Appendix 1. Information sheet on surveillance for acute hepatitis

Title: Surveillance for acute hepatitis

Person in charge of the surveillance activity in the centre: [Insert name, title and contact information]

Survey sponsor: [Insert name of the institution]

Description of the surveillance project
The health centre where you are getting care is taking part in a surveillance project that keeps track of acute hepatitis in [name of country]. This surveillance is based on (a) routine health care and (b) standard public health practice. It tries to find out the viruses involved in causing acute hepatitis and to identify the source of the disease. These results should help us prevent hepatitis and the Ministry of Health could better plan prevention work.

Procedures
A person will ask you some questions to understand how you got acute hepatitis and fill up a form with your answers. The form is one page long and may take about 5 minutes to fill up. We also propose to do a blood test that will find out the type of hepatitis you have (A, B, C or E). This information will be written in your medical record and kept securely as part of your confidential medical information. But if you agree, we would also use the data that we will collect in the surveillance system after we have removed all the information that identifies you. The information would then be used with a code, and without your name or date of birth.

Risks and discomforts
The risks are very small; however, taking blood may cause some discomfort, bleeding, bruising and/or swelling at the blood draw site. In rare cases, there is also a risk of fainting or an infection. It is also possible that talking about your personal situation in response to our questions may make you feel uncomfortable.

Getting the results of my tests
At [specify the time], you will be able to receive the results of your test. To obtain the results of your test, you will need to come back to the clinic and ask for your results. We will then give you all the information that you need on what to do next. These tests will also help us determine if we need to take active steps to protect someone else who has been exposed to you and who could get hepatitis from you. This could be done through vaccination, for instance.

What benefits are there for me in this?
The blood test results will tell us the type of acute hepatitis that you have. If you are found to be positive, we will help you protect others from the disease. The information from the questions will help us understand how you got it and how you can protect yourself better in the future. Acute hepatitis does not require treatment. You just need to abstain from taking medicines that are not strictly necessary.

Can I refuse the use of my data for surveillance?
You have the right to refuse the use of your data. If you refuse, all your data will stay in your confidential medical record and it will not be used for the project. This will not affect your care at the centre and you can still benefit from the results of the test.

Contact information
Feel free to contact [Title /Name / institution] if you have questions or concerns about this surveillance project.

Feel free to contact [Title /Name / institution] if you have questions or concerns about the ethical aspects of the surveillance project.