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**“I WANNA LIVE  
A FULL LIFE”**

-syringe exchange participant in Honolulu

Source: [https:// www.hepfreehawaii.org/news/hep-c-voices-report](https://www.hepfreehawaii.org/news/hep-c-voices-report)

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**HEP FREE 2030:**

**THE HAWAII**

**HEPATITIS**

**ELIMINATION**

**STRATEGY**

**2020-2030**





# Hepatitis Burden in Hawai'i



**VIRAL HEPATITIS CAUSES  
LIVER CANCER**

Hepatitis B and C account for 2 out of 3 of liver cancer cases in Hawai'i



**LIVER CANCER IS HIGH**

Hawai'i has higher rates of liver cancer and deaths compared to U.S.

Sources: Wong et al, AJS 2015; CDC, Cancer Statistics 2018

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# Underserved Communities in HI

## HEPATITIS A AFFECTS HOUSELESS PEOPLE

In 2020, ~6400 houseless people at risk for hep A



## VIRAL HEPATITIS AFFECTS SEXUAL & GENDER MINORITIES

- 1 in 10 LGBT students have injected drugs (hep C risk)
- 6 in 10 LGBT students had condomless sex (hep B risk)



- More than 50% people identify as Asian or Pacific Islander
- ~1 in 5 people in HI are born outside the US
- DOH project data finds 6% Hep B positive among Micronesians

## HEPATITIS B AFFECTS ASIANS & PACIFIC ISLANDER PEOPLE (API)



Sources: Point in Time count 2020; HHDW; Census 2018, 2020

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# Hepatitis C in Hawai'i

## HEPATITIS C SCREENING IS RECOMMENDED FOR 80% OF HAWAI'I

- Adults over 18 years old should be tested
- 1.1 million people in HI should be screened



## HEPATITIS C AFFECTS PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS

- 67% of syringe exchange participants are Hep C antibody positive
- For participants under 30 years old, Hep C positivity is 31%



## HEPATITIS C AFFECTS PEOPLE WHO ARE/WERE INCARCERATED

- All incarcerated persons should be tested
- 1 in 4 incarcerated persons were Hep C positive in HI in 2010



Sources: Census 2020; Salek et al, IJDP 2017; Bauman et al, HJMPH 2010

# Local People, Local Stories



## PAIJ

"I want to be able to walk other people through it. I want to get people to the right supports that they need."

[bit.ly/PaijHFH](https://bit.ly/PaijHFH)



## KENSON

"We need to change the way we think about the situation or the disease or experience that we have, to be able to come out and speak publicly and educate others."

[bit.ly/KensonHFH](https://bit.ly/KensonHFH)





## JADE

"There's always hope...You can get out of this, and you can recover, and you can have a normal life."

[bit.ly/jadeHFH](https://bit.ly/jadeHFH)



## PETER

"By going to doctor visits, and [my mom's] treatments and stuff, getting her medications – it's cool, because I know it's all for love."

[bit.ly/PeterHFH](https://bit.ly/PeterHFH)



## STACIA

"I thought to myself, you know what, give yourself a chance. You never gave yourself a chance ever in your life. Just give yourself a chance. And so I did."

[bit.ly/StaciaHFH](https://bit.ly/StaciaHFH)



## EDDIE

"Whatever I can do every day, I do it. Because I refuse to lay down. I refuse to die."

[bit.ly/EddieHFH](https://bit.ly/EddieHFH)

# Newest Stories



## Richard

“For all those people out there, just know there are others out there to talk to.”

[Watch Richard's story here!](#)

## Jewell

“We need to get together as a community.”

[Watch Jewell's story here!](#)





# “Love in Translation”



- ❖ **Now out!** Okee’s story on Youtube– [English](#) or [Korean](#) subtitles
- ❖ Released for World Hepatitis Day on July 28, 2023
- ❖ **Watch video at** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vk8LfPIQYYQ>



**WE SAVE LIVES**





# ▸ HIGHER RATES

## of Hepatitis B Deaths (2000-2020)

### 3 TIMES HIGHER IN HAWAI'I

In 2019, Hep B mortality rate for Hawai'i was **1.17 deaths per 100,000**, compared to 0.42 per 100,000 for the United States.

