



Hepatitis Health Report

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World Hepatitis Day 2013 in Palm Beach County

By Patty Taggart

On July 28th the global hepatitis community united around the world to raise awareness and fight stigma. This was a chance to shine a spotlight on hepatitis and an opportunity to gain recognition for the disease on a global level. Last year this was accomplished by setting a Guinness World Record™ by getting the largest number of people to perform the “see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil” (commonly referred to as the “three wise monkeys”) actions within 24 hours at multiple venues around the world. This theme was chosen to highlight that viral hepatitis is being ignored around the world.



This year, the World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA) hopes to break that record by showing growing support for the disease, prevention and control.

At the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) in Palm Beach County, the STD and Adult Immunization teams participated in this worldwide effort to promote hepatitis awareness. Palm Beach got in touch with the World Hepatitis Alliance and have done some outreach events. To see some of our photos, visit the WHA gallery at: www.worldhepatitisalliance.org/.



Hepatitis affects over 500 million people. It could affect you.

This is **hepatitis...**

World Hepatitis Day: 28 July
www.worldhepatitisday.info



For the grand finale, the team offered hepatitis B and C testing at the Pavillion in Bicentennial Park near the Riviera Beach Marina on Saturday, July 27, from 3:00 pm-7:00 pm. Starting at 7:00 pm, FDOH staff got a group of people to perform the "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" actions.



These three wise monkeys helped raise awareness for viral hepatitis.

Note: The next issue of *Hepatitis Health Report* will feature World Hepatitis Day photos and articles from around the state.

Programmatic Information About Hepatitis Prevention in Florida

By Phil Reichert

The Florida Department of Health, Hepatitis Prevention Program is a statewide adult (18+ years) hepatitis prevention program that includes surveillance, counseling, testing, vaccination, awareness, education and outreach.

Hepatitis A, B and C antibody testing and hepatitis B vaccines are available through the county health departments. Although hepatitis A vaccine is available in limited supply, the Hepatitis Prevention Program is de-emphasizing it in favor of hepatitis B vaccine. There are several reasons for this shift in priorities.

Hepatitis B continues to be a burden in adults, whereas hepatitis A cases usually occur in limited outbreaks among specific populations (such as: day-care centers and adult living facilities). Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continues to prioritize the provision of hepatitis B vaccine to eligible adults. Most Americans 30 years and younger are protected from hepatitis B because they were vaccinated as infants or children.



Phil Reichert

Reported Cases of Viral Hepatitis in Florida

Hepatitis A cases reported in 2012 (Jan-Dec): 92

Hepatitis B (acute*) cases reported in 2012 (Jan-Dec): 246

Hepatitis B (chronic**) cases reported in 2012 (Jan-Dec): 4119

Hepatitis C (acute*) cases reported in 2012 (Jan-Dec): 103

Hepatitis C (chronic**) cases reported in 2012 (Jan-Dec): 23,475

Based on current national estimates, there are approximately 310,000 Floridians living with hepatitis C. This is a disease where symptoms may not be evident for twenty years or more after infection.

**Acute cases of hepatitis B and C represent individuals who are known to have been infected within the past six months of the report.*

***Chronic hepatitis B and C cases represent individuals who have disease of unknown duration, but longer than six months.*

NOTE: All hepatitis A cases are acute.

Viral Hepatitis Testing

The state laboratory performed 22,826 hepatitis C tests in 2012. Of this number, 9% were positive.

Hepatitis A and B Vaccine Delivery

From January through December 2012, the Hepatitis Prevention Program provided 18,884 hepatitis A, B and combination A/B vaccines to adults (18+ years of age) at risk.

You can find out more about viral hepatitis at: www.flahepatitis.org or www.cdc.gov/hepatitis.

Approximate Costs of Treatment for Hepatitis C

By Cindy Kruty



Cindy Kruty

Note: Cindy Kruty, the new grant specialist with the Hepatitis Prevention Program, researched the costs of treating hepatitis C in the U.S. Here are some bullets and web-sites that can be used to estimate these costs:

According to the United States' Department of Veterans Affairs, out-of-pocket costs for hepatitis C standard-of-care treatment range from \$15,000-\$20,000 for 48 weeks of therapy.¹ This estimate is for Pegylated interferon and ribavirin only and does not include monthly office visits and blood work.

According to HCV Advocate, the 48-week course of treatment is estimated to be at least \$25,000, not including medical appointments, lab tests or drugs to manage any side effects.² Again, this does not include the cost of protease inhibitors (telaprevir and boceprevir) approved for use with Pegylated interferon and ribavirin, which can add about \$26,000 to \$49,000 to the total cost of treatment.

