



March 17, 2020

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Dr. Robert Redfield, Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Atlanta, GA

Dear Dr. Redfield:

The American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) commends the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other federal, state and local health agencies for your strong efforts to address the issue of testing and caring for vulnerable populations – those most at risk of severe infection from COVID-19.

AASLD is the only national organization that focuses on the prevention, treatment and cure of liver diseases. In this position of leadership, we strongly recommend that patients with any chronic liver disease and those who have undergone liver transplantation or are listed for transplantation be included on the list of patients with chronic illness and immunocompromised considered vulnerable to COVID-19 infection. These patients should be given priority for testing if they manifest upper respiratory tract symptoms and/or fevers and have timely access to care. This inclusion is most critical for patients residing in areas where clusters of COVID-19 have been reported but should apply throughout the country given the rapid spread of this virus.

Recognizing that access to timely diagnosis and care are critical to optimal outcomes of COVID-19 infection, we believe that CDC must ensure the development of a comprehensive list of vulnerable populations and that list should be promptly expanded to include those persons with chronic liver disease and those who have undergone or are listed for liver transplantation to ensure they receive appropriate care.

AASLD stands ready to support and assist CDC in this effort. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Jorge A. Bezerra, MD, FAASLD
AASLD President

Cc: Jonathan Mermin, MD, MPH
Carolyn Wester, MD, MPH