



## **IMPORTANT High Importance – Urgent Hepatitis A Outbreak in California Oct. 13, 2017**

### **BACKGROUND**

As of October 13, 2017, San Diego (498 cases), Santa Cruz (71 cases), and Los Angeles (8 cases) counties are reporting outbreaks of hepatitis A virus (HAV). Most of these cases are among individuals who are homeless and/or using illicit drugs. There have been 18 deaths associated with this outbreak. Related cases have also been identified in Arizona and Utah. **To date, there have been no related cases reported in Humboldt County.**

HAV is a highly infectious enteric virus that is transmitted person-to-person via the fecal-oral route (via contaminated food, water, or surfaces).

### **WHAT PUBLIC HEALTH IS DOING**

Humboldt County Public Health is receiving outbreak updates and guidance from the California Department of Public Health. We not aware of any HAV cases in Humboldt County related to this outbreak. Public Health has increased their symptom surveillance in local emergency rooms to identify any increases in symptoms associated with HAV.

### **WHAT PROVIDERS SHOULD DO**

- Be alert for suspect cases of acute HAV, especially in homeless and/or illicit drug using populations. Symptoms to watch for include abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, fever, jaundice and LFT elevation.
- Order HAV IgM antibody serology rather than HAV total antibody serology when working up patients for acute disease. Total HAV antibody positivity may indicate immunity due to previous infection or immunization and is not sufficient evidence of an acute infection.
- Promptly report all suspect and confirmed HAV cases to Humboldt County Public health by calling 707-268-2182 or by faxing a confidential morbidity report to 707-445-7346.

### **WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION**

- For additional information, please visit the California Department of Public Health's website at: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Hepatitis-A-Outbreak.aspx>
- An electronic version of this document can be found by visiting the Provider Communication page at: <https://humboldt.gov/2237/Provider-Communication-from-Public-Health>
- If you have other questions, call 707-268-2182 and leave a message with your name and phone number and a public health nurse will call you back.

