MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, August 6th, 2014; 5:30pm – 7pm
MEETING LOCATION: Philadelphia Department of Public Health, 500 S. Broad St

ORGANIZATIONS IN ATTENDANCE: AbbVie, Access Matters, ACT UP, AIDS Care Group, American Liver Foundation, Burman’s Specialty Pharmacy, C A Difference, Do One Thing, Drexel School of Medicine, Drexel School of Public Health, Frontier Nursing, Gilead, Health Federation, Hep B United, HepTREC, Janssen, Jefferson University, Kirkbride Center, Penn Medicine, Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Philadelphia Student Harm Reduction Coalition, Presbyterian Medical Center, Prevention Point Philadelphia, University of Sciences Philadelphia, US Health and Human Services

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Forty-two people representing 25 agencies attended our August HepCAP meeting!

HEPCAP RECAP: WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

July 28th was World Hepatitis Day. To generate awareness, HepCAP members made an awesome video, attended national meetings, held events, and shared their stories. Thank you to all the HepCAP members who came out to attend or volunteer at May’s events – we appreciate your hard work and support!

- **HepFree Music Video.** You’ve probably found yourself humming the super catchy song, “Happy,” by Pharrell. Well, the awesome C A Difference team at Drexel used the melody to create, “HepFree” – a song and video to raise awareness about hepatitis! The video already has 1,790 views – more views than last year’s Wobble dance flash mob video (which has an impressive 1,299 views)! A link to the video was shared by HepCAP partners locally and globally – Hep B Foundation, the Philadelphia Dept of Public Health, CDC, NVHR, Hep C Advocate, the American Association for the Study of Liver Disease, the World Hepatitis Alliance and others all helped promote it through social media. Thanks to Allison Brodsky who spearheaded the filming (and busted some dance moves in the O’Liver costume) for the cause! Check out the video and get HepFree stuck in your head!

- **Hep C Testing Events.** C A Difference and its partners at the Philadelphia Hepatitis Outreach Project and BEBASHI hosted testing events at Partnership Clinic and BEBASHI’s office. Thanks for opening up your testing programs to commemorate World Hep Day!

- **Hep C Story on WHYY Radio.** At the meeting, we played an excellent 10-minute story on hepatitis C that was featured on WHYY’s The Pulse. The piece, produced by Elana Gordon, featured HepCAP members Paul Yabor and Dr. Stacey Trooskin. Thank you both for sharing your experiences and opinions – you helped make it an excellent story!

The next HepCAP meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1st from 5:30pm-7pm at PDPH (500 S. Broad St)
The next HepCAP meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1st
from 5:30pm-7pm at PDPH (500 S. Broad St)


**White House Observance.** Three HepCAP partners – Chari Cohen (Hep B Fdn/Hep B United), Amy Jessop (HepTREC), and Stacey Trooskin (Drexel) – were invited to attend a World Hepatitis Day event at the White House! Read HHS’ recap, watch video from the event and pretend you were there with Chari, Amy, Stacey and leaders from across the nation!

- Video: [http://youtu.be/JZ-y5cBh2MQ](http://youtu.be/JZ-y5cBh2MQ)

**National Summit on Hepatitis C Treatment and Cure.** This event, held in mid-June and sponsored by the Viral Hepatitis Action Coalition, brought together national stakeholders at CDC to discuss best practices and challenges of improving the hepatitis C care cascade – from testing through linkage to treatment and a cure. Alex Shirreffs was invited to attend. Recapping the event, she noted that some of the major points to come out of it were:

- We need to use data to advocate for changes – surveillance, cost-effectiveness data, evaluation of programs and impact of legislation, etc. But also need to remember to show the human side of hepatitis C – personal stories also have huge impact.

- “We need comprehensive services, not a la carte models.” This is a collaborative effort out outreach to educate the public and providers about testing and linkage to care – insurance companies can send reminder letters to tell patients to be tested; public health departments can build capacity in community health settings; federal agencies can help pass performance measures to track progress of testing and linkage at federally funded programs; hospital systems can use EHR to promote testing or use provider dashboards for quality improvement; etc… There are many models out there to borrow/learn from!

- The cost of the treatment remains a huge barrier to getting more people cured. Matt Salvo, Director of the National Association of Medicaid Directors, noted that even if the cost of Sovaldi was lowered to $700 a pill, it would still be too much for state Medicaid programs to cover widely.

- We still have our work cut out for us on the advocacy side to push for equal access to treatment, more funding for community based programs, and for resources to help prevent new cases (which would include lifting the ban on use of federal funding to support syringe exchange and other practices that promote the health of drug users).

- View presentations:

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL!**

HepCAP members were treated to ice cream and spent time networking, catching up, and getting to know each other better!
POLICY UPDATES

Legislators locally and nationally are in summer break mode. This means that several pieces of legislation will be stalled for the next few months until legislators reconvene in the fall. Legislation and policies to keep our eyes on include:

- **Insurance company policies on new HCV meds.** Many clinicians who are treating hepatitis C report increasing challenges getting patients approved for the Simeprevir/Sofosbuvir treatment combo through public insurance plans. Barriers that are being presented by insurers include a requirement that patients are six months clean from drugs, submit to urine testing, and monthly adherence letters. While clinicians are managing to appeal and get access for some patients, the amount of required paperwork is becoming increasingly burdensome, taking up more of the clinicians’ time. HepCAP clinical partners discussed possible action steps that could be taken to engage insurance companies in a conversation about treatment coverage and/or raise awareness about how difficult it is becoming for patients to access a cure for their hep C infection.

