

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PHICAS, HEP C and TESTING



What is PHICAS?

Piedmont HIV Integrated Community Access Systems. PHICAS is a collaborative network of providers who coordinate services for patients to receive consistent diagnosis, treatment and care. Our purpose is to make care more accessible to people living with HIV and Hepatitis C, and to increase access to screening and prevention for people at risk

How is it funded?

We received a three-year grant from the Health Community Access Program (HCAP) of the Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC), a division of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

What are the federal programs designed to do?

HCAP projects are intended to help health care providers coordinate a safety net of services for uninsured and underinsured Americans. Funded programs increase access to health care by creating one-stop service delivery, increasing providers efficiency, and encouraging private sector involvement.

Who does PHICAS serve?

Our primary target population is people with HIV and Hep C who are uninsured or underinsured, and who live in Durham, Person, Warren, Vance, Granville and Franklin Counties, North Carolina. We are also committed to reaching people in the general population who are at risk for contracting Hepatitis C or for having undiagnosed chronic Hep C.

Who are the partners?

The core collaborative includes: Piedmont HIV Health Care Consortium, Health Inequalities Program, Lincoln CHC Early Intervention Clinic, Partners in Caring, Person County Health Department, Duke Addictions Program.

What are some PHICAS projects?

- Managed Information System, which links providers using a customized computer program. This helps insure that patient care is coordinated, and provides access to resources for health care providers.
- Education programs for HIV and Hep C providers, addressing both community and clinical issues.
- Community education programs, including the public service campaign to encourage testing for Hep C.
- Development of programs to deal with systemic barriers to medical care such as transportation problems, unaffordable prescription medications and fragmented services.
- Integration of social support services with medical care to better meet the needs of patients.

If I believe I am at risk for Hepatitis C, where can I get a test?

Ask your physician or health care provider if you should be tested. If you are in a high-risk category, testing is available at the Durham County Health Department.

What if I test positive?

It's important to get into care as quickly as possible. PHICAS coordinates a counseling program to refer you to programs and care. You will also learn how to keep from infecting other people.

What if I test negative?

After you breathe a sigh of relief, get the information you need to not get infected, especially if some of the things you're doing right now put you at risk. And spread the word!

I did something a long time ago, and I don't know if I got Hepatitis C or not. What should I do?

Contact PHICAS or go to our website, www.phicas.org, for information about causes, symptoms and treatment for Hepatitis C. If you ever did something that puts you at risk, such as injected street drugs or received a blood transfusion before mid-1992, then you should probably request a test.