CDC Awards Over $1M Grant to a Hepatitis B Coalition

Hep B United works with the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations to promote hepatitis B education, testing and care.

August 19, 2021

Hep B United—a national coalition that promotes hepatitis B education, vaccination, testing and linkage to care—received a $1.375 million grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to bolster its work among communities disproportionately affected by the hepatitis B virus.

Those communities include Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, African immigrants and people who inject drugs, according to a press release from the Hepatitis B Foundation, which formed Hep B United with the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) specifically to reach these populations.

According to Hep's Basics on Hepatitis B Transmissions and Risks, one of the main risk factors for hep B is being born or traveling to "regions with a moderate to high prevalence of HBV infection: Asia, Africa, the Pacific Islands, the Middle East, Eastern Europe (except Hungary), Malta, Spain, and indigenous populations of Greenland, Caribbean, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, South America, Alaska Natives and indigenous populations in Northern Canada."

About 2 million people in the United States are living with chronic hep B, the leading cause of liver cancer, according to Hep B United.

We're thrilled to announce the CDC award of over 1 million dollars for our @HepBUnited program dedicated to eliminating #hepatitis B by improving testing & linkage to care for those disproportionately impacted by #hepB in the U.S. #HBV #hepatitisB

https://t.co/DF4jYwL95O pic.twitter.com/bp90SYKlvo

— Hep B Foundation (@HepBFoundation) August 16, 2021

“We are excited about the opportunity to increase our capacity to reach underserved populations nationwide while continuing to work alongside the community and our partners since we started in 2012,” said Jeffrey Caballero, MPH, cochair and cofounder of Hep B United and executive director of AAPCHO, noting that the new funding will help the organization expand its work not only with African immigrant and Pacific Islander communities but also with federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) that serve minorities.

“One of our key new initiatives,” he said, “will be growing a Hepatitis B Community Health Center Learning Collaborative to foster partnerships with a new cohort of FQHCs to implement hepatitis B education, screening and linkage to care programs.”

Hep B United is well-positioned to reach minority populations. It comprises 50 national organizations and local community coalitions in 22 states, 30 cities and Washington, DC, according to the press release.

It’s National Immunization Awareness Month #DidYouKnow that only 25% of adults are fully vaccinated against #HepatitisB ? ???? See where you can get vaccinated on our website! Link is in our bio ????????

#takeTHAThepatitis #HepFree2030 #IVax2Protect pic.twitter.com/yigUO9q1UR

— Hep Free Hawaii (@HepFreeHawaii) August 18, 2021

Hepatitis is inflammation of the liver, the organ that acts as the body's filter. Hepatitis has many causes, including viruses (hep A, B and C), excess fat and chemicals such as alcohol. Hepatitis B virus (HBV) can cause serious liver damage. There is no cure for hep B, though treatments and vaccines are effective.

Hep's Basics section on hep B explains more about the virus:

> Hepatitis B is highly contagious and may be present in blood and body fluids, including semen and vaginal secretions. The saliva of people with hep B may contain evidence of the virus but in such small concentrations that kissing does not spread HBV. Here are the most common ways hepatitis B is transmitted:

- Sex with an infected partner
- Acquired at birth from an infected mother
- Sharing injection drug equipment (including needles, syringes, cookers, drug-preparation equipment)
- Contact with blood or open sores of an infected person
- Needlestick or other skin puncture
- Sharing items such as glucose monitors, razors or toothbrushes with an infected person.

> Hepatitis B may also be spread through non-injection drugs (e.g., cocaine straws and crack pipes) as a result of exposure to blood. An unsterilized instrument may transmit HBV during acupuncture, tattooing and body piercing. A human bite may spread hepatitis B.
>
> Hep B is not spread through food or water, sharing eating utensils, breastfeeding, hugging, kissing, hand holding, coughing or sneezing.
>
> HBV may live outside the body for at least seven days and still be potentially infectious.

Did you know that hepatitis B and C kill more people each year than HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis? To learn more about this viral hepatitis and to read a collection of related articles, click #Hepatitis B.

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http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/cdc-awards-1m-grant-hepatitis-b-coalition