

Kuwait

The Government of Kuwait reports as follows.

National coordination

There is a written national strategy or plan that focuses exclusively on the prevention and control of viral hepatitis. It includes components for raising awareness, surveillance, vaccination, prevention in general, prevention of transmission via injecting drug use, prevention of transmission in health-care settings, treatment and care, and coinfection with HIV.

There is a designated governmental unit/department responsible solely for coordinating and/or carrying out viral hepatitis-related activities: Fighting Epidemics Unit, Preventive Medicine Department. It has eight staff members. It is not known how many people work full-time on hepatitis-related activities in all government agencies/bodies.

The government has a viral hepatitis prevention and control programme that includes activities targeting the following specific populations: health-care workers (including health-care waste handlers), people who inject drugs, migrants, prisoners, people living with HIV, indigenous people, new army and police recruits, pregnant women and new employees.

Awareness-raising and partnerships

The government did not hold events for World Hepatitis Day 2012. Information was not provided on whether the government has funded other viral hepatitis public awareness campaigns since January 2011.

The government does not collaborate with in-country civil society groups to develop and implement its viral hepatitis prevention and control programme.

Evidence-based policy and data for action

There is routine surveillance for viral hepatitis. There is a national surveillance system for the following types of acute hepatitis: A, B, C, D and E, but not for chronic hepatitis B or hepatitis C. Information was not provided on whether there is a national surveillance system for chronic hepatitis D.

There are standard case definitions for hepatitis. It is not known whether deaths, including from hepatitis, are reported to a central registry. No hepatitis case is reported as "undifferentiated" or "unclassified" hepatitis.

Liver cancer cases and cases with HIV/hepatitis coinfection are registered nationally.

The government publishes hepatitis disease reports monthly.

Hepatitis outbreaks are required to be reported to the government and are further

Population (in millions) (2011)	2.8
Country classification (2012)	High-income
Gross national income per capita (PPP int \$) (2011)	\$53 720
Total health expenditure as % of GDP (2010)	2.63%
Per capita total health expenditure (PPP int \$) (2010)	\$1132.54
Per capita government health expenditure (PPP int \$) (2010)	\$910.20
Life expectancy at birth (in years) (2009)	78
Human Development Index (2011)	0.760
Median age (in years) (2010)	28
Total fertility rate per woman (2010)	2.3

investigated. There is adequate laboratory capacity nationally to support investigation of viral hepatitis outbreaks and other surveillance activities.

There is a national public health research agenda for viral hepatitis. Viral hepatitis serosurveys are conducted regularly; the target populations are children, the general population and people who inject drugs. The last serosurvey was carried out in 2011.

Prevention of transmission

There is a national policy on hepatitis A vaccination.

The government has established the goal of eliminating hepatitis B but did not provide information about a specific timeframe for this.

Nationally, 95% of newborn infants in a given recent year received the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine within 24 hours of birth and 95% of one-year-olds (ages 12–23 months) in a given recent year received three doses of hepatitis B vaccine.

There is a national policy that specifically targets mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B (Annex B).

There is a specific national strategy and/or policy/guidelines for preventing hepatitis B and hepatitis C infection in health-care settings. Health-care workers are vaccinated against hepatitis B prior to starting work that might put them at risk of exposure to blood.

There is a national policy on injection safety in health-care settings, which recommends single-use syringes for therapeutic injections. Single-use or auto-disable syringes, needles and cannulas are always available in all health-care facilities.

Official government estimates of the number and percentage of unnecessary injections administered annually in health-care settings are not known.

There is a national infection control policy for blood banks. All donated blood units (including family donations) and blood products nationwide are screened for hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

There is a national policy relating to the prevention of viral hepatitis among people who inject drugs.

The government does not have guidelines that address how hepatitis A and hepatitis E can be prevented through food and water safety.

Screening, care and treatment

Health professionals obtain the skills and competencies required to effectively care for people with viral hepatitis through schools for health professionals (pre-service education), on-the-job training and postgraduate training.

There are national clinical guidelines for the management of viral hepatitis, which include recommendations for cases with HIV coinfection.

The government has national policies relating to screening and referral to care for hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

People testing for both hepatitis B and hepatitis C register by name; the names are kept confidential within the system. Hepatitis B and hepatitis C tests are free of charge for all individuals, and are compulsory for health-care workers, immigrants, pregnant women, prisoners, new recruits in the army and police, and new employees.

Publicly funded treatment for hepatitis B and hepatitis C is available to the entire population. The amount spent by the government on such treatment for hepatitis B and hepatitis C is not known.

The following drugs for treating hepatitis B are on the national essential medicines list or subsidized by the government: interferon alpha, pegylated interferon, lamivudine, entecavir and telbivudine. The following drugs for treating hepatitis C are on the national essential medicines list or subsidized by the government: interferon alpha, pegylated interferon, ribavirin, boceprevir and telaprevir.

The Government of Kuwait welcomes assistance from WHO in one or more areas of viral hepatitis prevention and control (Annex C).