

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



Department of  
**Health**

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

[www.health-ni.gov.uk](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk)

**HSS(MD) 16/2024**

**FOR ACTION**

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/HSC Trusts/NIAS

Deputy Secretary SPPG

GP Medical Advisers, SPPG

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) 16/2024

Date: 24 May 2024

**PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST**

Dear Colleagues

**HEPATITIS C TESTING GUIDANCE**

1. On 20 May 2024 the Chair of the Infected Blood Inquiry (IBI), Sir Brian Langstaff, officially published the [final report](#). Following publication there have been a number of queries to PHA and Health Trusts regarding the availability of Hepatitis C home testing kits in Northern Ireland.
2. The purpose of this letter is to advise that Hepatitis C testing is currently carried out via routine clinical care.
3. If a person thinks they might have been infected through a blood transfusion or in another way, they should contact their GP who can discuss their concerns and if necessary, organise testing for hepatitis C and other infections.
4. The Department and the PHA will continue to monitor the overall context in relation to testing for Hepatitis C. All guidance and recommendations relating to Hepatitis C testing are subject to change and further updates/advice will be issued accordingly if/as needed.
5. I would ask that this letter is cascaded throughout your organisation as appropriate.

6. I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank you all for your continued commitment and dedication to serving the needs of all patients and service users across our health and care services in Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely



**PROFESSOR SIR MICHAEL McBRIDE**  
**Chief Medical Officer**

### **Circulation List**

Director of Public Health/Medical Director, Public Health Agency (*for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff*)

Assistant Director Public Health (Health Protection), Public Health Agency

Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency

Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, SPPG (*for onward distribution to Community Pharmacies*)

Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts

Family Practitioner Service Leads, SPPG (*for cascade to GP Out of Hours services*)

Medical Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Consultants, Occupational Health Physicians and School Medical Leads*)

Nursing Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Community Nurses, and Midwives*)

RQIA (*for onward transmission to all independent providers including independent hospitals*)

Michael Donaldson, Head of Dental Services, SPPG (*for distribution to all General Dental Practitioners*)