



National Task Force on Hepatitis B

www.hepbtaskforce.org

Meeting Notes

Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 (generally, every other 2nd Wednesday of the month)

Time: 3PM ET / 2PM CT / 1PM MT / 12PM PT / 9 AM Hawaii

Email: administrator@hepbtaskforce.org

Zoom Meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89093917018?pwd=VUVIV1JCcVIDaW1lVWV3ejl6T0dxUT09>

Meeting ID: 890 9391 7018; Passcode: 508912

Attendance (at or after 3:05PM) are as follows:

Executive Board Members (Officers):

- Co-Chair: Carol Brosgart, MD** (San Francisco, CA)
- Co-Chair: Richard So, MPH**, Executive Director, SF Hep B Free – Bay Area (San Francisco, CA)
- Secretary: Catherine Freeland, MPH**, Public Health Program Director, Hepatitis B Foundation (Doylestown, PA)
- Administrator (and notetaker): Amy Trang, PhD, MEd**, Founder and CEO, Social Capital Solutions (Northern VA)

Regional Directors:

- Northeast Regional Director: Dr. Ponni Perumalswami, MD**, Associate Professor, University of Michigan and Director of the Liver Clinic VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System (Ann Arbor, MI)
- Southeast Regional Director: Vacant**
- North Central Regional Director: Vacant**
- South Central Regional Director: Tzu-Hao “Howard” Lee, MD**, Assistant Professor, Baylor College of Medicine (Houston, TX)
- Western Regional Director: Thaddeus Pham**, Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator, Hawaii State Department of Health (Honolulu, HI)

Student Representation

- APAMSA students**

Board Advisors:

- Richard Andrews, MD, MPH, Board Advisor (Houston, TX)
- Moon Chen, PHD, MPH, Board Advisor; one of the original founders of the Task Force in 1997 (UC Davis; Sacramento, CA)
- Chari Cohen, DrPH, MPH, Board Advisor (Hep B Foundation; Doylestown, PA)
- Robert Gish, MD, Board Advisor (Robert G. Gish Consultants; San Diego, CA)
- Lu-yu Hwang, MD, Board Advisory (Department of Epidemiology, University of Texas HSC; Houston, TX)
- Karen Jobu, Board Advisor (Asian American Community Services; Columbus, OH)
- Amy Tang, MD, Board Advisor (North East Medical Services; San Francisco, CA)

General Members (open to all on listserv; please excuse any typos): Total Number of attendees: 19

- ✓ Julia Freimund, University of Washington School of Medicine (Seattle, WA)
- ✓ Jacki Chen, PhD (New Jersey)
- ✓ Alma Chaves, NYC DHMH (New York, NY)
- ✓ Umaima Khutan, NYC DHMH (New York, NY)
- ✓ Binh Tran, PharmD, APHF and Hep B Free LA (Los Angeles, CA)
- ✓ George Do, PharmD, APHF (San Diego, CA)
- ✓ Sandra Ashford, HBI (DC, MD, VA)
- ✓ Angeline Nguyen, HBI (DC, MD, VA)
- ✓ Sunny C.

Note: There may be some members missing from this list of attendees; please excuse any omission.

Agenda:

- 1) Welcome Task Force members
- 2) Note any changes to previous meeting's notes
- 3) Program / Project updates from Hep B Task Force members across the country
- 4) Discussion:
 - a. In-person hepatitis B CME vs. online options
 - b. Save the Date: In-person Liver Summit in Hawai'i – Saturday, November 23, 2024
 - c. Electronic Medical Records: Hepatitis B screening, testing, and vaccination issues for consideration

Meeting format:

- strategic discussions and resource sharing to assist members with their local work
- Note: majority of those on the call for this meeting was engaged in the collaborative discussions, so not everyone's name was specifically mentioned in the notes.

