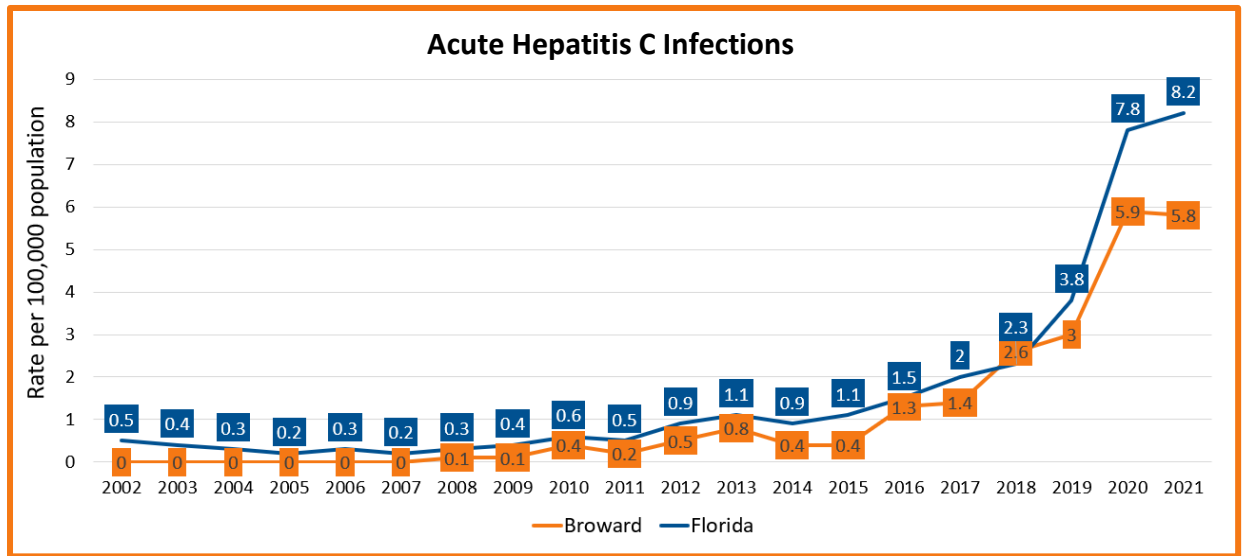


February 2023

Drug-Related Infectious Diseases and Deaths

In addition to addiction, substance use is often related to many diseases and conditions. The Community Health Assessment Resource Tool Set (CHARTS)



from the Florida Department of Health has recent data documenting trends in drug-related diseases and deaths. Given the ongoing opioid epidemic and associated injection drug use, hepatitis C infection is a significant concern. This blood-borne liver infection is primarily spread through drug injection via the sharing of needles, syringes, or other injection equipment. As seen in the chart, acute, or newly acquired, hepatitis C infections have been increasing rapidly in recent years, reaching a rate of 5.8 infections per 100,000 population in 2021, compared to just 0.4 in 2015. Treatment is available, but reinfection can occur.

CHARTS also has data related to deaths from alcoholic liver disease, which has been relatively stable in Broward County, with a rate of 5.7 deaths per 100,000 in 2021. However in Florida, alcoholic liver disease deaths have steadily increased over the past decade reaching a rate of 7.8 deaths per 100,000 population.

There are some positive data points from CHARTS. The first is deaths from tobacco-related cancers. Rates per 100,000 reached historic lows in Broward County in 2021 (48.7) and across the state (58.1). These deaths are largely driven by the use of traditional combustible cigarettes and data show that each year fewer people, and especially young people, are using cigarettes. Second, deaths from suicide by drug poisoning also reached historic lows, with 0.9 deaths per 100,000 in Broward County in 2021, compared to a rate of 2.1 ten years ago. Despite this decrease, suicide is an ongoing problem via other means, and prevention is a priority.

Source: Florida Department of Health Community Health Assessment Resource Tool Set, <https://www.flhealthcharts.gov/charts/default.aspx>

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