### MALE RESIDENTS IN HAWAI'I

Hep B mortality rates for male residents in Hawaii were **up to 1.7 times state average** from 2000 to 2020.

### API RESIDENTS IN HAWAI'I

Hep B mortality rates for Asian and Pacific Islander (API) residents were **up to 1.4 times state average** from 2000 to 2020.

<https://health.hawaii.gov/harmreduction/newhep-b-mortality-article/>

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Hawai'i residents with  
hepatitis C  
**died 20 years earlier**  
on average, compared to rest  
of state from 2016-2017.

<https://academic.oup.com/cid/article/71/5/1149/5581721>

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Hawai'i has the **highest proportion of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Asian deaths** among HCV-listed deaths (2016-2017), compared to other states.

<https://academic.oup.com/cid/article/71/5/1149/5581721>



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**WE SAVE LIVES**





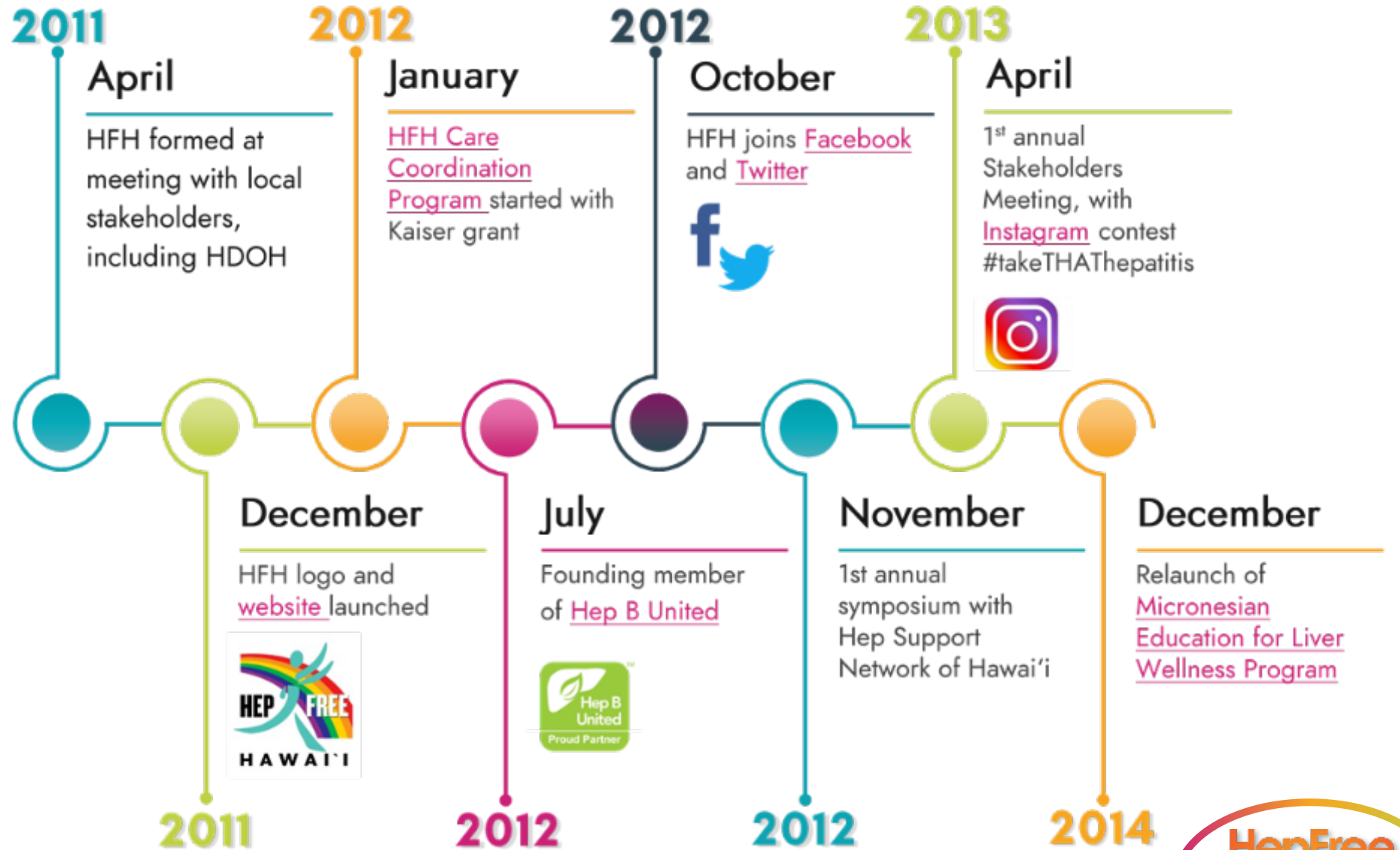


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HAWAII

**MORE THAN 10 YEARS TOGETHER**

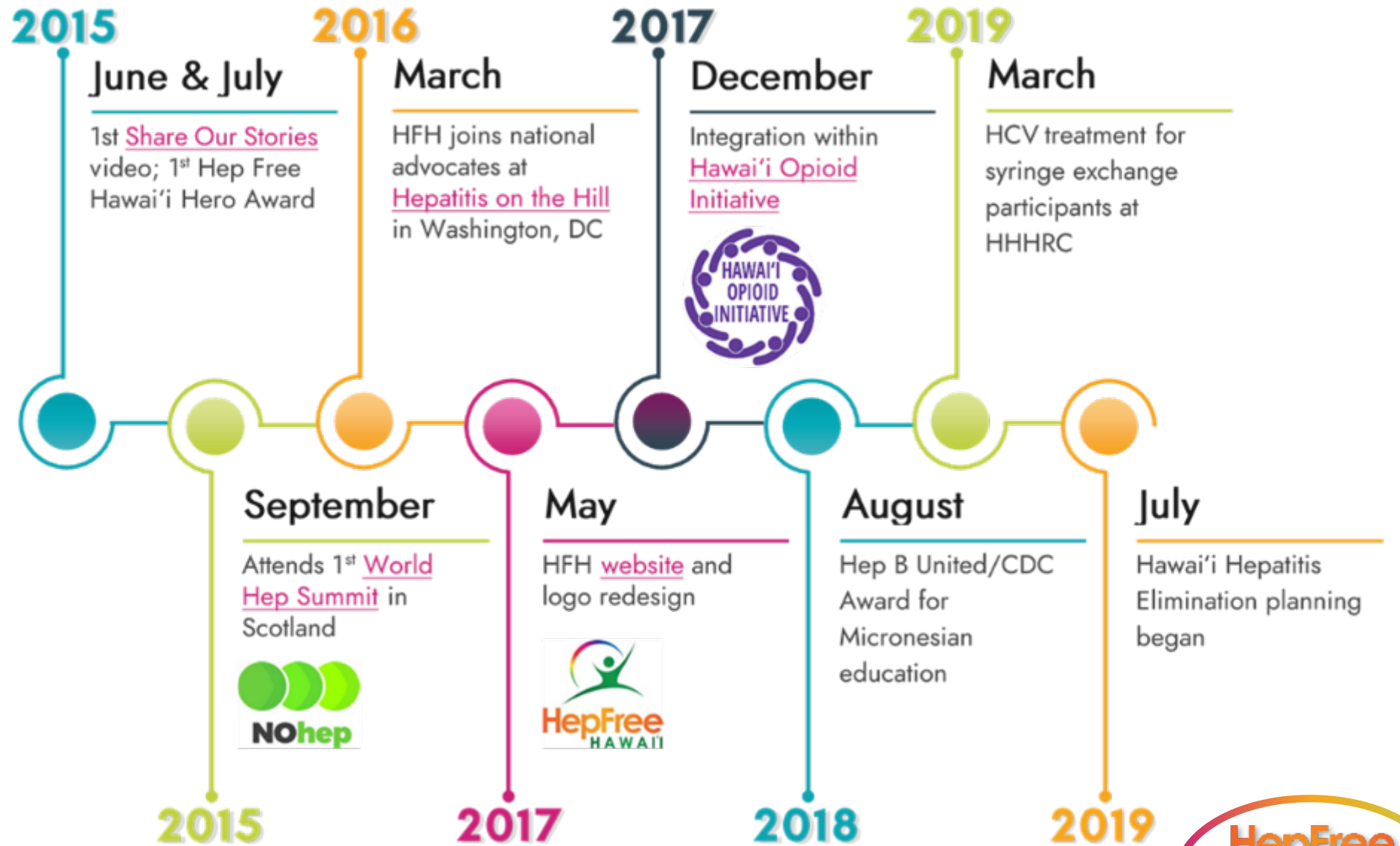
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# HFH TIMELINE



