

Japan

Population (in millions) (2011)	126.5
Country classification (2012)	High-income
Gross national income per capita (PPP int \$) (2011)	\$35 330
Total health expenditure as % of GDP (2010)	9.49%
Per capita total health expenditure (PPP int \$) (2010)	\$3203.74
Per capita government health expenditure (PPP int \$) (2010)	\$2643.96
Life expectancy at birth (in years) (2009)	83
Human Development Index (2011)	0.901
Median age (in years) (2010)	45
Total fertility rate per woman (2010)	1.4

The Government of Japan reports as follows.

National coordination

There is a written national strategy or plan that focuses exclusively on the prevention and control of hepatitis B and hepatitis C. It includes components for raising awareness, vaccination, prevention in general, prevention of transmission in health-care settings, and treatment and care.

There is a designated governmental unit/department responsible solely for coordinating and/or carrying out viral hepatitis-related activities: the Office for Promotion of Hepatitis Measures within the Health Service Bureau of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. It has 12 staff members. There are two 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 population: health-care workers (including health-care waste handlers).

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: the Japan Hepatitis Council and the Viral Hepatitis Research Foundation of Japan.

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 any type of chronic hepatitis.

There are standard case definitions for hepatitis. Deaths, including from hepatitis, are reported to a central registry. Of hepatitis cases, 5.6% are reported as "undifferentiated" or "unclassified" hepatitis.

Liver cancer cases are registered nationally, but cases with HIV/hepatitis coinfection are not.

The government publishes hepatitis disease reports weekly.

Hepatitis outbreaks are required to be reported to the government. 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. It is not known whether viral hepatitis serosurveys are conducted regularly.

Prevention of transmission

There is no national policy on hepatitis A vaccination.

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

Nationally, no newborn infant in a given recent year received the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine within 24 hours of birth and no one-year-old (age 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.

It is not known whether there is a national policy on injection safety in health-care settings, or whether 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 no 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

It is not known how health professionals obtain the skills and competencies required to effectively care for people with viral hepatitis.

There are national clinical guidelines for the management of viral hepatitis, but they do not include recommendations for cases with HIV coinfection. There are national clinical guidelines for the management of HIV, which include recommendations for coinfection with viral hepatitis.

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

People testing for hepatitis B and hepatitis C do not register by name. Hepatitis B and hepatitis C tests are free of charge for all individuals and are not compulsory for members of any specific group.

Publicly funded treatment is available for hepatitis B and hepatitis C. The following group is eligible for such treatment for hepatitis B: patients receiving interferon therapy or nucleoside analogue therapy. The following group is eligible for publicly funded treatment for hepatitis C: patients receiving interferon therapy. 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 or subsidized by the government: pegylated interferon, lamivudine, adefovir dipivoxil and entecavir. The following drugs for treating hepatitis C are on the national essential medicines list or subsidized by the government: interferon alpha, pegylated interferon, ribavirin and telaprevir.

The Government of Japan did not indicate a need for assistance from WHO in relation to viral hepatitis prevention and control.