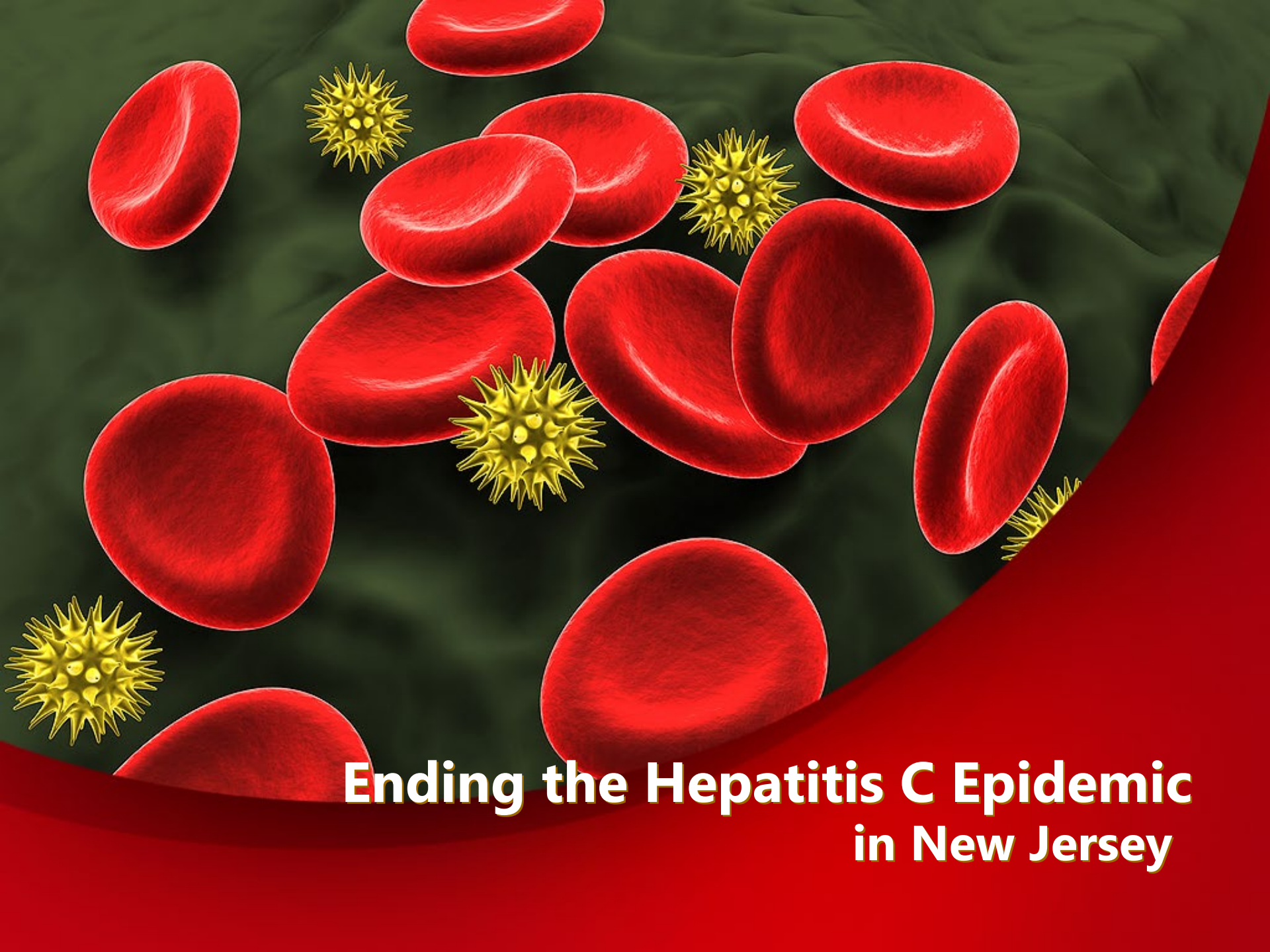




**Ending the Hepatitis C Epidemic
in New Jersey**



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Who is

NJCRI

?

NJCRI is a non-profit agency located in Newark with over 30 years of service provided to the HIV/AIDS community, expanding to primary medical care, infectious disease support for those living with chronic Hepatitis C, transgender medical care, and behavioral health services within our medical clinic to serve a high-risk and vulnerable population.

NJCRI has a team of medical case managers that work closely with each client to understand their needs and goals, and to develop a personalized treatment plan that is tailored to everyone's needs. We are a strong community who advocates and provides technical assistance to other community-based organizations in our area. Over 10,000 individuals avail themselves to our free and confidential services each year.

NJCRI recognizes that Hepatitis C is a silent epidemic within the state of NJ and to diligently fight this, we collaborate with substance use treatment centers, contract pharmacies and infectious disease specialist Dr. Jihad Slim to work toward the common goal of eradicating Hepatitis C in NJ. The 340B program at NJCRI allows patients from the most high-risk and vulnerable populations to be tested and treated for Hepatitis C at no cost to them or their addiction treatment facility.



