



National Task Force on Hepatitis B

www.hepbtaskforce.org

Meeting Notes

Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 (generally, the 2nd Wednesday of the quarterly month unless otherwise noted)

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

Email: administrator@hepbtaskforce.org

Zoom Meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81255351755?pwd=y1ve5Bx77MaQeA25Lw5vzoeIq2UBSt.1>

Meeting ID: 812 5535 1755; Passcode: 316125

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

- ✓ Amy Trang, PhD, Administrator for the National Task Force on Hepatitis B (DC, MD, VA)
- ✓ Binh Tran, PharmD, APHF and Hep B Free LA (San Diego and Los Angeles, CA)
- ✓ Lu-yu Hwang, MD, Center for Infectious Diseases at the University of Texas, School of Public Health at Houston.
- ✓ Stephanie Campbell, Dynavax
- ✓ Thaddeus Pham, Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator, Hawaii State Department of Health
- ✓ Bhavini Sotaa
- ✓ Haily, VACF (Fountain Valley, CA)
- ✓ Linda Puppolo, Maui AIDS Foundation (Hawaii)
- ✓ Robert Gish, MD (San Diego, CA)
- ✓ Kaley Konrad, Wyoming Department of Health, CDU
- ✓ Julia Freimund, University of Washington (Seattle, WA)

Total Number of attendees: 11

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 the previous meeting's notes (None)
- 3) Program / Project updates and open discussion from Hep B Task Force members across the country

Meeting format:

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

Notes:

Zoom AI Companion and Microsoft Copilot were used to create Meeting Summary for the Quarterly National Task Force on Hepatitis B Discussion Forum.

Quick recap

The meeting covered updates on various hepatitis B and C programs, including ECHO programs, storytelling initiatives, and outreach efforts across different regions. Participants discussed challenges related to funding, healthcare access, and vaccine recommendations, particularly concerning potential changes to ACIP guidelines and the potential role of private foundations in supporting treatments and vaccinations. The group concluded by planning upcoming events and maintaining their focus on sharing resources and information through the National Task Force on Hepatitis B, while acknowledging the difficulties of operating under the current administration's policies.

Next steps

- Hailey to share the link/flyer for the B Free OC project with Amy for inclusion in the newsletter and meeting notes.
- Amy to include information about the upcoming Hawaii Liver Summit and HepDART conference in the newsletter.
- Amy to share the Vaccine Integrity Project information in the meeting notes.
- Stephanie and Dynavax team to strategize on defending current hepatitis B vaccine recommendations against potential changes by the new ACIP.
- Julia to share updates on the release of the 3rd edition of Hepatitis B Online lessons on December 1st.
- Julia to post new mini-lectures on HBV reactivation and post-exposure prophylaxis in occupational settings in the coming weeks.
- Task force members to consider attending AASLD in Washington, DC and connecting with Amy for informal meetings if attending.
- Amy to resolve scheduling conflict for the October meeting and inform members of the final date; potentially moving the next meeting from Wednesday, October 16th to Wednesday, October 8th.

Summary

Hepatitis B ECHO Programs Update

Thaddeus shares information about an upcoming Hep B ECHO program in Hawaii starting September 8th, which will include patient perspectives and various medical professionals. Dr. Lu-yu Wang also highlights the Houston Viral Hepatitis ECHO program led by Baylor College of Medicine and the Hep B Foundation's "Be Informed" stories project, which provides a library of diverse patient experiences.

Resource Challenges in Patient Care

Amy and Dr. Hwang discussed the impact of limited resources on patient treatment, particularly for those losing insurance or not qualifying for Medicaid. They noted that a storytelling project supported by industry is unaffected by federal grant cuts, which primarily affect research projects at organizations or universities. Dr. Hwang also shared updates about the CDC reorganizing its HIV, hepatitis, STD, and COVID programs, though concerns remain about the capacity of health departments to function without adequate data collectors and outreach staff.

