

Norway

Norwegian Society for Infectious Diseases

Medical society

Oslo, Norway

<http://legeforeningen.no/Fagmed/Norsk-forening-for-infeksjonsmedisin/>

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

The Government of Norway did not respond to the World Health Organization survey for the 2013 [Global Policy Report on the Prevention and Control of Viral Hepatitis in WHO Member States](#), and therefore the Norwegian Society for Infectious Diseases could not comment on government information for this report.

The organisation provided the following general statement regarding key hepatitis policy issues in Norway:

Screening, care and treatment. The Norwegian government does not have national screening policies for hepatitis B and hepatitis C, except for in pregnancy, where testing of mothers belonging to defined risk groups is recommended. Unfortunately, there is not always adherence to this recommendation. Mothers with hepatitis B also exist outside of the defined risk groups. As a result, babies at risk of mother-to-child transmission may fail to receive vaccination and immunoglobulin, and subsequently may become infected. For the same

reason, mothers with high-level hepatitis B viraemia may not receive recommended antiviral therapy in pregnancy to reduce risk of transmission to their children. The government should consider introducing a policy of routine hepatitis B testing for all pregnant women, as is already the case with HIV. The government of Norway provides treatment for hepatitis B and hepatitis C free of charge, but does not have clear policies regarding when treatment is indicated. Treatment guidelines are available from the Norwegian Society for Infectious Diseases and the Norwegian Society for Gastroenterology. With the introduction of new and costly hepatitis C drugs, the above societies have begun to prepare guidelines regarding their use.

Prevention of transmission. The Norwegian government has only included hepatitis B vaccination in the child vaccination programme for children born into families in which at least one parent is not from a low-prevalence country. The most important measure for prevention of transmission of hepatitis B would be to include hepatitis B vaccination in the child vaccination programme for all children. Of 53 countries in the WHO European region, only five other countries besides Norway have not included hepatitis B vaccination in the child vaccination programme for all children.