

## WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

World Hepatitis Day will be on May 19, 2009. Look for details to come about education and awareness events along with collaborating with CPAG, and the other organizations for the three Pride Fests in June.

If you like meeting people, organizing, planning, being creative, then we are looking for you. We will be needing volunteers to help out with the various events to make them all that more successful. We can not do it without you, the volunteer, helping.

If you wish to help, please send your name and contact information via:

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## Did You Know?

One in 12 people worldwide are living with either chronic hepatitis B or hepatitis C. If just a small proportion of this total work together, we can make a real difference and help ensure that the World Health Assembly recognizes viral hepatitis as the public health priority it must be.

The New Mexico Hepatitis C Alliance will be doing its part in helping to bring awareness and education to New Mexico. We have been advocating in both Santa Fe and in Washington, DC to help increase funding and programs that will help out with testing, treatment, and surveillance of viral hepatitis.

We are also collaborating with many other organizations and agencies to work for better access for those affected by hepatitis C and other STD's. Please look at the list those that we collaborate with on the bottom of page two.

## One in 12 brings us 12 Questions to Ask

from HCV Advocate Website

Here are some questions that the World Hepatitis Day committee is asking of the World governments.

1. Public Recognition of chronic viral hepatitis as an urgent public health issue.
2. The appointment of an individual to lead government strategy nationally.
3. The development of a patient pathway for screening, diagnosis, referral, and treatment.
4. Clear, quantifiable targets for reducing incidence and prevalence.
5. Clear, quantifiable targets for reducing mortality.
6. Clear, quantifiable targets for screening.
7. Effective surveillance and publication of national incidence and prevalence statistics.
8. Commitment to examine cases of best practices internationally.
9. Commitment to work with patient groups in policy design and implementation.
10. Provision of free and anonymous (or confidential) testing.
11. A public awareness campaign that alerts people to the issue and is committed to reducing stigma.
12. Commitment to an ongoing national vaccination program.



NEW MEXICO  
**HEPATITIS C**  
ALLIANCE

### OUR MISSION:

To live in a world free of hepatitis C virus (HCV)

### OUR VISION:

To promote collaboration among individual, community, state and national policymakers to ensure universal education and access to prevent, manage & cure HCV infection and support all affected by hepatitis C

## Here Are Some Interesting Facts:

Department of Viral Hepatitis only receives \$18.3 million for viral hepatitis prevention and control. \$5.2 million of this funding funds the Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator position in 49 states, five cities, and the District of Columbia. With an average funding award of \$90,000, this is only enough for the position and not for the provision of core prevention services. We believe a \$31.7 million increase in funding is an important first step in restoring resources to address critical hepatitis prevention services, such as hepatitis B and C counseling, testing, and referral, in addition to delivering the hepatitis A and B vaccine, and establishing a surveillance system of chronic B and C. We want to remind our leaders that treating viral hepatitis outbreaks as sentinel events rather than systematically addressing the hepatitis B and C epidemics with over 6 million Americans infected is not cost-effective prevention.

- Approximately 6.25 million Americans are infected with hepatitis B and C.
- Approximately 3.2 million Americans are living with chronic hepatitis C, and the CDC estimates that approximately 19,000 new infections occurred in 2006.
- Chronic hepatitis B and C are the leading causes of liver cancer, now among the top 10 killers of Americans over the age of 25 years, and now one of the leading killers of Americans living with HIV/AIDS.
- Overall, the rate for hepatitis C-related deaths in the U.S. is expected to triple by 2019.
- Up to 15 percent of HIV positive individuals are co-infected with the hepatitis B virus and up to 30 percent are co-infected with the hepatitis C virus.
- Complications resulting from hepatitis C are a leading cause of non-AIDS-related death for people with HIV
- Approximately half of persons with chronic HBV are Asian Americans. HBV is most prevalent among immigrants from HBV-endemic countries (Asia and sub-Saharan Africa) who were infected at birth or childhood. Of the 24,000 HBV-infected women who give birth every year, half are Asian Americans.
- CDC considers HIV positive MSM to be an emerging risk population for hepatitis C

Source: HCV Advocate April 1, 2009

## NMHCA Actions for 2009

### Advocacy

**THREE** actions in New Mexico supporting Project ECHO, Drug Policy Alliance, and Medical Cannabis.

**NINE** actions on the national level that mostly dealt with making sure that funding is there for programs. We signed onto the "First 100 Days Document, a letter to President Obama regarding Rep. Ramstad, monitoring the Colorado Syringe Exchange debate, signed onto the Viral Hepatitis in Senate Economic Stimulus Bill, signed onto the Wellness and Prevention stimulus letter, signed onto the Viral Hepatitis Organization letter, signed onto a letter to President Obama on the Syringe Exchange & Federal Funding Ban, monitored the Nelson-Collins amendment in the Senate, and monitored the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund.

### Education and Awareness Programs

Health fairs we presented at include the KOB News 4 Health Fair, National Black AIDS Awareness Day (Two-Seven) event, New Mexico AIDS Services Women's Health Project "National Women and Girls' HIV Awareness Day" (Healthy and Beautiful: A Day of Pampering and Education For Women), the 9<sup>th</sup> Circle of Harmony Conference, the Spring Pan event, the Gathering of Nations event, and the three LGBT PrideFests in New Mexico.

### New Task Force is Formed

There has been a new task force formed to work with viral hepatitis within the HIV/AIDS community in New Mexico. This is a major collaboration between NMHCA and the New Mexico HIV Community Planning and Action Group (CPAG). We will be able to address the areas that need improvement regarding testing, treatment, surveillance, and outreach for both the HIV/AIDS and the co-infected community members.

NMHCA works in collaboration with National Viral Hepatitis Round Table, National Hepatitis C Advocacy Council, Hepatitis C Advocates United, Project ECHO, NMDOH, NM HIV Community Planning and Action Group, NM Governors AIDS Commission, Drug Policy Alliance, American Liver Foundation, NM AIDS Services, First Nations, Santa Fe Mountain Center, Navajo AIDS Network, Southwest Care, AmeriCorps, Rotary Club, Bosco's Buddies, Organ Transplant Awareness Program

*Wiping Out Hep C in New Mexico* is published quarterly by the New Mexico Hepatitis C alliance, Inc. The newsletter is also accessible on our website, [www.nmhhepcalliance.org](http://www.nmhhepcalliance.org). The Alliance is organized and incorporated under the laws of the State of New Mexico as a non-profit corporation for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, without profit to any officer or director. Yolanda Herrera, President; Benjamin Corsey III, Vice-President; R. Holly Taylor, Treasurer; Stephani Patten, Secretary; Saroj Baxter; Karen Gonzales; Lucy Yates; Teresa Williams; Rachel Pacheco; and Terry Holmes. To contribute an article or a letter to the editor, please email us at [info@nmhhepcalliance.org](mailto:info@nmhhepcalliance.org) or send to NMHCA, P.O. Box 6601, Albuquerque, NM 87197.