



## **HHS Viral Hepatitis Action Plan – 2015 Request for Information**

Hep B United (HBU) is a national coalition, co-led by the Hepatitis B Foundation (HBF) and the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO). HBU is currently comprised of 22 local hepatitis B coalitions as well as national organizations with a reach of over 4 million, working together across 14 states and 24 cities to address and eliminate hepatitis B, the leading cause of liver cancer and a major health disparity among the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. Local hepatitis B coalitions are multisectoral and include health departments, healthcare providers, academic institutions, student organizations, health clinics, and community-based organizations. Our collective goals are to raise the profile of hepatitis B and liver cancer as an urgent public health priority, increase hepatitis B testing and vaccination, and improve access to care and treatment for individuals living with hepatitis B. Hep B United convened as a forum for organizations working across the country to share information and resources, and discuss interventions to address hepatitis B. HBU also serves as a centralized resource, working to support and leverage the success of local community coalitions. In order to coordinate local hepatitis B activities, HBU coalition partners developed a [community strategic plan](#) (updated in 2014) in alignment with the Department of Health and Human Services National Viral Hepatitis Action Plan. The plan responded to four key strategic priority areas, and progress is discussed below:

### **Educating Providers and Communities to Reduce Health Disparities**

- In 2014-2015, HBU partners held over 13,000 educational sessions combined, including continuing medical education, one-on-one patient education, small group community sessions, and at community health fairs. Additionally, HBU hosts social media contests to raise awareness about hepatitis B focused around May National Hepatitis Awareness Month. In 2015, HBU launched a contest calling for individuals and organizations to use social media accounts to send photographs communicating awareness messages about hepatitis B.
- HBU partners with the CDC Division of Viral Hepatitis to develop [Know Hepatitis B](#), a national multi-lingual communication campaign promoting hepatitis B testing among AAPI communities. Campaign materials are available in English, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese among a number of other Asian languages, and are delivered in a variety of multi-media channels including television PSA's, radio PSA's, digital, and print. In 2014-2015, HBU partners disseminated over 5,000 campaign materials in community health centers and community-based organizations serving AAPI communities nationwide.

- In conjunction with the Know Hepatitis B campaign, HBU developed a multilingual [Speakers Bureau](#). Spokespersons engage with ethnic media and help to ensure effective outreach, dissemination and coverage of information about hepatitis B. HBU spokespersons play an essential role in informing the public about hepatitis B by sharing their knowledge and experiences with in-language media, leading to increases in hepatitis B awareness and opportunities for screening, vaccination, and linkage to care. The Speakers Bureau currently has 47 spokes persons representing 14 cities and 9 Asian languages.

### **Improving Testing and Linkage to Care to Prevent Hepatitis B-related Liver Disease and Cancer**

- HBU partners combined have screened 40,000 individuals nationwide including at federally qualified health centers and community events. As part of HBU's training and capacity building activities, HBU developed a mini grant program to increase hepatitis B education, testing, and linkage to care. In its first two years (2014-2015), HBU awarded over \$150,000 to nine local coalition partners in San Diego, CA, Akron, OH, Philadelphia PA, Dallas, TX, Washington, DC, Chicago, IL, Seattle, WA, and New York, NY. Grantees serving the Burmese, Chinese, Korean, Laotian, Vietnamese, Thai, Cambodian, Bhutanese, Nepali communities held 73 education and screening events and screened a total of 3,165 individuals, linking 100% of infected individuals to care.
- A 2014 HBU survey of partners showed that 70% used the CDC universal hepatitis B screening form and 100% either offer hepatitis B vaccines or refer susceptible individuals to vaccination programs. In addition, 100% of HBU partners surveyed conduct either formal or informal patient navigation/linkage to care services, including via community health worker programs, patient counseling, and health insurance assistance.

