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## Introduction:

Chronic infection with hepatitis C virus (HCV) can cause significant morbidity to individuals due to inflammatory damage to the liver. This chronic inflammatory damage can lead to further complications, including cirrhosis, hepatocellular carcinoma, and fulminant liver failure. In the military, HCV presents a concern for fitness for duty, readiness, and health care costs of its members. In 2020, the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD), U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) expanded recommendations for HCV infection screening to include all adults age 18 years or older.

## Methods:

The JBSA-Lackland Blood Donor Center was queried for the results of HCV screening for all basic military trainees who donated blood between Jan. 1, 2017 and Dec. 31, 2020. All other blood donations (those from individuals other than basic trainees) during this time period were excluded. HCV prevalence in those who donated blood was calculated using the total trainee donations as the denominator.

#### Results:

The prevalence of HCV in those BMT trainees who were screened from 2017 through 2020 was 0.0203% (6 of 29,615 screened), which is 3.1 times ( $p=.173$ ) the prevalence of HCV infection in this population during 2013–2016 (0.0065%, 2 of 30,660 screened).

#### Discussion:

Instituting accession-wide HCV screening at USAF BMT by adding it to the current lab evaluation would be an efficient method of ensuring that all new USAF enlisted service members are up to date on this screening as recommended by USPSTF, CDC, and AASLD.

Word Count: 249