Notes:

- 1) Welcome: Introductions / Roll Call of Officers and Regional Directors (Amy Trang)

All members are familiar with each other; no introductions necessary

- 2) Note any changes to previous meeting's notes:

a) East Coast ECHO program has changes in their time and program offerings. Catherine will provide details.

- 3) Program / Project updates from Hep B Task Force members across the country (notes taken by FATHOM, an AI technology; hyperlinks removed to respect members' privacy. Email Amy Trang directly for details.):

Regional updates @ 0:00

Members shared updates on community testing efforts, education programs, and organizational changes in their regions, including a study on Hep B burden among immigrants in Hawaii and an article on it shared by Thaddeus: <https://www.hepfreehawaii.org/news/hep-b-among-immigrants-in-hawaii>.

Note name changes of the following Task Force member organizations:

- 1) APHF (formerly Asian Pacific Health Foundation is now American Pacific Health Foundation); their website is still: <https://www.aphfsd.org>.
- 2) HBI (formerly Hepatitis B Initiative of Washington DC is now Health Betterment Initiative); their website is still: <https://hbi-dc.org>. Check out the new website to learn more!

[@11:32](#) - **Julia Freimund**: University of Washington shared information about the status of the rollout of fourth edition hepatitis C online. Last November, they released module five; it was about treating all genotypes at the same time. They are working on treatment of key populations module, and then screening and diagnosis, including management of cirrhosis related complications. After that, there will be two more. By the end of the year, they hope to launch a test treat and cure module, which will take somebody from the beginning, like a

primary care provider doesn't know anything, and take them through everything. Hopefully, they will also be able to release an app for hepatitis C treatment sometime, maybe by the end of the year, if not the early part of the next year. No plans to replicate the app for hepatitis B yet.

[@13:21](#) - **Ponni V Perumalswami**: At the University of Michigan, they are continuing with their project to try to adapt to community health worker led model of viral hepatitis and liver cancer By testing and care in Michigan Asian communities; they have already presented some of the qualitative work at the AASLD Liver Meeting in November. They are now starting the surveys in the three communities and so we're actually recruiting community members from the Burmese, Chinese, Bangladeshi communities to complete a survey around determinants that were informed in parts from some of the qualitative work already done. The idea is that they will have a very deep understanding of all the determinants for each of the three communities and then sit with community leaders from each of the communities and talk about whether or not to adapt this community health worker led model and if so how to do it effectively. They plan to disseminate the findings from the qualitative work and then start looking at the survey data once they are collected (sometime later in the spring).

One focus group with about 2 external stakeholders across the state; interviews with a total of 11 community leaders from the three communities. Next is the surveys of 50 members from each community; the surveys are translated and field coordinators are utilized. Incentives will be offered.

Also, Dr. Ponni discussed the issue of TAF prescribing with Michigan Medicaid, i.e., provider restriction and then needing to resubmit prior to the resistance every few months that her team became aware to escalate it to the Medicaid formulary team. Now they have eliminated those restrictions that happened a few months ago. Dr. Ponni is sharing this to the group in case others were hearing of similar restrictions in their area. Make the case that we shouldn't have to submit prior authorizations each time for people who are lifelong treatment or expected to be on lifelong treatment and that we shouldn't have the prescriber restrictions and they removed them. Thaddeus will share this information with NASTAD.

[@18:27](#) – **Jacki Chen, PhD**: Jacki commented that he recently had an experience with that with interacting with other patients as well. It's happening all across the country and affecting patients. It's been a hassle for patients to get medication coverage. It seems to be insurance specific.

[@25:46](#) - **Sandra Marrero-Ashford**: HBI currently has two projects specifically related to hepatitis B, i.e., RELINK (administered by CDA Foundation) and a Delta Study with the University of Maryland. In both projects, they are actively calling hepatitis B (and C) positive patients to check on their linkage to care / treatment status and educate them about hepatitis Delta. They are emphasizing the importance of asking their providers for hepatitis Delta information and testing. Multilingual HBI team members working on the projects are also assisting the patients make appointments if they have trouble. The communities most affected are the Vietnamese, Mongolian, Chinese, and some African immigrants.

