Guidance on reporting cases of hepatitis in GU medicine clinics

England and Wales

Under the *Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010* cases of acute infectious hepatitis (which includes hepatitis A, B and C) must be notified to the Local Authority Proper Officer or the Health Protection Unit. Full information and the form for notifications is available from the Health Protection Agency’s website (see: [http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/NotificationsOfInfectiousDiseases/](http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/NotificationsOfInfectiousDiseases/)). Notification requires provision of the infected person’s name and address. Registered medical practitioners have a duty to provide this information and should explain the reasons for this to the patient and encourage their compliance. If after discussion a patient is unhappy with this amount of information being notified then the form should be completed using Soundex code, first part of the postcode and date of birth. Physicians do not have the option of not notifying at all: this would be a breach of the 2010 regulations and BASHH’s understanding is that the duty to notify overrides the duty to confidentiality.

Northern Ireland

Under the *Public Health Act (N.I.) 1990* cases of acute infectious hepatitis (which includes hepatitis A, B and C) must be notified to the Public Health Agency, Linenhall Street Unit, 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS. Notification requires provision of the infected person’s name and address. Physicians do not have the option of not notifying at all: this would be a breach of the regulations and BASHH’s understanding is that the duty to notify overrides the duty to confidentiality (see: [http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/directorate-public-health/health-protection/blood-borne-viruses-stis](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/directorate-public-health/health-protection/blood-borne-viruses-stis)).
Scotland

Under the Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008 cases of hepatitis are not notifiable in Scotland (see: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0039/00398230.doc).

Dr Keith Radcliffe
Chair
Clinical Effectiveness Group
BASHH

3 December 2012