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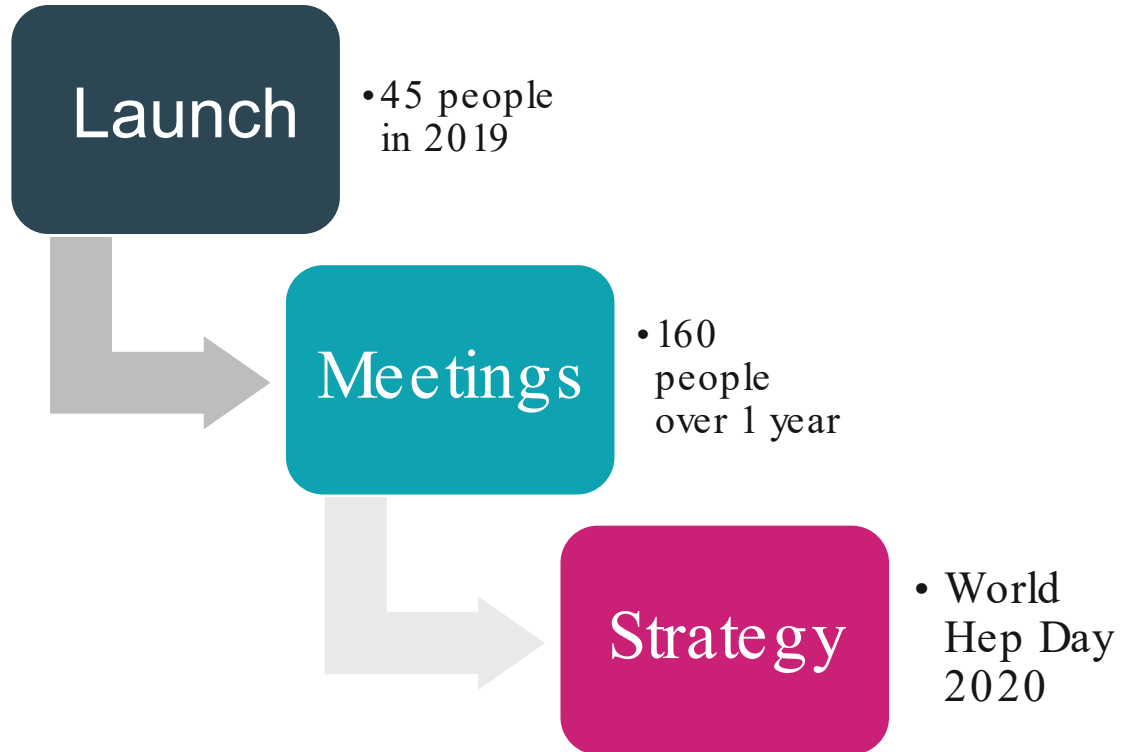
# HFH TIMELINE



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# Strategy Process



# Fail Fast and Amplify Good



## WHAT DOES MICRO-ELIMINATION MEAN?

Micro-elimination means that we will work on many different, innovative, community-driven projects at the same time. This allows us to tailor hepatitis elimination to the needs of each community and to change direction quickly if things aren't working.<sup>xvi</sup>