In-person training needs @ 28:27

Members discussed the continued need for in-person CME trainings for providers due to the ability to directly engage in case-based learning and build networks, though online trainings satisfy basic CME requirements.

Hawaii liver summit @ 35:46

Details were provided on an upcoming in-person liver disease summit in Hawaii following the AASLD conference, focusing on leveraging opportunities in Hepatitis elimination through case-based CME sessions. Save the Date:

Saturday, November 23, 2024. [Hawai'i CME Liver Summit @8:30AM HST — Hep Free Hawaii](#). Email Amy Trang directly if you are interested in attending; she is reserving room blocks. Additional information will be shared at a later date.

EMR engagement @ 38:52

Challenges of directly engaging EMR systems to include Hep B screening prompts were explored, given customization of each system and lack of standardization, though some successes at individual hospitals were noted.

USPSTF recommendation impact @ 58:03

Members agreed USPSTF universal recommendation for Hep B screening, expected in 2025 at earliest, could help address insurance reimbursement barriers and give momentum to push for EMR integration given precedent with Hep C and vaccines. Implementation efforts would continue until then.

4) Next Hep B Task Force Zoom meeting date: **Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 3PM Eastern Time /2PM Central/ 1PM Mountain/ 12PM Pacific / 9 AM Hawaii.**

- Other dates in 2024: May 8, 2024 (cancelled), September 11, 2024
- No Zoom call in November because of AASLD; meetings will resume in January 2025.

The National Task Force on Hepatitis B is a volunteer-based national coalition and is independent from the state and local Task Forces or coalitions. Everyone is welcome to join the National Task Force on Hepatitis B by registering through our website. [Newsletter - The National Task Force on Hepatitis B \(hepbtaskforce.org\)](#) or emailing administrator@hepbtaskforce.org. Promotion of the National Task Force on Hepatitis B is primarily through “word-of-mouth” and personal communication.

5) Meeting adjourned at 4:05PM Eastern Time.

Upcoming HBV ECHO sessions: Free CME

Gulf Coast (Texas Heart Institute with Baylor St. Luke Medical Center): [Project ECHO Interest Form \(bcm.edu\)](#)

- Every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month
- 12:00PM to 1:00PM Central Time
- To register: [Project ECHO Interest Form \(bcm.edu\)](#)

East Coast (Hep B United Philadelphia): Hepatitis B ECHO Meeting

- Every 3rd Thursday of the month
- 12:00PM – 1:00PM Eastern Time
- To register:
[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMpceChpiorEtOCXVew1sCEbX28G1almHIG#/registrati
on](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMpceChpiorEtOCXVew1sCEbX28G1almHIG#/registrati
on)

Other ECHO programs with HBV:

- The University of Washington Project ECHO Viral Hepatitis meets every Tuesday, 12 – 1:30 PM Pacific Time.

- To discuss if this ECHO program would be a good fit or if other training or consult options would better suit your interests/schedules, please email Pam Landinez, landinez@uw.edu.
- The sessions are geared towards individuals in the state of Washington and focus on hepatitis B or C is driven by the program participants.

Upcoming international conferences relating to HBV and other liver diseases:

- Asian Pacific Association for the Study of the Liver (APASL) 2024
 - Kyoto, Japan
 - March 27 – 31, 2024
 - Registration link: <https://www.apasl2024kyoto.org/>
- World Hepatitis Summit 2024
 - Lisbon, Portugal
 - April 9 – 11, 2024
 - Registration link: <https://www.worldhepatitisalliance.org/news/world-hepatitis-summit-2024-to-convene-in-lisbon/>
- EASL SLD Summit 2024
 - Geneva, Switzerland
 - September 19 – 21, 2024
 - No registration link yet.

Items shared via email: None