



CHIPO: Coalition Against Hepatitis

for People of African Origin

Conference Call Minutes

Monday March 21st, 2022

3:00-4:00 pm EDT

Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82431105839?pwd=Ulg3a1dXbzhPQ1VNRXVPMXN1Z3g2QT09>

Phone: +1 646 558 8656

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

Beatrice Zovich (Hepatitis B Foundation), Yvonne Nartey (Cape Coast Teaching Hospital, Ghana), Kenneth Kabagambe (National Organization for People Living with Hepatitis B, Uganda), Peyton Thompson (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), Seun Aluko (Columbus Department of Public Health), Bilan Hussein (Columbus Department of Public Health), Monde Nyambe (Illinois Public Health Association), Elizabeth Koch (Columbus Department of Public Health), Farma Pene (NYC Department of Health), Kendra Pelz (VBI Vaccines), Arafat Bwambale (Great Lakes Peace Centre, Uganda), Tory Foster (NYU), Dana Cogen (Asian Health Coalition), Hibo Noor (Columbus Department of Public Health), Jane Pan (HBI-DC), Halimatou Konte (African Services Committee), Dauda (African Services Committee – let me know if I misspelled or missed part of your name!), Evelyn Botwe (National Black Leadership Commission on Health)

3:00pm: Welcome and Updates:

- Membership expansion and development: We are working to expand CHIPO's reach and better engage our current membership. We will discuss this more at the next meeting, since we ran out of time today, but please consider these three questions and feel free to reach out to Beatrice (beatrice.zovich@hepb.org) to share your thoughts!
 - What resources or actions would you like to see or hear more of from CHIPO?
 - What topics would you like to be addressed at upcoming meetings?
 - How could CHIPO better support you as a member?
- There are many upcoming advocacy events, including a Hill Day and opportunity to meet with legislators to discuss hepatitis B! Register below for upcoming events from the Hepatitis Appropriations Partnership:
 - Hepatitis and Maternal/Child Health Webinar (3/24 at 1pm ET): [Register here](#)
 - Overdose and Hepatitis Webinar (3/28, 2:30pm ET): [Register here](#)
 - Federal Perspectives (Week of 4/4 - details and registration link to come)
 - HAP Hepatitis Hill Day (04/11) – [Sign up here](#)
- We will be hosting a webinar to provide an overview and discuss preliminary results of our project examining disparities in hepatitis B and liver cancer knowledge and screening rates in highly impacted communities on Wednesday 3/23 at 4pm EDT (tomorrow!). [You can register to attend here.](#)
- On April 20th at 3pm Eastern Time, we will be hosting another webinar to address myths and misconceptions around hepatitis B in African immigrant communities. Stay tuned for a registration link!
- Hep B United has begun hosting monthly state advocacy calls on the second Tuesday of every month at 3pm Eastern Time. The next one will be on April 12th. Topics of these calls will include state budget/appropriations advocacy, state implementation of new ACIP

recommendations for universal adult hepatitis B vaccination, requesting state and local proclamations for Hepatitis Awareness Month, and updates and additions to state advocacy resource pages, among other topics. These calls are a great resource, and we hope you can join! [Register here!](#)

- We are updating the "Members" section on [our website](#) and would love to have more complete information for our different member organizations! If you would like to have your organization's description, website, and/or contact information listed on our website, please complete this [SurveyMonkey form](#), so we can list you!
- We have printed out many of the [resources](#) that were created for community health educators and community members, as part of the CDC's Know Hepatitis B campaign. If you would like any materials printed and mailed to you, please let us know using [this form](#).
- CHIPO now has now expanded to other social media channels! Please follow us on [Facebook](#) and [@CHIPO_HBV](#) on Twitter and Instagram.

3:10 pm: Presentation: *An Overview of Hepatitis B & C Advocacy Efforts Taking Place in Africa* **Presenters:** Dr. Yvonne Nartey, Internist, Cape Coast Teaching Hospital, Ghana and Mr. Kenneth Kabagambe, Founder and Executive Director of the National Organization for People Living with Hepatitis B, Uganda

- Presentation slides are attached.
- The burden for both hepatitis B and C seem to be particularly high in the northern part of Ghana, which is more removed from the capital and larger cities, and therefore has less access to testing and linkage to care.
- WhatsApp communication between physicians and community health workers, in addition to trainings about hepatitis B, have proven to be particularly innovative and helpful interventions for increasing general awareness and uptake of testing and vaccination.
- It appears that the government and national health insurance scheme can begin to absorb some of the costs of hepatitis testing and treatment.
- The Egyptian government has played a large role in providing hep C testing (goal is to reach one million people in Africa)
- There have been a lot of improvements to hepatitis reporting systems in Ghana.
- In Uganda, prevalence of hepatitis B remains high, but the introduction of the birth dose vaccine has proved helpful.
- The importance of mentoring and coaching health workers, as well as midwives, young people, and cultural and religious leaders about hepatitis B itself, as well as testing, prevention, and treatment cannot be overstated.
- Testing and prophylactic treatment among pregnant women remains low.
- The government in Uganda does fund hepatitis programs (around 3 million USD), but most of this goes to the vaccination of adults, for whom the full series completion rate is very low (only 5%). Introduction of the two-dose vaccine in Africa would be very helpful. The fact that the vaccine can also prevent liver cancer should also be emphasized. This is also why more focus needs to be placed on birth dose.
- The government does pay for test kits, but these primarily measure surface antigen and viral load, so if someone has recovered from an acute infection, they may end up receiving the vaccine because antibody tests are not completed. Liver function tests are also not typically paid for and people are sent to expensive and often inaccessible private health facilities to access these.
- Stigma and discrimination remain big problems in Uganda, and can even result in domestic violence, between an infected and non-infected partner.
- Gavi seems to have taken up hepatitis B vaccination again this year, so hopefully birth dose access and uptake will continue to expand with more resources and funding.

3:40pm: Questions

3:55pm: Member Updates

From Farma at NYC DOH: Email me (fpene@health.nyc.gov) to get invites for the CHIPO-NYC (NYC chapter of CHIPO coalition) committee meeting planned for April.

4:00pm: 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!

Next Coalition Call:
May 9th, 2022, 3pm ET/2pm CT