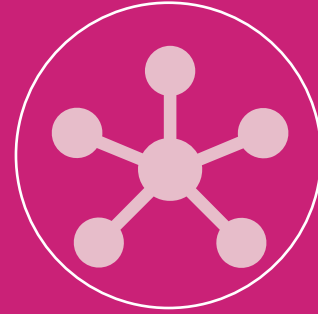
# Values in Practice



Harm  
Reduction



Social Justice



Intersectionality



Aloha





# Values in Practice

**"OUR FIGHT AGAINST HEPATITIS IS ALSO A FIGHT  
AGAINST STIGMA, DISCRIMINATION, AND INEQUITY."**

*- HFH Steering Committee Member, whose uncle had hepatitis B*



# Mission and Vision

## Mission

- To empower Hawai'i 'ohana to promote liver health and wellness
- To raise awareness and increase access for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of liver disease, especially viral hepatitis and related harms
- To erase stigma, social and racial inequity, and health disparities surrounding communities affected by liver disease

## Vision

- To create a Hawai'i free of hepatitis and other liver disease
- To promote liver health by integrating culturally appropriate services within a comprehensive system of care



# Hep Free 2030 Priorities





# Priority 1: Awareness and Education



**DIGITAL  
PRESENCE**



**CULTURAL  
ENGAGEMENT**



**HUB FOR  
EXPERTISE**



**HEALTHCARE  
EDUCATION**

**HepFree  
2030**

# Join Hep C ECHO

○ Case-based learning for providers and team members from experts

○ Mondays (12-1:30 pm HST) until November 20

○ 55-60 attendees at first two sessions

○ [Register](#) and [present a case](#)



The poster features a blue L-shaped graphic on the left and a background of light-colored sand. The title 'Hawai'i Hepatitis C ECHO' is in the top right. A blue banner contains the schedule: 'EVERY MONDAY STARTING AUG 28' and '12-Week Series 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM (HST)'. Below the banner is a paragraph of goals. A QR code is labeled 'Register Here'. Contact information for Thaddeus Pham is provided. Logos for Hawaii Learning Groups, Project ECHO, HepFree Hawaii, and the Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center are at the bottom.

## Hawai'i Hepatitis C ECHO

**EVERY MONDAY  
STARTING  
AUG 28** | **12-Week Series  
12:00 PM - 1:30  
PM (HST)**

Our goals are to support all primary care providers to prevent, evaluate, treat, and eliminate hepatitis C. We also aim to decrease the need for patient travel for hepatitis care.

**Register Here**

**For more information:**  
Thaddeus Pham, Department of Health  
Thaddeus.Pham@doh.hawaii.gov

In partnership with:



**SOCIAL MEDIA**

**WEBSITE  
REVIEW**

**LANGUAGE  
ACCESS**

**HepFree  
2030**





# Priority 2: Access to Services



IMMUNIZATIONS

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TESTING

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LINKAGE  
TO CARE

---



TREATMENT

---



PRESCRIBER  
CAPACITY

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# HCV Reflex at Labs

## Summary

### What is known about this topic?

Current hepatitis C virus (HCV) testing guidance recommends a two-step testing sequence for diagnosis of HCV infection. When an HCV antibody test is reactive and no HCV RNA test is performed, testing is considered incomplete. Historically, approximately one third of patients have incomplete testing.

### What is added by this report?

New guidance for completion of HCV testing supports operational strategies that collect samples at a single visit, and automatic HCV RNA testing on all HCV antibody reactive samples. Use of strategies that require multiple visits to collect samples should be discontinued.

### What are the implications for public health practice?

Automatic HCV RNA testing on all HCV antibody reactive samples will increase the percentage of patients with current HCV infection who are linked to care and receive curative antiviral therapy.

- ❖ [CDC guidance](#) on HCV reflex (July 2023)
- ❖ DOH following up with CLH and DLS to promote
- ❖ Discussed best practice with Ku Aloha Ola Mau after HCV ECHO session

**HBV VACCINES  
AT  
PHARMACIES**

**HCV/MOUD  
CARE COORD**

**HCV IN  
JAILS/PRISONS**

**HepFree  
2030**

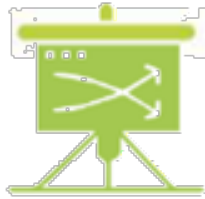
The logo for HepFree 2030 is located in the bottom right corner. It consists of the text "HepFree" in a bold, sans-serif font above the year "2030" in a larger, bold, sans-serif font. To the right of the year is a small circular icon containing a stylized human figure. The entire logo is enclosed within a colorful, multi-layered oval border.