HCV Patients Treated through NJCRI 340B Program

- **2019:**
 - 113 total patients seen
 - 110 completed treatment
 - 3 lost to follow-up
 - 97.35% cured
- **2020:**
 - 74 total patients seen
 - 70 completed treatment
 - 4 lost to follow-up
 - 94.59% cured
- **2021:**
 - 189 total patients seen
 - 144 completed treatment
 - 16 lost to follow-up
 - 90% cured
- **2022:**
 - 1131 total patients seen
 - 595 completed treatment
 - 61 lost to follow-up
 - 90.8% cured
- **2023:**
 - 1313 total patients seen (Jan-Nov)
 - 626 treatment ordered
 - 31 lost to follow-up
 - Est. 95.3% cure rate for year
- **Overall Numbers (2021-2023):**
 - Over 5000 patients tested, including POC rapid AB tests
 - 2633 total patients seen by ID specialist
 - 1365 completed treatment
 - 108 lost to follow-up
 - 92.7% average cure rate



Who are At-Risk Individuals?

- The current recommendations from **USPSTF, CDC, AASLD, and IDSA** is universal testing for HCV and if RNA (virus load) is detectable, evaluation for therapy
- Periodic testing recommended for those with continued risk of exposure – people who use drugs
- Micro-elimination efforts - NJCRI currently collaborates with 60 substance abuse facilities in all 21 counties of New Jersey focusing on high-risk individuals
- Nobody is turned away from NJCRI's Hepatitis C Elimination Program for any reason!



Common Barriers to Hepatitis C Treatment

- Poor Awareness/Education – patient and provider
- Lack of Medical Coverage (Insurance)
- Patient Non-Adherence
- Provider Referrals – lab/specialist
- Financial Concerns
- Transportation/Logistical Concerns
- Immigration Status
- Communication Difficulties
- Access to Care



NJCRI's solutions to Barriers to Treatment

- **Simplification of therapy – DAA's - 8 to 12 weeks of therapy – Sustained Virologic Response (SVR) 95-98%**
- NJCRI's approach to remove all barriers to treatment:
 - Mobile testing and treatment clinics
 - Patient and clinical staff education
 - As needed transportation to NJCRI or local facilities for additional testing
 - Insurance enrollment assistance for all uninsured individuals
 - Cost coverage by NJCRI for those who do not qualify for insurance, including migrant population
 - Telehealth appointments with ID specialist to diagnosis and prescribe treatment
 - Insurance authorizations for treatment, copay assistance, medication delivery
 - Streamlined communication between the clinic, pharmacy, facility, insurance, and patient



NJCRI's Financial Solution to Hepatitis C Elimination: 340B

- NJCRI participates in the federal 340B program to collaborate with local contract pharmacies to make Hepatitis C Elimination a reality for New Jersey.
 - **If Medicaid changes their prescription drug program to Fee-For-Service, the 340B program will essentially disappear in NJ and Hep C Elimination will no longer be possible with a program like this**
- 340B funds are used to cover costs for the program such as: medical RV for site visits, lab costs for uninsured patients, transportation for patients, medication copays, and insurance premium payments for patients who qualify for ACA coverage. **Patients do not have to pay out of pocket for any part of their Hepatitis C treatment through the 340B program.**
- HRSA's federal 340B program has high standards for audits and transparency and NJCRI complies with all requirements from HRSA.



Hepatitis C Treatment Process

- Consent and registration for testing and treatment
- POC rapid testing when applicable / Full work-up for those with prior positive result
- Patient scheduled for a telehealth appointment with ID specialist the week following
- Patient seen for evaluation of treatment
- Treatment ordered immediately when applicable and sent to contracted pharmacies
- Upon approval, the pharmacy will contact the patient to schedule delivery of the medication, typically, 5 days after MD appointment
- Patient is scheduled for post-treatment blood work 12 weeks after treatment

- 95% of patients will start treatment within 2 weeks of initial contact with NJCRI



Curing Hepatitis C is Motivational

- One of the most positive outcomes of treating Hepatitis C in this high-risk and vulnerable population of people who use drugs (PWUD) is hearing their personal stories of feeling proud to be treated of this chronic disease and using this as a motivation to stay clean and sober. We hope you rely on us to help your clients to be treated of chronic Hepatitis C and to help us in the bigger picture of eradicating Hepatitis C in the state of New Jersey.

If interested in learning more about this program and working together on this team effort, please contact:

- **Emily Levaggi, Program Manager (340B & Hepatitis C Elimination)** at 917-478-2232 e.levaggi@njcri.org
- **Kevin Leyden, BSN, RN, CARN – HCV Elimination Clinical Program Manager** at 973-483-3444 x291 k.leyden@njcri.org



References for Information

- AASLD Guidelines - <https://www.aasld.org/hcv-guidance-updates-recommendations-identification-and-management-chronic-hep-c> (2020)
- AASLD's HCV Guidelines - <https://www.HCVGuidelines.org> (2020)
- Center for Disease Control (CDC) - <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/hcv/hcvfaq.htm> (2020)

Telehealth appointments - We come to you!

Call us to start your treatment
in less than 2 weeks at **no cost to you!**



Hepatitis C Elimination Program

Direct Hotline: (973) 483-1065

Text or Call	(917) 478-2232
for additional assistance:	(862) 215-1821 en Español