Hepatitis Programs and Outreach Updates

The meeting focused on updates and activities related to hepatitis B and C, including the progress of updating primary care guidance and the upcoming release of the third edition of hepatitis B online lessons by the University of Washington. Julia shared updates on mini-lectures and clinical challenges, while Amy highlighted the positive feedback on the clinical challenges feature. Hailey provided an update on the B Free OC project, which will launch next week with a focus on vaccine access and screening. Dr. Binh Tran discussed upcoming outreach efforts in San Diego, including collaboration with a mental health organization. The conversation ended with the introduction of Kaley, the new hepatitis and tuberculosis epidemiologist from Wyoming.

Hepatitis B Task Force Challenges

Dr. Hwang and Amy discussed the challenges and limitations faced by the Task Force under the current administration, particularly in terms of funding and priorities for disadvantaged populations. They highlighted the importance of maintaining connections with communities and leveraging resources, including partnerships with organizations like the Hepatitis B Foundation. Amy explained that the Task Force remains a volunteer-based national coalition focused on sharing resources and information about hepatitis B, utilizing quarterly

calls, a website, and newsletters. They also emphasized the commitment and strategy of promoting hepatitis B education through liver cancer prevention and the importance of widening their knowledge of other liver diseases.

Hepatitis B Vaccine Recommendation Concerns

The group discussed concerns about potential changes to hepatitis B vaccine recommendations by the ACIP, which recently underwent a major overhaul. Stephanie noted that ACIP signaled plans to review the hepatitis B birth dose recommendation, raising fears that this could lead to potential changes in both birth and adult vaccine recommendations, which had been updated to universal in 2021. Amy mentioned that she and Thaddeus serve on Hepatitis United's National Advocacy Committee and are monitoring the situation, though they are unsure how to approach it given the current administration's stance on vaccines. The group agreed to continue strategizing internally and identify potential champions to defend the current recommendations, while also ensuring insurance coverage remains stable for patients and providers.

ACIP Staffing and Vaccine Guidelines

The group discussed challenges with the new ACIP staffing and the potential establishment of an alternative science-based recommendation body for vaccine guidelines. Thaddeus shared Hawaii's efforts to frame public health discussions around economic benefits and explore workarounds for Medicaid workforce requirements, including creating nominal jobs for rural and homeless communities. Amy noted the administration's strategy of decentralization makes it difficult for national coalitions to maintain a unified front, while Dr. Hwang emphasized the U.S. system's reliance on private sector involvement rather than purely government solutions.

Healthcare Funding and Access Challenges

The group discussed funding challenges for healthcare, with Dr. Hwang highlighting the role of private foundations and pharmaceutical companies in supporting vaccines and treatments, while noting that government funding is limited under the current political climate. Amy acknowledged that both private and public sectors are facing difficulties in providing support. Linda shared her organization's work in hepatitis education and vaccination efforts, including a successful pride event where 4,000 people received vaccinations.

Liver Summit Planning and Updates

The group discussed the upcoming Liver Summit in Hawaii in December with Amy mentioning the availability of an inter-island scholarship for travel costs for those who live in neighboring Hawaiian islands around Oahu. Amy noted that the next meeting would be scheduled in October, though there might be a personal schedule conflict, and she would update everyone if it doesn't happen. The group agreed to continue using the Task Force for sharing information and resources, and Amy encouraged those attending AASLD as well as those who may be interested in participating in the Hawaii Liver Summit, which will be the day before HepDART in Hawaii.

Note: Other members who emailed that they could not join did not have any updates to share, but had hoped to have the opportunity to engage in the quarterly discussion and indicated that they look forward to the meeting notes.

This document is an edited transcript of a quarterly meeting of the National Task Force on Hepatitis B, led by Amy Trang, who serves as the administrator for the task force. The meeting format has been updated to an open discussion forum, allowing participants to introduce themselves and share their experiences related to hepatitis B and related health issues.

