March 17, 2020

POSITION STATEMENT ON THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK AND TESTING FOR PATIENTS WITH LIVER DISEASE

The American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) and the undersigned individuals commend the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other federal, state and local health agencies for addressing the issue of testing of vulnerable populations – those most at risk of severe infection from COVID-19.

AASLD and our co-signers, which include health care providers, patients, and representatives of patient and community groups, focus on the prevention, treatment and cure of liver diseases. We strongly recommend that patients with chronic liver disease and those who have undergone liver transplantation be included on the list of immunocompromised patients considered vulnerable to COVID-19 infection and that they be given priority for testing if they manifest upper respiratory tract symptoms and/or fevers. This is even more important for patients residing in areas where clusters of COVID-19 have been reported.

Recognizing that access to timely diagnosis and care are critical to optimal outcomes of COVID-19 infection, we believe the Congress must ensure that the CDC develops a comprehensive list of vulnerable populations and is promptly expanded to include those persons with chronic liver disease and those who have undergone liver transplantation to ensure they receive appropriate care. A letter recommending including the inclusion of these patients considered vulnerable for the purposes of testing for COVID-19 infection. That letter is also attached to this email.

Sincerely,

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