

Country Case Study: Spain



EuroTEST

Working together for integrated
testing and earlier care

Addressing Hepatitis, HIV, STIs and TB

Revocable Consent Form

Overview

This case study describes experience from an opt-out Hepatitis C (HCV) testing programme implemented in the Emergency Department (ED) of Torrecárdenas University Hospital (HUT), Almería, Spain.

The prevalence of active HCV infection in Spain is estimated to be 0.2%, but a large number of persons are unaware of their infection status.

To support the implementation of routine HCV screening in the ED, a revocable consent model aligned with Spanish legal frameworks was introduced that enabled patients to receive information about testing while retaining the right to decline participation.

Approach

- At admission, administrative staff provided patients with a leaflet providing information on HCV infection, transmission, screening rationale, and treatment options. On the reverse side was a revocation form for patients who did not want to be tested.
- The form could be filled in and deposited in a designated mailbox.
- Once the information leaflet was delivered, a checkbox was automatically marked in the electronic admission system.
- Before proceeding with HCV testing, staff verified that no revocation had been recorded for the patient.

**HEPATITIS C SCREENING IN THE
TORRECÁRDENAS EMERGENCY
DEPARTMENT**
Unidad de Gestión Clínica Urgencias
TORRECÁRDENAS
Hospital Universitario

¿ WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C is a chronic viral infection that, in most cases, causes no symptoms but can lead to serious liver damage.

HEPATITIS C IS CURABLE. There are simple, short-term treatments with no side effects that cure the infection in more than 95% of patients.

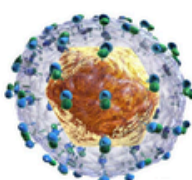
The Emergency Department offers **Hepatitis C Screening** to all eligible patients attending this service.

If you are between 18 and 69 years old and require a blood test for any reason during your visit to the Emergency Department, you will be tested for hepatitis C in the same blood sample.

➤ If the result is positive, we will contact you to offer care and treatment in our hepatology clinic.

➤ If the result is negative, you will not be contacted.

All information regarding your case will remain confidential and managed in accordance with current ethical and legal standards (Declaration of Helsinki).



If you DO NOT agree to undergo this test, please complete the "Revocation of Consent" form (on the back of this document) and place it in the mailbox located in front of the Emergency Department admissions desk. We understand that if you do not submit this signed document, you consent to the Hepatitis C test being performed.

¡For your peace of mind, get tested for Hepatitis C!

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REVOCATION OF CONSENT

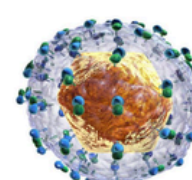
I, Mr./Ms. _____, hereby freely and knowingly withdraw my consent for hepatitis C screening.

In Almería, on the ____ day of _____, _____

PATIENT SIGNATURE: _____ LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE (if applicable): _____

Signed.: _____ Signed.: _____

IF YOU DO NOT AGREE TO UNDERGO THE TEST, PLEASE PLACE THIS REVOCATION OF CONSENT FORM WITH YOUR INFORMATION IN THE MAILBOX LOCATED IN FRONT OF THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ADMISSIONS DESK.



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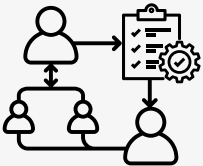
Lessons learned



Embedding screening within routine ED workflows through a revocable consent (opt-out) model enabled implementation without disrupting clinical activity.



Many patients diagnosed with active HCV through this programme had no recorded risk factors or presented with non-specific symptoms and would likely have been missed by risk-based testing alone.



Strong linkage to care pathways, including rapid contact and direct referral to hepatology, were essential to translate diagnosis into treatment and cure.

Source

[Camelo-Castillo A, Jordán Madrid T, Cabezas Fernández T, Rodríguez-Maresca M, Duarte Carazo A, Carrodegua A, Medina D, García F, Casado-Martín M. Opportunistic screening for hepatitis C virus infection in an emergency department in Almería, Spain. Emergencias. 2024 Jan;36\(1\):25-32. English, Spanish. doi: 10.55633/s3me/03.2023. PMID: 38318739.](#)

The HCV opt-out screening programme at Torrecárdenas University Hospital was implemented within the framework of the FOCUS public health programme and model, an initiative that supports the implementation of blood-borne virus testing and linkage-to-care strategies in Spain and Portugal.