- **Good Samaritan/Naloxone Bill (PA).** An amended version of Senate Bill 1164 would expand the use of Naloxone in PA to reverse overdoses.
  - Stay updated on action steps by following the PA Overdose Prevention Action Network on Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/PAODAction](https://www.facebook.com/PAODAction)
  - Overdose prevention makes local news:
    - *Newsworks:*
    - *Inquirer:*

- **Hep C Testing Bills:**
  - **US Senate Bill 2538:** The Viral Hepatitis Testing Act of 2014 would authorize $80 million over three years for a comprehensive national system – an enhancement and strengthening of existing public health programs – for surveillance, education, testing, and linkage to care for HBV and HCV, to prevent transmission, morbidity, and mortality from viral hepatitis-related chronic liver disease and liver cancer.
    - [http://nvhr.org/content/nvhr-fact-sheet-viral-hepatitis-testing-act-2014-s-2538](http://nvhr.org/content/nvhr-fact-sheet-viral-hepatitis-testing-act-2014-s-2538)

*The next HepCAP meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1st from 5:30pm-7pm at PDPH (500 S. Broad St)*)
The next HepCAP meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1st from 5:30pm-7pm at PDPH (500 S. Broad St)

Pennsylvania House Bill 2003: - An Act providing for hepatitis C testing and treatment and for duties of the Department of Health - has moved into the PA Senate.

COMING SOON: HEPCAP MEMBER SURVEY

Alex distributed a draft HepCAP member survey and collected some feedback from people at the meeting. Keep a lookout for this survey in your inbox this fall! Information collected through the survey will be used to help plan HepCAP activities in 2015.

UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Several HepCAP members made announcements for the group:

- New Hep B United Coordinator. Daniel Chen, who many of you may have known from his superhero shirt and cape, has gone on to a doctoral program at George Washington University in DC. Fortunately, there’s a great new coordinator taking over - welcome Pavitri Dwivedi! Meet Pavitri and check out a hepatitis B documentary at their community lunch on September 19th!
  
  o Hep B United Lunch – Friday, 9/19; 12-1:30pm at Imperial Inn (146 N 10th St)
  o RSVP to Pavitri.dwivedi@hepb.org

- Jefferson Liver Disease Symposium. This symposium will address both the common, as well as critical, liver diseases feature presenting in the office of the gastrointestinal specialist, primary care practitioner, internist, and mid-level practitioner. Experts in the fields of Hepatology, Gastroenterology, Surgery, Medical Oncology, and Radiology will provide a multi-disciplinary approach to the treatment and management of patients.
  
  o Educational sessions during the conference will include:
    ▪ Updates in Management of Viral Hepatitis B and C and Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD),
    ▪ Diagnosis and Multi-disciplinary Treatment of Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC)
    ▪ Complications of Cirrhosis.

  o Saturday, October 11th at the Doubltree Hilton
  o Flyer/Agenda/Registration: [http://jeffline.jefferson.edu/jeffcme/GICME/events.cfm](http://jeffline.jefferson.edu/jeffcme/GICME/events.cfm)

- Philadelphia Student Harm Reduction Coalition. Thanks to some Penn Nursing students, Philly finally has a student-run harm reduction group! PSHRC’s mission is to build a network of students, professionals, and allies interested in and committed to bringing the principles of harm reduction to their respective practices in Philadelphia and beyond. This is a great way for local students with an interest in health disparities, vulnerable populations, social justice, and harm reduction to get together, network, and learn about local harm reduction organizations with Project SAFE and Prevention Point.
  
  o Contact: PhillySHRC@gmail.com or [https://www.facebook.com/PhilaSHRC](https://www.facebook.com/PhilaSHRC)

The next HepCAP meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 1st from 5:30pm-7pm at PDPH (500 S. Broad St)
• **American Liver Foundation Fall Events.** The American Liver Foundation announced several upcoming events. More details about these events can be found online at http://www.liverfoundation.org/chapters/midatlantic/events/
  
  o **Liver Life Walk 2014**
    - 8:00am, September 27th, 2014 at Lincoln Financial Field
    - Join us for our annual Liver Life Walk in Philadelphia! Pound the pavement to help ALF put an end to Liver Disease.
  
  o **8th Annual Hepatology and Liver Transplantation Conference**
    - 7:30am, November 14th, 2014; Location TBA
    - The Purpose of the Hepatology and Liver Transplantation Conference is to provide education on hepatology and transplant issues and topics.
  
  o **Liver Life Challenge: Gore-Tex Philadelphia Marathon**
    - 7:00am, November 23rd, 2014
    - Join the American Liver Foundation, Mid-Atlantic Division in raising awareness for Liver Disease by running or walking the Gore Tex Philadelphia Half or Full Marathon.
  
**Upcoming HepCAP Meetings!** HepCAP meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every other months at 5:30pm at 500 S. Broad Street):
  
  • **2014 Meetings:** Dec 3rd
  • **2015 Meetings:** Feb 4th, Apr 1st, Jun 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.*