections has continued to maintain a policy of denying treatment to people with chronic HCV, in defiance of the modern standard of care and AASLD/IDSA guidance. Litigation against this policy was unsuccessful.

Targeted Interventions for Key Populations and the Provision of Linguistically Diverse Informational Materials

The state funds targeted interventions for key populations, such as persons who use drugs and those experiencing homelessness.

Enduring Coalition / Task Force to Coordinate and Leverage Resources

The state convened an elimination committee in 2019 – HCV Free Florida – but it is unclear whether the committee is active. The status of elimination planning efforts is also unclear.

Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access Grade

Florida’s Hepatitis C: State of Medicaid Access grade has slightly improved since July 2022, from a C to a B, following the implementation of “Smart PA,” which will effectively remove the prior authorization requirement in place.

5. Improving Viral Hepatitis Surveillance and Data Usage

Epidemiological Report / Profile, and Public-Facing Website with Viral Hepatitis Data

Florida does have a public-facing website, but only HAV data is updated regularly on this site. It was most recently updated in April 2023. The state has not published an epidemiological report / profile that includes HAV, HBV, or HCV data within the last two years though. The state should consider updating and publishing this information as soon as new data is available.