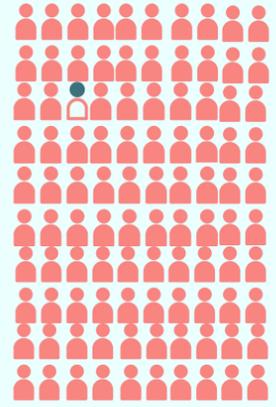


# Birth cohort testing for hepatitis C

Birth cohort testing for hepatitis C (HCV) involves offering once-off HCV testing to people in Ireland born between 1965 and 1985.



It is estimated that 1 in 100 could have chronic HCV infection.

The prevalence of chronic HCV infection is highest in this age group.

HCV is a blood-borne virus, which primarily affects the liver.



55–85% of people infected with HCV develop chronic HCV infection.

Chronic HCV infection is often asymptomatic. Left untreated, it can cause severe damage to the liver and other organs.

Highly accurate diagnostic tests are available to identify people with chronic HCV infection.



Safe, effective and well-tolerated medications are available to treat chronic HCV infection – over 95% of people treated are cured.



Birth cohort testing requires a large upfront investment, but is cost-effective in the long term.



The National Clinical Guideline for hepatitis C Screening describes other types of HCV testing in Ireland. Birth cohort testing would not impact access to these.



Introducing birth cohort testing for HCV would help the HSE achieve the World Health Organization target of making Hepatitis C a rare disease by 2030.