# Priority 3: Policy at All Levels



**HEALTH DEPT.  
CAPACITY**



**POLICY  
INTEGRATION**



**INSURANCE  
COVERAGE**



**COMMUNITY  
ADVOCACY**



**PROVIDER  
ADVOCACY**



# Removal of HCV Prior Auths

Governor Josh Green, MD  
State of Hawai'i  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
CC: Hawai'i Med-QUEST Division; Hawai'i Department of Health

RE: Delayed Implementation of Med-QUEST Memo for Curative Hepatitis C Medications

Aloha Governor Green,

On behalf of Hep Free Hawai'i—a local coalition of over 100 partner agencies dedicated to hepatitis elimination in Hawai'i—and the **signatory organizations listed below**, we request your help to ensure that MedQUEST and its contracted managed care organizations abide by the MedQUEST memo entitled "[Direct Acting Antiviral \(DAA\) Medications for Treatment of Chronic Hepatitis C Infection](#)" (#QI-2227, FFS 22-08 dated December 30, 2022).

**Hepatitis C is a preventable cause of death and cancer for Hawai'i**

Hawai'i residents diagnosed with hepatitis C have a **lower life expectancy by 20 years**,<sup>1</sup> compared to residents without this diagnosis. People living with hepatitis have equal or higher risk of developing liver cancer, compared to lung cancer in active smokers.<sup>2</sup> Viral hepatitis causes more than 75% of all liver cancer cases in

❖ Confirmed no policy changes at health plans or MedQUEST, despite memo from Dec 2022

❖ To send letter to Governor, Dept. of Health, MedQUEST

❖ **REQUEST: Sign on by Sept.**

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**LEGISLATIVE  
BRIEFING**

**STATE HEALTH  
IMPROVE PLAN**

**OPIOID  
SETTLEMENT  
FUNDS**

**HepFree  
2030**





# Priority 4: Equity in Everything



**SHARED  
LEADERSHIP**



**PEOPLE  
FIRST**



**STIGMA  
REDUCTION**



**DATA  
EVALUATION**

# Micronesian Education



- ❖ Talk Story with Women of the Pacific and the partners in August
- ❖ Six couples and 7 others attended at Ala Moana Park.
- ❖ Requested by couple living with hep B who wanted friends and family to learn.

**STORYTELLING**

**PWUD  
COMMUNITY  
ADVISORY**

**TRANSGENDER  
MATERIALS**

**HepFree  
2030**



# Priority 5: Data for Decision-Making



**DATA TO ACTION  
(CARE CASCADES)**



**CROSS-CUTTING  
EVALUATION**



**SURVEILLANCE  
INFRASTRUCTURE**



**EQUITY  
METRICS**

# Voices of PWUD

- ❖ DOH report featuring “talk story” interviews w PWUD on HCV treatment
- ❖ Developed infographic with DOH
- ❖ <https://www.hepfreehawaii.org/news/hep-c-voices-report>



## “I WANNA LIVE A FULL LIFE”

### WHAT PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS SAY ABOUT HEP C CURE



In June 2023, the Hawai‘i Department of Health released a landmark report that highlighted insights from people who use drugs to guide hepatitis C elimination programs. Such qualitative research aligns with “Equity in Everything”, a chief priority of the Hep Free 2030 strategy ([www.hepfreehawaii.org/hep-free-2030](http://www.hepfreehawaii.org/hep-free-2030)).

## VOICES OF LOCAL PEOPLE

### On Meaningful Hepatitis C Treatment

#### USE SYRINGE EXCHANGES

Syringe exchanges are **essential hubs for hepatitis C treatment** and other related services.

“Just come to the same spot where the van is. There could be a doctor here who could prescribe.”

#### PROVIDE INFO, REDUCE STIGMA

People who use drugs are **concerned about their health**, although stigma and misinformation persist.

“I feel like they think that like people that have it are like, dirty.”

#### SHORT, DIRECT MESSAGES

People prefer **visual, directive messaging**, especially print materials at syringe exchanges.

“Listen...Hep C is curable!”; “Things have changed. Read this.”; “Look. It’s curable!”

