



Quest Diagnostics Partners with CDC to Improve Hepatitis C Public Health Research to Promote Early Detection and Medical Intervention

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Collaboration aims to improve health outcomes for the estimated 3.2 million Americans infected with hepatitis C

MADISON, N.J., July 10, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Quest Diagnostics (NYSE: DGX), the world's leading provider of diagnostic information services, today announced a collaboration with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to improve public health analysis of hepatitis C screening, diagnosis and treatment, based on analysis of the company's national hepatitis C virus diagnostic information.

The collaboration aims to enhance screening, diagnosis and medical intervention for the approximately 3.2 million Americans infected with hepatitis C, promoting favorable health outcomes. The organizations will primarily focus on individuals born during 1945 through 1965. Individuals in this "baby boomer" generation are five times more likely than other adults to be infected, and one-time testing, as recommended by the CDC in 2012, could prevent more than 120,000 deaths in this age group.

In June 2013, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommended one-time hepatitis C screening for all adults born between 1945 and 1965.

"Deaths from hepatitis C infection have nearly doubled over the past decade to now more than 15,000 a year. Early detection and treatment of hepatitis C saves lives, but most people who are infected don't know it or are not being effectively treated," said Jay Wohlgemuth, M.D., senior vice president, science and innovation, Quest Diagnostics. "Our collaboration with the CDC underscores the importance of using diagnostic information to derive useful insights enabling effective prevention, detection and management programs for diseases with a significant impact on public health."

Under an agreement, medical experts, scientists and health informatics experts from Quest Diagnostics and the CDC's Division of Viral Hepatitis will share access to de-identified hepatitis C test results, in a HIPAA compliant manner, from the Quest Diagnostics Health Trends™ national clinical laboratory database, which represents every state and the District of Columbia. The de-identified data, with names and personally identifying information removed, will include results of screening and confirmatory diagnostic tests as well as genotyping and viral load tests used by clinicians to manage treatment.

Data will be evaluated to identify and track epidemiological trends in hepatitis C virus infection, testing and treatment, and evaluate how those trends differ based on gender, age, geography and clinical management. The organizations may jointly publish results of their research, such as in peer reviewed publications and scientific conferences.

"With 3 million Americans living with hepatitis C and up to 3 out of 4 who don't know they are infected, increased testing is critical to ensure that those who are infected receive life-saving care and treatment," said John W. Ward, M.D., director of CDC's Division of Viral Hepatitis. "Because these individuals are at serious risk for liver cancer, disease and death, I am excited about this innovative collaboration with Quest Diagnostics and believe it will help improve our understanding of how people access hepatitis C testing and care across the nation."

"This collaboration is an important step forward to producing actionable insights to aid public and clinical disease detection and management of hepatitis C," said Rick Pesano, M.D., Ph.D., medical director, infectious diseases. "Working with the CDC, Quest Diagnostics will lead the way for other providers to improve diagnosis and management of this disease, which in turn will help more people lead healthier lives."

Hepatitis C virus infection is the most common chronic bloodborne infection in the United States. The disease can cause liver damage and cancer and is a leading cause of liver transplants. Hepatitis C often does not manifest symptoms for decades. Early diagnosis, through laboratory blood tests, and treatment can help prevent liver damage, cirrhosis, liver cancer and death.

Quest Diagnostics provides comprehensive diagnostic information services for hepatitis C, including genotyping, risk stratifying and viral load testing, to aid the diagnosis, treatment, and monitoring of hepatitis C virus infection and disease.

About Quest Diagnostics Health Trends™ Reports

Quest Diagnostics Health Trends™ Reports provide insights into critical health issues, based on diagnostics data, affecting large numbers of Americans. The reports identify trends in disease and wellness based on analysis of de-identified test data from Quest Diagnostics, which maintains the largest private clinical laboratory database in the United States. Quest Diagnostics Health Trends™ Reports are published in peer-reviewed medical journals, at medical conferences and by the company as a public service. Previous reports have focused on prescription medication misuse, allergies and asthma, cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, diabetes, heart disease, influenza, pregnancy, rotavirus, sexually transmitted infections and wellness. Visit QuestDiagnostics.com/HealthTrends.

About Quest Diagnostics

Quest Diagnostics is the world's leading provider of diagnostic information services that patients and doctors need to make better healthcare decisions. The company offers the broadest access to diagnostic information services through its network of laboratories and patient service centers, and provides interpretive consultation through its extensive medical and scientific staff. Quest Diagnostics is a pioneer in developing innovative diagnostic tests and advanced healthcare information technology solutions that help improve patient care. Additional company information is available at QuestDiagnostics.com. Follow us at [Facebook.com/QuestDiagnostics](https://www.facebook.com/QuestDiagnostics) and [Twitter.com/QuestDX](https://twitter.com/QuestDX).

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Quest Diagnostics Contacts:

Wendy Bost (Media): 973-520-2800

Dan Haemmerle (Investors): 973-520-2900

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