CHIPO: Coalition Against Hepatitis
for People of African Origin
Coalition Call Minutes
July 14th, 2025
3:00pm-4:00pm EDT
Zoom Link
Phone: +1 646 558 8656

Attendees: Please let me know if I missed you, misspelled your name, or got only your partial information!

3:00 pm: Welcome and Introductions

Beatrice Zovich (Hep B Foundation), Shreya Koirala (Hep B Foundation), Chari Cohen (Hep B Foundation), Bilan Hussein (Columbus DOH), Amy Harcar (Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services, Columbus), Alma Chavez (Hep Free NYC), Meg Chappell (Hep Free NYC), Reed Vreeland (NYC DOH), Elizabeth Koch (Columbus DOH), ebtouray (Columbus DOH), Brian T. Lee (Hoag Liver Program, Newport Beach, CA)

3:05 pm: Announcements:

- The recording of the recent B Informed Liver Cancer Conference held in June, *Working Together to Tell a New Story,* is now available and can be found here. Additionally, an infographic outlining key findings from the meeting can be found here.
- We are hosting a Liver Cancer Connect webinar on Thursday July 17th at 3pm Eastern, entitled *Bridging the Gap between Liver Cancer Research & Impacted Communities.* Register here.
- The 2025 Hep B Community Research Showcase is now open! This initiative aims to bridge the divide between scientists and the community of people living with and affected by hepatitis B. Individuals showcasing their research in an accessible way will be eligible for gift vouchers of $250. All types of research are welcome. You can find the informational poster with more information, as well as instructions for how to submit your work here.

3:15 pm: Presentation:

- **Meg Chappell,** Program Director, Empire Liver Foundation & Chair, Hep Free NYC Advocacy Committee
    - What does it mean to be an advocate?
        - Advocacy requires a lot of voices including clinicians, patients, allied health professionals and family members.
        - Advocates are influential in building policy, bringing change and removing stigma around hep B.
        - Testimony of people with lived experience is a powerful tool for advocacy around hep B.
    - How to begin the advocacy journey?
        - Relationship-building
        - Building relationships with local elected officials is important. They hold a lot of power and have a lot of sway in the budget. They also really like to hear from and engage with their constituents!
        - Understanding the legislative budget and calendars
        - Invite elected officials to your community events. It may take a few tries but be persistent. If they attend your events, take pictures and tag them on social media.
        - Be persistent and try to find members who resonate with your agenda on hep B so they can be champions of the cause.
        - Speak up at committee hearings: Find out when your elected officials are meeting and what's on their agenda and attend the meetings.
    - Creating tools and resources
        - Educate community members and elected officials on hep B.
        - Create scripts to reach out to elected officials.

        - Create toolkits that are useful for community members.
    - NY Advocacy Committee Goals
        - Share info with community members
        - Provide education to Hep Free NYC about the city budget and talking to elected officials
        - Members of Hep Free NYC are people from community-based organizations working on hepatitis.
    - Advocacy Resources
        - Advocacy Toolkit
            - Example: A script that talks about how to make phone call to local elected officials.
        - Advocacy Season Calendar
            - This gives information on what dates the community need to know so they can set up meetings, apply for funding, attend community hearings etc.
        - Heat Maps
            - Using Data to Action: The advocacy community partners with the health department, which provides epidemiological data (by neighborhood, city council district, census, geographical region, etc.) and this data is used to show how hep B and C affect districts council members represent. So, data is used for advocacy.
    - Successes
        - Very engaged advocacy leadership committee which creates resources for the community
        - Building relationships with council members pays off.
    - Ongoing challenges
        - Getting community members, especially people with lived experience to participate is challenging.
        - Building confidence in community members
        - Identifying funding for hep B work in challenging.
        - Translating educational materials into different languages is tough.
    - Takeaway messages
        - Understand the power of data and visualization and use it.
        - Advocacy can be intimidating but please be persistent!

3:35 pm: Q&A

For community organizations who may not yet be connected with their local health departments, what is the best way to do this?

- Starting with outreach and individual relationships is best in order to build up support for broader advocacy initiatives within a particular municipality. If you are interested in getting started, the NYC DOH can help with tips for initiating this type of relationship and building confidence and capacity in other health departments around the country through their model of innovative and robust data collection and dissemination for advocacy purposes (such as heat maps).

Can you speak to the comparative efficacy of phone calls versus other types of outreach (such as, for example, emails)?

- Calls are generally the most effective tool, but emails can be a good baby step. If you are nervous about making calls at first, it can sometimes be a good strategy to have a “Zoom party,” where many people get together on a Zoom call and work to make calls together!

3:45 pm: Member Updates – please feel free to email any updates or events to the listserv! Happy World Hepatitis Day coming up!

3:50 pm: Conclusion

Thanks so much for joining! Please keep us updated about research and programmatic news and let us know if you'd like to present at the next meeting!