Hepatitis Awareness Month: Data Are People

May 18, 2018 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

"Statistics are human beings with the tears wiped off." ~Paul Brodeur, Outrageous Misconduct

In April, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released its latest surveillance data on viral hepatitis in the United States. The data summarizes estimated trends during 2001-2016 and reported infections of hepatitis A, B and C in 2016. Here is what the CDC found:

Hepatitis A: From 2015- 2016, the reported cases of hepatitis A increased by 44 percent. In 2016, the estimated number of new hep A infections was 4,000.

Hepatitis B: An estimated 20,900 new hepatitis B infections were reported in 2016. Nearly half of the chronic hep B infections were among Asian/Pacific Islanders.

Hepatitis C: The number of reported cases of hepatitis C increased nearly 22 percent from 2015 to 2016. There were an estimated 41,200 new hep C infections reported in 2016.

The most discouraging report is the mortality data from 2016. The following people are dying at a disproportionately high rate:

- People aged >55 years for hepatitis A.
- People aged >55 years of age and Asians/Pacific Islanders for hepatitis B.
- People aged 55–64 years and American Indians/Alaska Native for hepatitis C.

These numbers are people, humans whose lives can be saved with prevention, access to care, and treatment. Let's use Hepatitis Awareness Month to increase awareness, educate, and increase our efforts to eliminate viral hepatitis.

Tweet @hepatitismag and let us know what you are doing to raise awareness during Hepatitis Awareness Month.

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