Meeting Date: Wednesday, May 6, 2015; 5:30pm – 7pm
Meeting Location: Philadelphia Department of Public Health, 500 S. Broad St
Organizations in Attendance: AbbVie, ACT UP, Do 1 Thing, Drexel School of Medicine, Drexel School of Public Health, Health Federation, Hep B Foundation/Hep B United, HepTREC/University of the Sciences, Jefferson, Kensington Hospital, Merck, National Nursing Centers Consortium, OraSure, Partnership Clinic, Penn Medicine, Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health/Office of Addiction Services, Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Philadelphia Health Corps, Presbyterian Medical Center, Prevention Point Philadelphia, SWOP, Target Pharmacy, Temple University

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

33 people attended our May meeting, representing over 23 organizations!

To start the meeting, Alex reminded participants that phillyhepatitis.com is LIVE and showed screen shots from the website. Bookmark this site to find basic hepatitis information, links to resources, or an online resource guide to find local hepatitis services! Just to make sure you don’t forget it…

www.phillyhepatitis.com
Philadelphia’s Online Hepatitis Resource!

ADVOCACY UPDATE: HEP ON THE HILL (MARCH)

Eleven HepCAP and Hep B United members travelled to Washington DC for advocacy training and legislative visits on March 9-10. This event was sponsored by the National Viral Hepatitis roundtable (NVHR) and National Association for State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD). We had the biggest delegation of any state! This event provided a great opportunity to learn how to do legislative visits, practice developing and presenting a concise message, and network with hepatitis advocates from across the country. Our main asks for legislative offices were:

- Sign House/Senate letter in support of President’s proposed FY2016 budget to increase funding at the CDC’s Division of Viral Hepatitis to $62.8 million, and include request in the Member appropriations submissions.
- Support repeal of the federal funding ban on syringe services programs.
- Join the Congressional Hepatitis Caucus.

We visited six legislative offices:

- **House of Representatives:** Michael Fitzpatrick (R-PA8), Bob Brady (D-PA1), Chaka Fattah (D-PA2), Bill Shuster (R-PA9)
- **Senate:** Bob Casey (D), Pat Toomey (R)

The next HepCAP meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 3rd from 5:30pm-7pm at PDPH (500 S. Broad St)
All of our visits were with legislative staffers, not the actual Congressmen. Some of the offices had been visited by hepatitis advocates before or had some knowledge/awareness of hepatitis B and C; other staffers knew very little and asked many questions to get up to speed on the issue. One takeaway for the HepCAP team is that legislators need to learn more about hepatitis if we want them to advocate for us – before they vote for more money, they need to understand what hepatitis is, why it is an urgent health issue, and understand why it needs more funding!

Talking points and other Hep on the Hill materials will be posted with Meeting Highlights on the HepCAP website.

REPORT BACK: PA HEPATITIS C SUMMIT

On May 1st, the Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinators for Philadelphia (Alex Shirreffs) and Pennsylvania (formerly Sameh Boktor, now Charlie Howsare) hosted a Leadership Summit on Hepatitis C Policy. PA was one of three states selected by CDC to host a summit, along with Florida and Massachusetts; this event was sponsored by the CDC Foundation.

There were 91 participants at the summit, including state officials, clinicians, city and county officials, community based organizations, federal agency leadership, and national advocacy organizations. We have a CURE for hepatitis C and this summit intended to start the conversation about how we end hepatitis C in Pennsylvania. After opening presentations by the PA Physician General, CDC, and HHS, panel discussions were used to engage panelists and the audience in conversations about points along the hepatitis C care cascade, including surveillance, testing and linkage, and treatment access.

Alex noted that the summit had the feel of a HepCAP meeting – participants were assigned seating to encourage conversations between stakeholders with similar interests or areas of focus; space was given during breaks and lunch for people to converse and network; and participants were encouraged to share their insight during the panel discussions. It’s in part through the great work HepCAP has been doing that CDC and other national partners have their eye on what is happening in Pennsylvania!

Highlights for HepCAP members who attended included:

- A powerful panel on access to hepatitis C treatment which featured Robert Greenwald, a lawyer from Harvard who is looking at access to hep C treatment across the US, four clinicians, and Dr. David Kelley, the Chief Medical Officer for the PA Dept of Human Services (which oversees Medicaid). Everyone delivered very passionate messages about treatment access and Dr. Kelley said that he is limited by his budget but he wants to work together to see everyone in PA who has hepatitis C get access to treatment.
  - A webinar on Medicaid access to hepatitis C treatment in the US featuring Robert Greenwald is archived here: [https://youtu.be/pl4YVJ95liyo](https://youtu.be/pl4YVJ95liyo)

- There was a great energy throughout the day. Between sessions there were lively conversations and lots of networking happening. Debra was impressed to see high level state officials so engaged – for example, even though the Chief Medical Officer for the Department of Corrections did not make comments during the panels, he was taking a lot of notes and talked with people at his table.