Other news to share via email:

- 1) American Pacific Health Foundation continues to organize health education and screenings for the community in San Diego. We collaborate with San Diego Indian American Health Center at the **Mental Health Summit** this Friday July 18, 2025, from 10 am to 2 pm (PDT) at 1936 Quivira Way, San Diego, CA 92109. We will provide **Hepatitis B education and screening** to participants as they are learning about raising suicide awareness and efforts to highlight Zero Suicide.
- 2) **2025 World Hepatitis Day Free Happy Hour**
WHERE: Gambit Lounge, San Francisco (581 Hayes Street)
WHEN: Thursday, July 24th, 2025 | 5-8 PM
Join us as we raise awareness and celebrate World Hepatitis Day! While World Hepatitis Day is July 28th, this year we will be celebrating Thursday, July 24th.

Come enjoy happy hour with complimentary drinks and hearty bites from 5:00-7:30ish at the awesome Gambit Lounge in Hayes Valley. Then we will walk over to city hall for a golden hour photo with City Hall lit up. Make sure you [register](#) as space is limited.

3) **World Hepatitis Day 2025 Community Forum (by World Hepatitis Alliance)**

Friday 25 July

12:30–14:00 (GMT+1) [Zoom](#)

Our beloved WHD Community Forum is back! Hear from guest advocates, people with lived experience, and community leaders as we share ideas, tackle challenges, and focus on our shared goals for the coming year. Featuring:

- **Rachel Halford** (President, WHA, UK) (Chair)
- **Supa Chantschool** (CEO, [HepB Companion](#), UK)
- **Karen Hoyt** (Author, Liver Loving Diet, www.ihelpc.com, US)
- **Chester Chimanda** (Executive Director – [Youth Movement for HIV/TB/SRHR Advocacy in Zambia](#))

4) Please save the dates and share info for [Project ECHO: Hawai'i Hepatitis B](#), which is coming soon!

This no-cost, CME virtual series will use **case-based learning** to enhance capacity of healthcare teams to **screen, manage, and treat hepatitis B in Hawai'i**. Over 8 weekly sessions, local and national experts will discuss a real case and present topics to support local healthcare team members, including physicians, nurses, pharmacist, care coordinators, and even patients. Sessions will be held every Monday (12-1:30pm HST) via Zoom, from September 9 through October 27, 2025. Registration will be available soon. Please email Heather Lusk with any questions at hlusk@hhhrc.org.

5) Please see the opportunity for advocacy training from the [Global Liver Institute Advanced Advocacy Academy](#). They are looking for **patients, caregivers, family members, and clinicians** to become new or stronger advocates. The training will be held on September 5-8, 2025 in Washington, DC. Travel scholarships are available!

6) We're calling on individuals, groups, and organisations around the world to [submit abstracts](#) to the World Hepatitis Summit 2026 that showcase impactful work driving the response to viral hepatitis – whether at national, regional, or community level. Submissions will be reviewed by independent peer reviewers and, if successful, be selected for an oral presentation, poster presentation, or a poster at the summit in **Bangkok, Thailand, 28–30 April 2026**.

Abstract submissions close on **Wednesday 17 September**.

7) **The Liver Meeting® 2025**

November 7 - 11, 2025

Walter E. Washington Convention Center (Washington, DC)

[Registration](#) is open!

8) We are pleased to announce **Hep-DART 2025** will be held at the Hilton Hawaiian Village from December 7-11, 2025 in Honolulu, Hawaii. This year will mark the 30th anniversary for the conference. The in-person meeting is designed for vibrant scientific presentations and discussion, as well as for new investigators to meet leaders in their field, benefiting from educational feedback on their work. The aim of HEP-DART 2025 is to assemble clinicians, researchers, basic scientists, nurses and physician assistants together to advance our knowledge of the ongoing drug development processes in the treatment of viral hepatitis (HBV, HCV, HDV, HAV and HEV), metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis (MASH), fibrosis, and hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC).

This CME-accredited workshop will uniquely blend the areas of biology, chemistry, pharmacology and clinical research to provide the scientific community with an increased understanding of the current and future challenges in therapeutics for liver infection, disease and cancer.

We hope to see you in December! Learn more at: [Hep DART 2025 — Informed Horizons Education Inc.](#)