

**From the Chief Medical Officer
Prof Sir Michael McBride**



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

HSS(MD) 83/2021

FOR ACTION

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/Health and Social
Care Board/HSC Trusts/ NIAS

GP Medical Advisers, Health & Social Care Board

All General Practitioners and GP Locums (for onward
distribution to practice staff)

OOHs Medical Managers (for onward distribution to staff)

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Our Ref: HSS(MD) 83/2021

Date: 16 December 2021

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST

Dear Colleague

**UPDATE OF GUIDANCE ON CLEARANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF
HEALTHCARE WORKERS LIVING WITH A BLOODBORNE VIRUS (BBV)**

In 2019 we wrote to you (HSS (MD) 21/2019) advising that updated integrated guidance had been published that described new recommendations on the monitoring and clearance of healthcare workers (HCWs) living with hepatitis B infection, and the investigation of situations where a HCW has been diagnosed with a BBV, based on the evidence base and experience from over 20 years of UKAP investigations.

Over the past 2 years this guidance has been embedded into practice and a 2021 update has been issued which contains changes to the recommended monitoring time of HCWs living with hepatitis B. These changes, detailed in section 7.2 of the guidance, align with national practice and other international guidelines.

Other changes to the guidance are outlined on page 6.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the very considerable benefits of identifying and then treating a BBV. Treatments for HBV (if required) and HIV are generally safe, easy to take and highly effective in suppressing the virus. For HCV, a short course of treatment is safe, easy to take and, for almost everyone, curative.

Yours sincerely

Prof Sir Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer

Linda Kelly
Chief Nursing Officer

Caroline Lappin
Chief Dental Officer