#### FOR MORE VOICES, SEE THE FULL REPORT

<https://health.hawaii.gov/harmreduction/people-who-use-drugs-talk-about-hep-c>



Updated July 31, 2023



**DOH  
SURVEILLANCE**

**FQHC CARE  
CASCADES**

**MORTALITY  
REPORTS**

**HepFree  
2030**



# Elimination Projects List

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Project Description	Strategic Direction	Status	Success (Progress)	Challenges/Needs	Updated By	Updated on
1	Social Media Committee	Digital Presence	Current	Social media and YouTube/TikTok are great places to reach targeted groups which are often the under 30 crowd and especially the 18-24 who use this platform often.; promote Tiktok on multiple platforms #TikTokTuesdays;	Action: Send pics/Tiktok dances/ideas for social media to amartin@hhrc.org (include names of individuals in the photo, what they're doing, and any tags)ACTION: Join Awareness Committee on 2nd Tuesdays at 11	Anika	9/14/2021
3	Expanding the HCV treaters pool	Healthcare Education	Current	reformatting) 3. language rights video w Marshallese narration (pending) 4. language rights video w/o narration (youtube)•co-branding w OLA/HFH increases touchpoints for more awareness 5. OLA participate in HEP monthly Marshallese Talk Story Session. 6. update postcards in language; create Chuukese materials including video	translations available through separate DOH program: bilingual access led by Val Rose - MAHALO!;	Thaddeus P	9/14/2021

[CLICK HERE](#)

[://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1J9-e8THlvQsRPdy-jfQtdhkkUT-QzWqO/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=117538010742265597442&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1J9-e8THlvQsRPdy-jfQtdhkkUT-QzWqO/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=117538010742265597442&rtpof=true&sd=true)

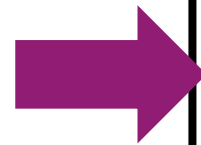


# Conferences & Publications

➤ Review (and suggest edits) to list at <https://www.hepfreehawaii.org/publications>

➤ Global! [World Hepatitis Summit Abstracts](#) due September 29

➤ Local! [Hep B Screening among Long-Line Fishermen in Honolulu Harbor](#)



## Results of Pilot Hepatitis B Screening Program among Honolulu Harbor's International Long-line Fishermen.

Rod Neil David BS<sup>1</sup>; Thaddeus Pham MPH<sup>2</sup>; Jackson Jacobson BS<sup>1</sup>; Henry Huynh BS<sup>1</sup>; Craig Nakatsuka MD<sup>1</sup>.  
<sup>1</sup>. Seafarers Medical Clinic; <sup>2</sup> HepFreeHI; HI DOH ;<sup>4</sup>. Kaiser Permanente

### BACKGROUND

- For over 30 years, the Hawai'i long-line fishing industry has employed crews from Southeast Asia, mainly from the Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam.
- South East Asia has a high prevalence of chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) infections
  - Indonesia at 7.1% [2] Vietnam at 8%[3], and the Philippines at 16.7%.[1] To address this,
  - Hep Free Hawai'i, the Hawai'i State Department of Health, Seafarers Medical Clinic (SMC), and Kaiser Permanente partnered to provide on-site HBV education, screening, and appropriate follow-up (vaccinations, referral to in-country treatment) to fishermen in Honolulu Harbor.

### OBJECTIVE

- The purpose of this project is to analyze and assess the prevalence of HBV within SMC patient population and provide culturally competent Hepatitis B and vaccine education to the longline fishermen of Hawai'i

### METHODS

In September 2022, 83 participants were recruited from SMC's patient population. Participants' blood samples were collected and screened for HBV using the following tests: hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg), hepatitis B surface antibody (anti-HBs), and hepatitis B core antibody (anti-HBc).

Test and Result	Interpretation
HBsAg — Positive Total anti-HBc — Positive IgM anti-HBc — Positive Anti-HBs — Negative	Acute Infection
HBsAg — Negative Total anti-HBc — Positive Anti-HBs — Positive	Resolved Infection
HBsAg — Negative Total anti-HBc — Negative Anti-HBs — Negative	No exposure- Offer Vaccination

Table 1: HBV Blood Collection Interpretation

### RESULTS/ DISCUSSION

A total of 84 fishermen participated. All participants identified as male, with 16 originating from Vietnam, 43 from Indonesia, and 24 from the Philippines. Among those tested, there was an HBsAg positivity of 2.4%.

