Laying the Groundwork for a Hep Free NYC South Asian Hepatitis Initiative (SAHI) to Improve Awareness and Access to Care

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Background

- 230,000 people are estimated to be living with Hep B and 116,000 people are estimated to be living with Hep C in New York City (NYC); many are unaware of their status and are not in care.
- According to the World Health Organization, Hep B and C account for 420,000 deaths annually in South Asia.
- NYC has a large and diverse South Asian-born and diaspora population who face barriers to health care including limited English language proficiency, limited materials in primary spoken language, difficulty navigating complex health care systems, and ineligibility for health insurance.

Methods

- The NYC Health Department Viral Hepatitis Program formed a workgroup to plan a Hep Free NYC coalition based South Asian Hepatitis Initiative (SAHI) that would raise awareness, translate and develop educational materials, and develop community outreach and engagement plans.
- The workgroup developed goals for the South Asian Hepatitis Initiative, designed the logo and created a resources webpage.

South Asian Hepatitis Initiative Goals

- Raise awareness about Hep B and Hep C among South Asian-born and diaspora populations;
- Provide screening, immunization, referral services for Hep B, Hep C and liver disease in South Asian-born and diaspora populations;
- Build community and provider partnerships for Hep B and C prevention for South Asian-born and diaspora populations;
- Identify and reduce cultural and language barriers to immunization, screening, and treatment for Hep B, Hep C and liver disease

Results

- SAHI developed a culturally appropriate stylistic and health literacy approach which was used to produce new awareness and education materials: Hep B and C focused post cards, a Hep B and C two-sided pocket card and a one-hour presentation to be delivered at organizations serving the South Asian community.
- NYC Health Department hepatitis booklets were translated into Bengali, Urdu, and Hindi.
- Materials were distributed through the Hep Free NYC website and social media.

South Asian Hepatitis Initiative Hep C Materials

- Hepatitis C: Get Tested, Get Cured.
- Most people living with Hepatitis C (Hep C) do not have symptoms, and can still spread Hep C. Hep C can cause liver disease and cancer.
- You may have been exposed to Hep C from blood transfusions, medical procedures or used medical/injection equipment or needles.
- Protect Your Loved Ones. Ask Your Healthcare Provider About Hep C.

Translation of NYC Health Department Hep C Materials

- Booklets in Bengali, Urdu and Hindi

Conclusions and Discussion

- SAHI intends build upon the infrastructure of Hep Free NYC to improve hepatitis awareness and access to care in the South Asian community in NYC.
- Identification of low-cost care, culturally and linguistically appropriate clinicians, additional resources, and awareness ambassadors are needed to provide needed health education, testing and care in the South Asian-born and diaspora community.

2 South Asian Hepatitis Initiative Resource Page: hepfree.nyc/south-asian-initiative
3 Translation of NYC Health Department Hep B: The Facts Booklet in Bengali (Bengali) and Hep C and Your Liver Booklet in (Bengali), Urdu (Hindi)