Why Is This Important?
Hepatitis C is a virus transmitted through exposure to blood from an infected person. Common routes of infection include the sharing of injection drug equipment, tattoo & piercing equipment, and personal hygiene items like razors and toothbrushes. Some people with hepatitis C can clear the virus but most become chronic carriers of the virus and are at risk for developing liver damage or liver cancer.

Hepatitis C may have no signs and symptoms and therefore poses a risk for ongoing transmission.

Based on several equity measures a gap in hepatitis C infection rates persists within the Region’s population. From 2004 to 2010, 66% of hepatitis C cases were reported in individuals living in the least advantaged areas of Saskatoon (see Advancing Health Equity in Health Care – Hepatitis C).

What Is Being Done?

What’s Being Done In Saskatoon Health Region to Reduce STIs and Bloodborne Illness?

To Learn More:

Destiny’s Story (YouTube): a personal story from a hepatitis C positive individual living in our Region.

Chief Medical Health Officer’s 2014 Call to Action

Advancing Health Equity in Health Care—What is Health Equity?

Highlights

Hepatitis C rates are declining but still high in the Region.

- Hepatitis C rates have steadily decreased in the Region but are still higher than national rates (Figure 1).
- In 2016, 155 cases of hepatitis C were reported, including 92 cases in males and 63 cases in females (Figure 2). Twenty-five cases were acute infections. At least 7% of all cases were co-infected with HIV (not shown).
- The Region’s rate decreased by 7% from the previous year (Figure 1).
- Rates vary by age group with the highest rates occurring in young women 20 to 24 and adult men 30 to 39 years old.
- In 2015, 61% (98) of individuals with hepatitis C reported injection drug use as a transmission risk, a decrease from 2014. See transmission risk for hepatitis C.

Figure 1: Hepatitis C Rates per 100,000 Population, Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatchewan, and Canada, 2007 to 2016

Source: PHAC, Ministry of Health, iPHIS

Figure 2: Hepatitis C Cases and Rates per 100,000 by Gender, Saskatoon Health Region, 2007 to 2016

Source: iPHIS