

Promoting Hepatitis B Awareness and Screening in the Sacramento Vietnamese Community

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Hepatitis B Research Network, chartered by the National Institute of Health, reports that 25% of childhood acquired Hepatitis B (HBV) cases result in liver cancer and cirrhosis secondary to chronic HBV infection. Significant segments of the Asian/Pacific Islander (API) community, particularly recent immigrants from endemic areas, demonstrate a lack of knowledge about HBV transmission and the importance of knowing one's exposure status.

GOAL

In order to reduce the potentially devastating health complications associated with undiagnosed chronic HBV infection, the Vietnamese Cancer Awareness Research and Education Society (VN CARES) is collaborating with the Asian American Network for Cancer Awareness Research and Training (AANCART) to provide (1) awareness education, (2) appropriate serological screenings, (3) vaccination, and (4) linkage to long-term care for Vietnamese community members in Sacramento, CA.

VN CARES BACKGROUND & MISSION

BACKGROUND

Founded in 2001, VN CARES provides educational outreach and health services to the medically underserved Vietnamese community with the mission of alleviating cancer-related health disparities. Specifically, VN CARES offers free, culturally-appropriate cancer screening, primary care, and health education regarding common cancers for low-income Vietnamese community members in Sacramento.

MISSION & OBJECTIVES

- Inform the Sacramento Vietnamese community about cancers that are highly prevalent among Asian Americans – namely breast, cervical, prostate, and liver cancer.
- Educate the community about common cancer risk factors and benefits of undergoing recommended routine cancer screenings.
- Provide free cancer screenings as well as cancer-related health services to underserved members of the Sacramento Vietnamese community.



Medical students and undergraduate volunteers providing HBV education and screening at local health fair.

PROJECT DESIGN

DESIGN

A. Venue and Staffing

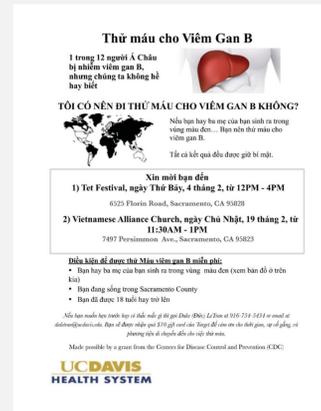
- Outreach to local community spaces that cater to a high density Vietnamese American individuals including temples, churches, community centers, and apartment complexes as potential venues.
- VN CARES provide medical student and undergraduate volunteers for language interpretation and Hepatitis B education while AANCART provide staff and supplies for specimen collection, processing and result notification.



Hepatitis B awareness and screening events at a local Vietnamese temple and community center.

B. Advertising and Publicity

- Event publicity flyers are distributed by VN CARES volunteers in areas with a high density of Vietnamese community members
- Event publicity advertisements are also posted in local Vietnamese newspapers and magazines.



C. Follow-Up Care Linkage

- Participants are notified by phone and physical mail of their screening results in their preferred language of Vietnamese or English.
- Participants who screened positive for HBV infection will be linked to receive the appropriate follow-up care through VN CARES clinic and Sacramento Collaborative to Advance Testing and Care of Hepatitis B (SCRATCH B) program.
- Participants with results of no prior HBV exposure will be placed on a running list for vaccination through the SCRATCH B program and Sacramento County Health Center.

