Testing for Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Infection

HCV antibody test on one 7.5 ml brown cap serum gel blood tube

Positive

Negative

HCV antigen test automatically performed on sample by lab

**No evidence of HCV infection;
Repeat test if within 6 months of possible HCV exposure;
Give BBV risk reduction advice**

Positive: Active HCV infection

Negative

Offer referral to specialist treatment centre and other agencies for psychosocial support

Laboratory will request one 7.5 ml red cap anti-coagulated EDTA blood tube for PCR testing *

Positive: Active HCV infection

Negative

Confirmatory sample usually performed at specialist service (needs to be done in Primary Care if patient does not attend)

Offer referral to specialist treatment centre and other agencies for psychosocial support

**No evidence of active infection;
Give BBV risk reduction advice**

**Patient is not immune.
Antigen testing should be requested every 6-12 months if patient is at ongoing BBV risk**

* A follow-up PCR test is required as the antigen test is slightly less sensitive than the PCR assay and may miss cases with a very low viral load. However, active infection usually results in a very high viral load, so cases where the patient is antigen negative but PCR positive will be very rare.