



GSK Research Study

24 November 2025

Chronic Hepatitis B (CHB) affects around 94,000 people in Aotearoa, especially Māori, Pacific, and Asian communities. While current treatments can reduce liver damage, they seldom result in a complete cure. Only a few people achieve what's known as a 'Functional Cure' – where the virus is controlled without requiring ongoing therapy. This greatly lowers the risk of liver cancer and cirrhosis and improves long-term health.

To help us better understand who might benefit from new treatments, HFNZ is supporting a research study being conducted by ICON plc, a clinical research organisation, with patients registered with HFNZ. This study is funded by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), a pharmaceutical company developing new therapies for CHB. The results of this study will support GSK's application to approve a new treatment in New Zealand called bepirovirsen, which is designed to help more people achieve a Functional Cure. These findings will be submitted to government agencies that assess whether medicines are safe and whether they can be publicly funded (e.g., Te Pātaka Whaioranga [PHARMAC]). The goal is to help make future CHB treatments more broadly available to people in Aotearoa.

The study has been approved by the Health and Disabilities Ethics Committee of New Zealand. **The study will start on 24 November 2025 and finish on 31 July 2026.**

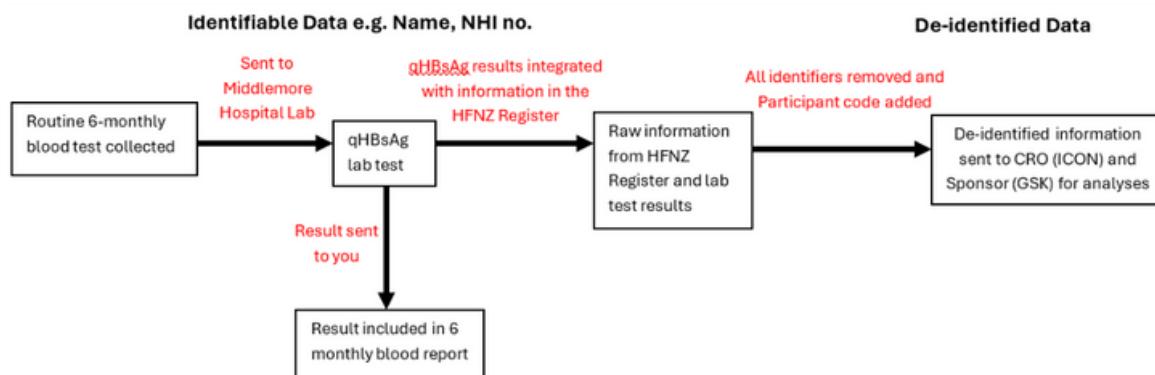
What this means for you

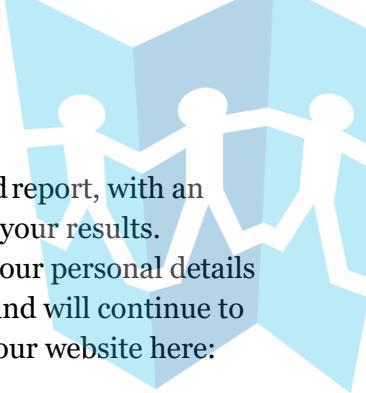
As part of your next routine 6-monthly blood draw, we would like to include a variation of a routine test that you already have - HBsAg. It is called a **quantitative hepatitis B surface antigen (qHBsAg) test.** A small amount of blood from your routine sample will be analysed and the result will be coded. Research has shown that people with lower levels of qHBsAg may have a higher chance of reaching Functional Cure.

If you are happy to take part in this study, you don't need to do anything – this extra test will happen automatically unless you choose to '**opt-out**'. If you have any questions about the study and would like to speak to a member of the research team or your community hepatitis nurse, please contact us at 0800 33 20 10 or email us at hepteam@hfnz.nz

Please note that:

- No additional needle or appointment is required.
- The qHBsAg test will only be done once, as part of your next routine blood test.
- No information that could personally identify you will be shared with either the pharmaceutical company sponsoring this study or clinical research organisation undertaking the study.
- Your test results may indirectly be a part of a scientific publication, however, in a form that does not identify you, and in full accordance with privacy and data protection laws that apply.





- You will be informed of your test result as part of your usual six-monthly blood report, with an explanation provided through the same process HFNZ normally uses to share your results.
- Your health information will remain confidential and de-identified (meaning your personal details will be removed or coded so the results cannot be linked back to identify you) and will continue to be handled in accordance with our Privacy Statement, which can be found on our website here: www.hepatitisfoundation.org.nz/privacy-statement/
- All blood samples will be tested within New Zealand and will be destroyed after batch testing per standard laboratory protocols.
- Your test result will be linked to existing data in the HFNZ registry to support improvements in CHB care. This data will then be coded before being sent to the CRO (ICON) and Sponsor (GSK).
- Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Participation or non-participation in this study (or the test result) will not affect the regular care you are receiving at the moment. If you opt-out, any data collected will not be used and will be removed from the study.
- Once the study is complete, and the results have been published in a scientific journal, we will share a summary of the study findings on our official website www.hepatitisfoundation.org.nz so you can learn what was discovered.

If you do NOT wish to be included in the study:

- Email us at hepteam@hfnz.nz
- Call us on 0800 33 22 10 or
- Text us on 021 921 566 with your National Health Index (NHI) number and/or full name.

Please note that while we will aim to include all willing patients, there is a possibility that your blood sample may not be tested for the purposes of this study if the targeted number of samples has already been collected by the time of your routine blood draw.

Thank you for helping strengthen hepatitis B care and treatment options for our communities across New Zealand.

Ngā mihi nui,

Hepatitis Foundation of New Zealand

Study at a glance:

- **Your participation will help us to identify patients who may be suitable for a cure for hepatitis B.**
- **If you wish to participate, you don't need to do anything.**
- **You can opt-out at any time before the end of the study on 31 July 2026 or before your next blood test. Contact us as above to opt-out.**
- **No extra appointments or needles are required.**
- **The qHBsAg test will only be done once – at the same time as your next routine 6-monthly blood test, using the same blood sample.**
- **Your data will remain de-identified.**
- **You will receive your personal test result along with an explanation of what this result means.**
- **Your blood sample will be destroyed after batch testing per standard laboratory protocols.**
- **See our website for more information - as well as translations available in Te Reo Māori, Simplified Chinese, Samoan and Tongan www.hepatitisfoundation.org**

Questions? Call us on 0800 33 22 10, or email us at hepteam@hfnz.nz