D. Education and Awareness

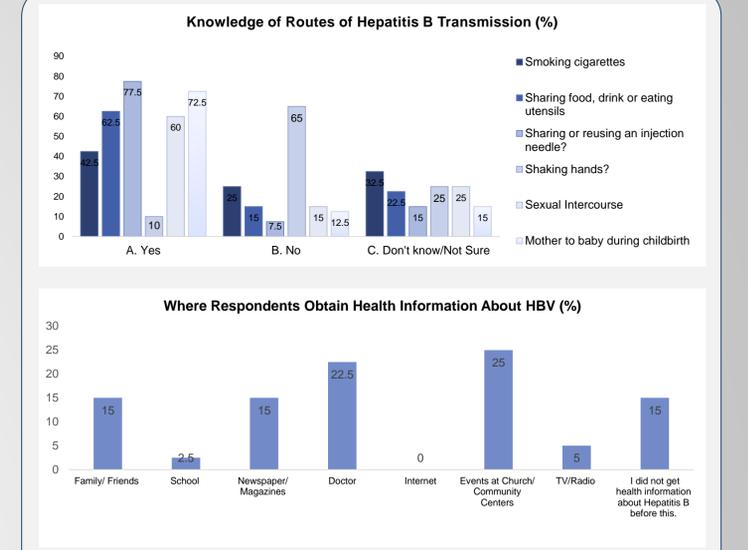
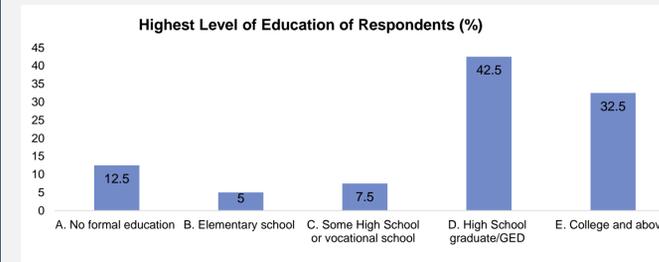
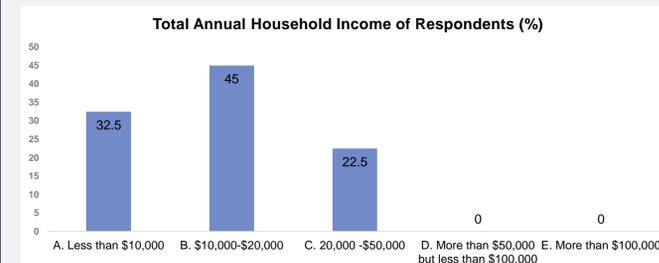
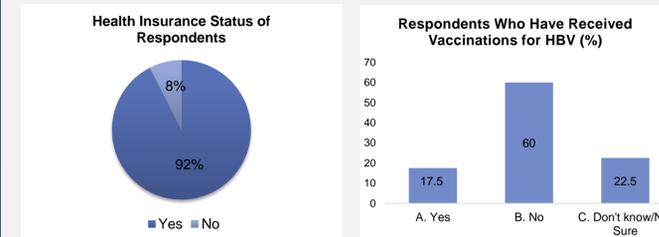
- VN CARES undergraduate volunteers will work with medical students to prepare and present medically-accurate and culturally-appropriate Hepatitis B educational materials adapted from the Asian Pacific Islander Cancer Education Materials (APICE) Web Tool.
- A survey will be administered, in either Vietnamese or English, to identify the prevalent barriers to HBV screening.



Medical student volunteers obtaining and checking Hepatitis B screening labs and surveys at monthly VN CARES clinic.

PROJECT PROGRESS

Hepatitis B Screening Results					
	Number of events	Infected	Immune	Non-immune	Total per year
2015	3	2	37	20	59
2016	6	7	56	25	88
2017	5	Pending	Pending	Pending	51
Total	14	Pending	Pending	Pending	198



CONCLUSION

Since June 2015, the project has screened 198 Sacramento Vietnamese community members for HBV. Although 92.5% of surveyed participants reported having health insurance, a striking 60% of participants reported not having received HBV vaccination, suggesting insufficient knowledge about care options and care utilization. Additionally, our data revealed multiple knowledge misconceptions, thereby motivating us to continue promoting HBV awareness. This troublingly low rates of HBV screening and vaccination necessitate that physicians of Southeast Asian patients should actively advocate for HBV screening and vaccination when indicated.

Our data also indicate the success of employing community resources to disseminate HBV information and care services with the Sacramento Vietnamese community. The top three sources that participants relied on for HBV health information were (1) events at community gathering places (e.g., temples churches and community centers), (2) their doctors, and (3) family and friends. 50% of surveyed participants learned about our events through their temples, churches, and community centers and 27.5% via magazines and newspapers. These results strongly support our utilization of community resources and venues to increase participation at HBV awareness and screening events.

FUTURE DIRECTION

Through additional data from our barriers to HBV screening survey, we hope to better assess the knowledge, linguistic, and socioeconomic barriers to HBV screening in an effort to adapt a more effective, targeted approach to enhance HBV awareness and screening in the Sacramento Vietnamese community. We will also continue to solidify our partnerships with established community organizations to pursue and expand our goals at larger scale community events.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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