

Belarus

The Government of Belarus reports as follows.

National coordination

There is no written national strategy or plan that focuses exclusively or primarily on the prevention and control of viral hepatitis.

There is no designated governmental unit/department responsible solely for coordinating and/or carrying out viral hepatitis-related activities. There are 20–25 full-time equivalent staff members who work 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: people who inject drugs, prisoners, people living with HIV, sex workers and men who have sex with men.

Awareness-raising and partnerships

The government held events for World Hepatitis Day 2012 and has funded other viral hepatitis public awareness campaigns since January 2011 (Annex A).

The government collaborates with the following in-country civil society groups to develop and implement its viral hepatitis prevention and control programme: NGO "Positive Movement" and Belarusian Red Cross.

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, and for the following types of chronic hepatitis: B, C and D.

There are standard case definitions for hepatitis. Deaths, including from hepatitis, are reported to a central registry. Information was not provided regarding the percentage of hepatitis cases reported as "undifferentiated" or "unknown" hepatitis.

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

The government publishes hepatitis disease reports monthly and annually.

Hepatitis outbreaks are reported to the government and are further investigated. There is adequate laboratory capacity nationally to support investigation of outbreaks and other surveillance activities.

Information was not provided on whether there is a national public health research agenda for viral hepatitis. Viral hepatitis serosurveys are conducted regularly; the

Population (in millions) (2011)	9.6
Country classification (2012)	Upper-middle-income
Gross national income per capita (PPP int \$) (2011)	\$14 460
Total health expenditure as % of GDP (2010)	5.61%
Per capita total health expenditure (PPP int \$) (2010)	\$786.12
Per capita government health expenditure (PPP int \$) (2010)	\$610.70
Life expectancy at birth (in years) (2009)	70
Human Development Index (2011)	0.785
Median age (in years) (2010)	38
Total fertility rate per woman (2010)	1.4

target populations are people who inject drugs, men who have sex with men, pregnant women, people living with HIV, health-care workers, members of the military and prisoners. Information was not provided on when the last serosurvey was carried out.

Prevention of transmission

There is a national policy on hepatitis A vaccination.

The government has not established the goal of eliminating hepatitis B.

Nationally, 100% of newborn infants in a given recent year received the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine within 24 hours of birth and 98%–100% 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 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 has 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 members of some specific groups but these groups were not identified.

Publicly funded treatment is available for hepatitis B and C. Information was not provided on who is eligible for publicly funded treatment for hepatitis B. Publicly funded treatment for hepatitis C is available only to people with acute infection (not those with chronic infection). Information was not provided on the amount spent by the government on such treatment for hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

The following drugs for treating hepatitis B are on the national essential medicines list: interferon alpha, pegylated interferon, lamivudine and tenofovir. The following drugs for treating hepatitis C are on the national essential medicines list: interferon alpha, pegylated interferon and ribavirin.

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