### **Eliminating Perinatal Hepatitis B Transmission**

- HBU partners educate women of reproductive age, conduct case management, collaborate with state perinatal hepatitis B coordinators, work with OB/GYN teams, and reach out to health care providers.
- Examples of HBU partner activities include: Hep B Free Los Angeles increased the percentage of infants (in LA county hospitals) that received the hepatitis B vaccine from 71% to 88%; Hep Free Hawaii issued a joint letter from the Hawaii Department of Health and the Hawaii Immunization Coalition to local hospitals encouraging them to join the Immunization Action Coalition's Hep B Birth Dose Honor Roll Campaign; and the New Jersey Hepatitis B Coalition partnered with the New Jersey Hospital Association HRET to develop educational events for OB providers to help with patient education regarding the hepatitis B birth dose.
- In May 2015, in observance of National Hepatitis Awareness Month, HBU partnered with the National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR), the National Task Force on Hepatitis B, and the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD), to host a [congressional briefing](#) on perinatal hepatitis B transmission. Speakers included leaders from the CDC Division of Viral Hepatitis and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.
- In conjunction with World Hepatitis Day in July 2015, HBU partnered with the NVHR and NASTAD and Congressman Mike Honda to co-host a [press conference](#) calling attention to the rates of perinatal HBV transmission in the U.S.

## **Strengthening Surveillance to Detect Viral Hepatitis Transmission and Disease**

- HBU partners are collecting data, advocating for increased national surveillance, using new electronic health records and platforms, collaborating with state/local health officials, and conducting community surveys. In 2014-2015, HBU partners have published 8 papers contributing to the body of knowledge on the impact of hepatitis B in high-risk communities across the country.
- In 2015, HBU awarded a mini grant to the Hepatitis B Initiative of Washington, DC, a local coalition partner, to further develop and expand their capacity to electronically capture hepatitis B education, screening, vaccination, and linkage to care data for each patient.

## **Developing Strategies to Foster Stakeholder Collaboration and Sustainable Programs**

HBU's training, technical assistance, and capacity building program's goals foster collaboration, develop and sustain hepatitis B programs, and leverage the success of hepatitis B coalitions nationwide. The program is multi-pronged, and includes online training, annual in-person coalition summits, a peer mentoring program, a mini grants program, and resource dissemination.

- In 2014 and 2015, HBU held 15 [webinars and video chats](#) ("Hep B Hangouts") with over 2,000 live attendees and YouTube views (archived sessions), on topics ranging from maintaining a hepatitis B coalition to best practices in community-based HBV screenings to collecting and using HBV data for research and policy.
- In 2014, HBU implemented a peer-to-peer mentoring program designed to foster coalition building to address hepatitis B, collaboration across the national coalition, and improve skills to conduct hepatitis B education, screening, vaccination, and linkage to care. This program matched experienced local hepatitis B coalitions with organizations seeking to develop hepatitis B coalitions in their community and/or expand and strengthen their coalitions. In 2014, two new hepatitis B coalitions grew as a result of the program, the New Jersey Hepatitis B Coalition and Hep B United Minnesota, mentored by HBU Philadelphia and the Hepatitis B Initiative of Washington DC, respectively. The new coalitions brought together local stakeholders, strengthened their networks and were able to successfully conduct hepatitis B education and screening events.
- In 2014 and 2015, HBU held two [annual summits](#), bringing together local HBU partner coalitions and working to address hepatitis B. The annual summits provide opportunity for coalition partners to review progress as a national entity, share best practices, to discuss strategies on educating, screening, and treating hepatitis B, as well as meet with federal partners and members of Congress.
- In addition to the ongoing expansion of the Know Hepatitis B campaign, HBU aims to serve as a depository for hepatitis B resources. HBU issues bi-monthly e-newsletters to over 600 subscribers, and has a revamped website with archived online trainings, policy initiatives, news, and educational materials. In addition, in 2014 and 2015, HBU developed new technical assistance tip sheets: 1) How to Engage Your Local Hepatitis Coordinator; 2) How to Engage Your Local HBU Coalition Partner; 3) Tips for Hosting a Successful HBV Screening Event; 3) Utilizing the Know Hepatitis B campaign materials.

**What is the most significant need your community/clients experience with respect to combating viral hepatitis?**

In a 2015 survey, HBU partners indicated their largest barriers to conducting hepatitis B screening and linkage to care were primarily rooted in lack of funding and organizational capacity. Partners also noted their most significant needs are increased resources for HBV vaccinations (i.e. HBV vaccine supply to local communities/health departments for adults), and resources/education materials for infected individuals who need follow-up care.