



EXAMINING HEPATITIS C VIRUS
TREATMENT ACCESS:
**A REVIEW OF SELECT STATE
MEDICAID FEE-FOR-SERVICE
AND MANAGED CARE PROGRAMS**

Rhode Island



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Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) in Rhode Island

Prevalence

- + It is estimated that there are between 16,603 and 22,660 individuals living with hepatitis C virus (HCV) in Rhode Island, of whom 12,286 to 16,768 are chronically infected.¹

HCV/HIV Co-Infection

- + Unavailable

Yearly Reported Cases

- + Reported cases of HCV have significantly increased in recent years, rising from 182 reports in 1992 to 1,962 reports in 2006.²

Age Breakdown

- + Most reported cases have been among individuals in the baby-boomer generation.³

Deaths

- + Unavailable

State HCV Programs in Rhode Island

Rhode Island provides several HCV services through its Integrated HIV/Viral Hepatitis Counseling, Testing, and Referral System (CTR).⁴ CTR works with three funded agencies to provide HCV screening throughout the state.⁵ Additionally, the Office of HIV/AIDS & Viral Hepatitis in Rhode Island runs a program called Education, Needle Exchange, Counseling, Outreach, and Referral (ENCORE) to provide an anonymous and confidential needle exchange program that also offers education, counseling, outreach, and referrals for HCV.⁶

Medicaid in Rhode Island

Eligibility

In addition to covering categorically needy populations, Rhode Island has also elected to expand Medicaid coverage. All eligible adults earning 138% of the federal poverty level (about \$16,105/year) or under are eligible for Medicaid, regardless of whether they meet other categorical requirements. All individuals who are newly eligible for Medicaid pursuant to the expansion are enrolled in the Rhody Health Partners program.⁷ Rhode Island also offers two supplemental Medicaid programs for families with slightly higher income limits: RIte Care, which covers uninsured families, children, and pregnant women, and RIte Share, which covers some portion of health insurance premiums and copays to help families get insurance through their employer.⁸

Care Delivery

Most individuals in Rhode Island Medicaid receive care through one of two managed care plans, Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island or United Health of New England.⁹ Some individuals (those who are blind or disabled, and/or other categorically needy populations) may also choose to enroll in the Connect Care Choice primary care case management program and/or fee for service.

Medicaid Coverage of Sofosbuvir (Sovaldi)

Fee for Service

Rhode Island Medicaid's fee for service program follows the criteria for prior authorization of Sovaldi set by the Rhode Island Medicaid Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, which meets four times a year to develop formulary and associated prior authorization criteria.¹⁰ Currently, sofosbuvir (Sovaldi) is considered non-preferred.¹¹ In order to receive approval for Sovaldi, the following criteria must be met (note that additional criteria in other categories may also be required).¹²

Fibrosis Criteria

- + Individuals must be diagnosed with stage 3 or 4 hepatic function and/or stage 3 or 4 cirrhosis using at least one of the following methods:
 - › AST to Platelet Ratio Index (APRI) greater than or equal to 1.0; or
 - › Liver biopsy indicating Metavir score 3 or 4; or
 - › FibroScan[®] score greater than or equal to 9.5kPa; or
 - › FibroTest[®] score greater than or equal to 0.58; or
 - › Imaging study consistent with cirrhosis.

Requirements Related to Substance Use

- + Individuals with current or past significant alcohol or intravenous drug use disorder must be abstinent for 6 months prior to treatment; OR
- + Actively participating in a substance abuse treatment program.

Prescriber Limitations

- + The requesting provider must be a gastroenterologist, hepatologist, or infectious disease practitioner;
- + Other physicians may, however, request to be an approved prescriber upon submission of a written request supporting this capability.

HIV Co-Infection Criteria

- + Rhode Island does not appear to have specific criteria with respect to treatment of individuals who are co-infected with HIV.

Additional Adherence Requirements

- + Rhode Island also requires that individuals sign a "patient contract," which among other requirements, provides that failure to complete all required office visits and/or laboratory testing will result in discontinuing the individual's supply of prescription medication.¹³ The contract does not need to be submitted with the prior authorization request, but must be kept on file by the provider.

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References

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