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• This was the first time people from across the state had the chance to gather together to discuss hepatitis C. Some participants who work in more rural areas of the state appreciated the chance to see that they were not alone in feeling frustrated by the lack of resources available to help their hepatitis C patients. The panelists were all very excited to have the chance to share their work and experiences.

As next steps, Health Federation is transcribing the event recording and Gili Ronen will help prepare a summit report. A survey has been sent to participants to gather additional feedback to help prioritize which next steps Pennsylvania stakeholders should focus on.

Agenda, slides and other summit materials are available on the HepCAP website:
• http://www.hepcap.org/pa-hepatitis-summit/

HEP C TREATMENT ACCESS

The conversation about access to hepatitis C treatment continues! In addition to attending the PA Hepatitis C Summit, Stacey Trooskin has had regular contact with key decision makers from the PA Department of Human Services (DHS). Stacey has offered herself to DHS as a resource, someone who can put hepatitis C treatment policies into context since decision makers at the state or insurance companies are not usually hepatitis C experts and so do not always understand how policies play out in clinical practices. Because Stacey has been such a great link between patients/clinicians and DHS, she was asked to serve as a context expert at the May 20th Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee meeting in Mechanicsburg, PA. The P&T committee makes decisions about what drugs to put on the state Medicaid formulary and meets twice a year to pass these decisions. There is an opportunity for stakeholders to present testimony so HepCAP members interested in coming to Mechanicsburg on May 20th can contact Alex or Stacey!

Based on the feedback DHS has heard from Stacey and other providers, Pennsylvania may see changes to treatment restrictions soon as well as a more standardized treatment approval process.

HepCAP is also planning to write a letter to the Secretary of Health and the Governor to express concerns about access to hepatitis C treatment – this is a letter HepCAP partners will be asked to sign on to so stay tuned!

For more information on the role that P&T committees play in making decisions about treatment access, check out an archive of this webinar, Pricing of Drugs and Formulary Placement: Making Sense of Hepatitis C Treatment:
• https://www.iasusa.org/content/pricing-of-drugs-and-formulary-placement-webinar-2015

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HEPATITIS AWARENESS MONTH

May is Hepatitis Awareness Month! A few plans are in the works:

- **Check out CDC’s tools.** CDC has a number of tools – web buttons, PSAs, posters, hashtags – that you can use to promote hepatitis awareness during May. Check them out at: [http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HepAwarenessMonth.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/HepAwarenessMonth.htm)

- **O’Liver Says.** PDPH created a sign to use to raise awareness on social media. It will be included with HepCAP highlights – write a message from O’Liver, take a pic, and post online using the hashtags #OliverSays and #hepaware!

- **Tues, May 19th – Hepatitis Testing Day.** Amy Jessop from HepTREC said she planned to do a testing event targeting Baby Boomers at the University of the Sciences.

- **Fri, May 22nd – P-HOP Health Fair.** The Philadelphia Hepatitis Outreach Project is hosting their 7th Annual Community Health Fair from 11am-3pm on Friday, May 22nd at the 8th and Diamond playground in North Philly.

- **Thurs, June 4th – City Council Briefing on Hepatitis.** HepCAP and Hep B United are teaming up again build awareness about hepatitis at City Council. Join us at City Hall on June 4th from 2-3:30pm to accept a resolution and share information about hepatitis with City Council staff! A flyer for this event is included with meeting highlights.

UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **AIDS Education Month:** This year, the Prison Healthcare & Reentry Summit, HIV Prevention & Outreach Summit, and Faith Leaders and Community Summit have been combined into one super event – the **End AIDS 2015 Summit: One Day, Three Events** - to be held at the Convention Center on **Monday, June 8th from 8am-6pm**! There will be a hepatitis panel and plenty more panels on HIV, public health, and incarceration throughout the day! Register for this and other AEM events here:
  - [http://www.aidseducationmonth.org/](http://www.aidseducationmonth.org/)

- Anna Quinn from Jefferson is sitting on a committee for the **Public Health Film Festival during APHA**. Got a video you’d like to submit to be screened at this event? Contact Anna at [Anna.Quinn@jefferson.edu](mailto:Anna.Quinn@jefferson.edu)

- **Upcoming HepCAP Meetings!** HepCAP meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every other months at 5:30pm at 500 S. Broad Street:
  - 2015 Meetings: June 3rd, Aug 5th, Oct 7th, Dec 2nd

*Please contact Alex Shirreffs at 215-685-6462 or alexandra.shirreffs@phila.gov if you have edits to these notes or feedback about HepCAP.*