

Breaking the Stigmas of Viral Hepatitis in the Underserved Communities of Minnesota

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BACKGROUND

HBI-Minnesota (HBI-MN) is a non-profit organization that was started in October 2015 to provide FREE hepatitis B and C testing, education and linkage to care for the underserved communities of Minnesota.

Services:

- Work with community leaders to ensure resources are culturally and linguistically appropriate
- Provide direct services in easily accessible places such as places of worship, markets, offices and at special events
- Link those who test positive for hepatitis B and/or C to care and provide referrals for FREE hepatitis B vaccines

METHODS

HBI-MN partnered with the Hmong Health Care Professionals Coalition in November 2015 to initiate viral hepatitis outreach and testing for the Hmong community.

Additional partners: healthcare providers, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, government agencies and ethnic media (3HmongTV, HmongTVNetwork, Hmong Times, Hmong Today and Hmong-FM Radio).

Testing was provided and surveys were administered to participants to collect their knowledge, attitudes and behavior regarding viral hepatitis.

RESULTS

Since February 2016, HBI-MN has screened 881 individuals for hepatitis B (HBV) and 1289 individuals for hepatitis C (HCV).

HBV and HCV Statistics

- 4% HBV+
- 2% HCV+
- 43% need HBV vaccinations

Majority Demographics

- Health Insurance: *Yes*
- Primary Care Provider: *Yes*
- Tested for HBV/HCV in past: *No*
- Vaccinated for HBV: *Yes*
- Family history of HBV/HCV/liver cancer: *Don't Know*
- Recruited: *referrals and walk-ins*

Liver booklets and models are great ways to illustrate what happens to the liver if hepatitis B and/or C is not treated!



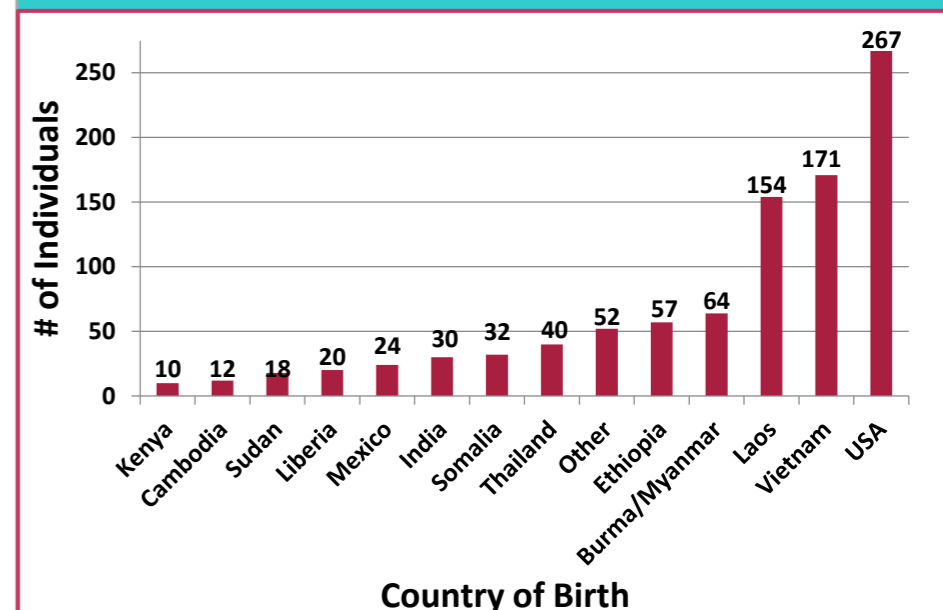
Hmong Health Care Professionals Coalition

Viral Hepatitis Education with the Minnesota Department of Health and Vietnamese Social Services



Karen and Burmese Hep B & C Education

Number of Individuals Screened listed by Country of Birth



**Note: survey is optional therefore not all who tested were included in the analysis*

CONCLUSIONS

- Collaborating with community leaders and providing direct services in easily accessible locations is the best way to reach the underserved populations.
- Working with ethnic media spreads awareness and makes viral hepatitis and liver cancer seem less stigmatized.
- Trust is key when it comes to working with any community.
 - Important to build those relationships first
 - Focus on just one community
 - Word of mouth is the best form of advertisement

REFERENCES

All data above were obtained from HBI-MN's screenings from February 2016 to August 2017.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

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