### CONCLUSION

Our findings revealed unexpectedly low HBsAg positivity among the fishermen. Among this patient population, there was high vaccination compliance. Translators were present who were proficient in the participants' native languages and played a pivotal role in delivering education regarding hepatitis and vaccinations. This underscores the significant role of translator liaisons in facilitating patient care in non-English speaking communities. Some noteworthy challenges arose due to unique work schedules requiring frequent voyages at sea. This posed a hurdle in providing continuity of care for fishermen to receive follow-up and additional vaccine doses.

### LIMITATIONS

- Difficulty executing Follow-ups due to conflict with Fishermen's work schedule.
- Limited availability of Vietnamese, Filipino Liaison during recruitment and follow-up execution.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank our Indonesian, Filipino, Vietnamese Liaisons/Translators : Aunty Rini, Ratna, Cathy, Mutiara, Joanne and Chris Chow and HepFreeHI for providing us with materials for this pilot HBV Screening.

### REFERENCE

- Wong, S. N., Ong, J. P., Labio, M. E., Cabahug, O. T., Daez, M. L., Valdelon, E. V., Sollano, J. D., Jr, & Arguillas, M. O. (2013). Hepatitis B infection among adults in the Philippines: A national seroprevalence study. *World journal of hepatology*, 5(4), 214-219. <https://doi.org/10.4234/wjgh.v5.i4.214>
- Wijayanti, T., Spahr, R., Turjadi et al. Seroprevalence of HBV infection among health-care workers in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. *BMC Infect Dis* 18, 279 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12879-018-3190-x>
- Flower, B., Du Hong, D., Thi Kim, H. V., Pham Minh, K., Geskus, R. B., & Day, J. (n.d.). Seroprevalence of hepatitis B, C and D in Vietnam: A systematic review ... The Lancet Regional Health. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanwpc/article/PIIS2666-6065\(22\)00083-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanwpc/article/PIIS2666-6065(22)00083-9/fulltext)

Figure 1: Flow chart for obtaining Patient Consent.

Figure 2: Patient Demographics.

Figure 3: Data Results

Figure 4: % (Initial Dose) Vaccine Compliance per Ethnicity

Figure 5: % Vaccine Series Compliance per Ethnicity



# CALL TO ACTION

**JOIN  
COALITION**

**JOIN A  
WORKGROUP**



**GIVE  
FEEDBACK**

**USE YOUR  
VOICE**

**FOLLOW ON  
SOCIAL MEDIA**



**1. Increase Awareness** about the problem



We need to make sure people and decision-makers know that hepatitis is an issue. Hawai'i has one of the highest rates of liver cancer in the U.S., and the leading causes are hepatitis B and C!

**2. Increase Access** to needed services



We want to make sure that everyone gets access to hepatitis vaccines, testing, care, and treatment, even if they cannot pay. People also need services like harm reduction, housing, substance treatment, and more!

**3. Increase Advocacy** at all levels



Your voices matter! Let's make sure that people who decide on funding and policies hear what is most important for our communities. Tell your story, and help us make change!

**4. Promote Equity** in everything we do



Hepatitis affects so many people. To really eliminate hepatitis, we need to also talk about homelessness, racism, stigma, immigration health, LGBTQ rights, and more!



**5. Use Data** to make decisions



Let's get moving, and get data! We will use data to help us know who to help and show if things are working. Remember: data not only includes numbers but also stories.

We need everyone's help! You don't have to be an expert. Your voice always matters. Join our efforts to eliminate hepatitis in Hawai'i by 2030.

Contact us at (808) 436-5884 or [hepfreehawaii@gmail.com](mailto:hepfreehawaii@gmail.com). Visit us at [www.hepfreehawaii.org](http://www.hepfreehawaii.org) or follow @hepfreehawaii on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Youtube.

**NOT MUCH TIME?**  
 Read our onepage summary  
 of the plan here!







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