Preface

The discovery of hepatitis C virus (HCV) in 1989 was the culmination of years of scientific efforts to identify one of the most challenging causes of chronic liver disease, the so-called non-A, non-B hepatitis. Following this discovery, efforts in the next decades focused on accurately diagnosing HCV infection, quantifying the amount of virus in the blood, determining HCV genotypes, clarifying its natural history, identifying its economic burden, and developing curative treatment regimens. In this context, the liver disease related to HCV infection has always been at the centerpiece of these efforts. Nevertheless, there is increasing evidence that HCV infection is a systemic infection with important clinical, economic, and patient-reported outcomes. Furthermore, it is now fully recognized that the clinical consequences of HCV infection include both hepatic and extrahepatic manifestations. In this issue of Clinics in Liver Disease, the nonhepatic, the patient-centered, and the economic consequences of HCV infection are reviewed in detail by an international group of experts. The main purpose of this issue of Clinics in Liver Disease is to raise awareness about the multifaceted aspects of HCV infection leading to hepatic, extrahepatic, economic, and patient-reported outcomes (PROs).

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