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National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission
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New Hepatitis C Treatment

The Food and Drug Administration has approved a second drug for the treatment of hepatitis C. The treatment, known as "pegylated interferon alfa-2a" was recently shipped to the VA medical facilities that have the most need.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) takes care of more than 70,000 patients a year suffering from this serious liver disease - that is more than any other health system in the country. VA has screened more than 2.6 million veterans for hepatitis C risk factors.

Through VA's national hepatitis C program, veterans with the disease receive appropriate medical care to include:

- Counseling for risk factor identification and disease prevention;
- Systematic screening and testing;
- Proactive patient and clinician education;
- Liver transplantation if clinically necessary; and
- Support services such as substance abuse and mental health care.

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Carol J. Rutherford

CAROL J. RUTHERFORD, Director
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