Urgent Hepatitis Action Alert

November 18, 2015 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

I have so much to tell readers about the Liver Meeting, but this hepatitis action alert from the National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVRH) is critical. **Please call now**. I will post info about the liver meeting in the future, so stay tuned.(And yes, that is me and extraordinary advocate Daniel Berner on a windy San Francisco day, trying to raise awareness)
URGENT - Raise Your Voice, Raise Federal Hep Funding!
Congress will be making its federal funding decisions this week - now is the time to make as many phone calls as possible to your Representatives. Let them know how important these issues are to you, your family, and your community, and ask for critically-needed increased funding for the Division of Viral Hepatitis at CDC!
Below you'll find information on how to reach your House Rep's and two Senators' offices and a sample script to get you started, but you should definitely personalize your message if you are comfortable doing so. If you still have questions, contact Christine Rodriguez at crodriguez@nvhr.org.

DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF YOUR VOICE! Even a handful of calls can make the difference between a Member fighting for us - whether publicly or behind the scenes - or not. Please share this widely, and encourage others in your networks to do the same.
Let's keep those phones ringing! It is CRITICAL to make our needs heard, because while every program in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill serve to improve American lives in myriad ways, it is much easier to ignore those who are not speaking up. Our epidemics may be silent, but we can't be!

STEP 1: If you don't already know, first find out who your House Representative and Senators are. Search for them on this website -- https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members/map -- all you need to know is your address.
STEP 2: Call the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121, and ask to be connected to the Member's office.
STEP 3: When connected, ask to speak to the staffer who handles Health or Appropriations. If neither are available, don't worry! Just leave your message on their voicemail or with whoever answers the phone - your message will still get to the right person.
STEP 4: Repeat until you reach all 3 offices!

Sample Script:
Hi, my name is _____ and I'm calling from _____, may I please speak to the person who handles Appropriations or Health issues for the Congress(wo)man (or Senator)?

(If connected, reintroduce yourself)

I am calling today to ask Congress(wo)man/Senator _____ to support increased funding for the Division of Viral Hepatitis at CDC. This money is critically important in order to combat the hepatitis B and hepatitis C epidemics in the United States, including prevention, surveillance, and testing services. Approximately 6 million Americans are living with hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or both, up to 75% do not know their status, and viral hepatitis is the leading cause of liver cancer in the US today. $31 million is simply not enough to address our many challenges.

(Include a personal story, if you'd like)

I hope the Congress(wo)man/Senator will support as high a funding level as possible, and ideally the President's request of $62.8 million. I would appreciate if the Congress(wo)man/Senator could get back to me about this issue. (Give your preferred contact info) If Congress(wo)man/Senator _____ has any questions, please contact me.

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