Sofosbuvir is an upcoming treatment which is currently in the final phase of Food and Drug Administration (FDA) trials. According to U.S. News and World Report, potential costs will not be released prior to its approval.³

Hepatitis C Research and News states that, "as new treatments and screening guidelines are introduced, spending is estimated to grow by 32.3% in 2013 and 56.3% in 2014. Experts note, however, the cost of new treatments is not yet apparent."⁴

An article by The Wall Street Journal, when speaking of new treatments in development aimed to eliminate interferon and only take as little as 12 weeks, states that "the price for the projected drugs hasn't been set, but could be higher than the current treatment."⁵

According to Investing Daily, the FDA approved two new drugs in 2011 called "protease inhibitors" which cut the treatment time from 48 to 24 weeks. The cost of Victrelis (boceprevir) by Merck is \$26,400-\$48,400 per course of treatment, requiring 12 pills daily. And Incivek (telaprevir), by Vertex Pharmaceuticals, costs \$49,200 per course of treatment, requiring 6 pills per day. Each of these drugs is used along with Pegylated interferon and ribavirin, for a triple-drug therapeutic regimen.⁶

CBS News: Sacramento reported on an inmate who received hepatitis treatment. Speaking of two new drugs, boceprevir and telaprevir, the article estimates the cost to add up to more than \$50,000 for each course-of-treatment.⁷

Please note that this information shows costs for medication only. Doctor's visits, blood tests and medication to handle side effects are not included in these costs. According to Dr. Jeffrey Beal, Medical Director for the HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Section of the Bureau of Communicable Diseases, total current costs to treat one patient for hepatitis C could exceed \$100,000.

¹<http://www.hepatitis.va.gov/provider/reviews/hcv-treatments.asp>

²http://www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/factsheets_pdf/Treat_prep.pdf

³<http://health.usnews.com/health-news/news/articles/2013/04/23/experimental-drug-for-hepatitis-c-promising-studies-show>

⁴<http://hepatitisresearchandnewsupdates.blogspot.com/2013/05/hepatitis-c-treatment-challenged-by.html>

⁵<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323293704578330712442353712.html>

⁶<http://www.investingdaily.com/15590/hepatitis-c-drug-companies-and-all-oral-treatment-a-20-billion-market/>

⁷<http://sacramento.cbslocal.com/2013/05/13/50000-prisoner-prescription-inmates-get-expensive-hepatitis-c-treatment/>

Florida Viral Hepatitis Council

By Phil Reichert

The Florida Viral Hepatitis Council (VHC) met in Tampa on May 30-31. The VHC was established in 2004 to encourage and promote the combined efforts of dedicated, skilled individuals and organizations to reduce the growing burden of viral hepatitis on Floridians, their families and communities. The VHC provides advice and guidance to the Florida Hepatitis Prevention Program on issues related to viral hepatitis. It is responsible for writing the *Florida Hepatitis Prevention Comprehensive Plan*, which includes program goals and objectives.

This was the first face-to-face meeting since 2009 and proved to be a very productive venture. Among the biggest accomplishments of the group members was identifying barriers and gaps in services and conducting a needs assessment. Some of the greatest barriers included inadequate access to higher risk populations, limited resources and providing consistent surveillance services.

Goals and objectives for the upcoming 2014-2016 comprehensive plan were discussed, along with topics for future position papers. A goal that is being considered is to increase treatment opportunities, in light of the upcoming implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Michelle Scavnicky, Director of Education at The AIDS Institute (TAI), gave an update on the HIV/AIDS Prevention and Patient Care Planning Groups. She also described how TAI is incorporating work on healthcare issues related to HIV/AIDS, including viral hepatitis. In 2012, Brian Anderson, the former hepatitis coordinator for the state of Virginia, was hired by The AIDS Institute to assist with increasing hepatitis education, training and capacity building programs.



Standing, L to R: Guests & Council members Rick Mendiola, Susanne Crowe, Mike Jolly, Dr. Phillip Styne, Dr. William Chen, April Crowley & Phil Reichert.

Sitting, L to R: Barbara Rush, Enid Santiago-Cruz, Pat Simmons, Donna Dowling & Michelle Scavnicky.

HepatitisMain

By Gordon Licata, Director

HepatitisMain, based in St. Petersburg, is an organization made up of volunteers with years of experience in assisting people who are diagnosed with viral hepatitis. We are always working to provide education and resources for those infected with viral hepatitis.

HepatitisMain can help you explore:

- ◆ Treatment Options
- ◆ Research Options
- ◆ Dietary Issues
- ◆ Support Meetings
- ◆ Viral Loads (In fact, we were able to complete 108 viral loads on June 26th and 27th!)



Gordon Licata with April Crowley on the steps of the old Capitol in Tallahassee on World Hepatitis Day in 2008.

HepatitisMain is designed to specifically fit the needs of individuals diagnosed with hepatitis who live in the St. Petersburg/Tampa area. This is made possible by partnering with local physicians, nurses, local county health departments, providers of lab results, research institutes and support meeting facilitators.

For more information, call 727-323-7500, email HepatitisMain@yahoo.com or visit our website at www.HepatitisMain.com.

Survey Reveals Discrimination with Hepatitis C

<http://www.hepatitisnews.com/>

A new survey from [hepatitisnews.com](http://www.hepatitisnews.com) finds that almost two thirds of people with hepatitis C have experienced stigma and discrimination. The survey also found low awareness of the virus. Four out of ten respondents admitted that they had never heard of hepatitis C until they were diagnosed.

While 87% told their family and friends about their diagnosis, over 70% said that people they told had a limited understanding of how the virus is transmitted. One respondent said: "Education and open discussion are needed within the media, much as there has been with mental illness and depression."

Almost eight out of 10 felt there is not enough help or support for people living with the hepatitis C virus.

[Hepatitisnews.com](http://www.hepatitisnews.com) is an online community and news resource for people living with hepatitis C. The site features tips on living well with the virus, details of resources and support groups worldwide, expert advice and regular news and features on hepatitis C and liver disease.

To read the report in full, visit: <http://www.hepatitisnews.com/>

hepatitis  news

Division of Disease Control & Health Protection

Broward CHD Hepatitis Campaigns

By Marie E. McMillan

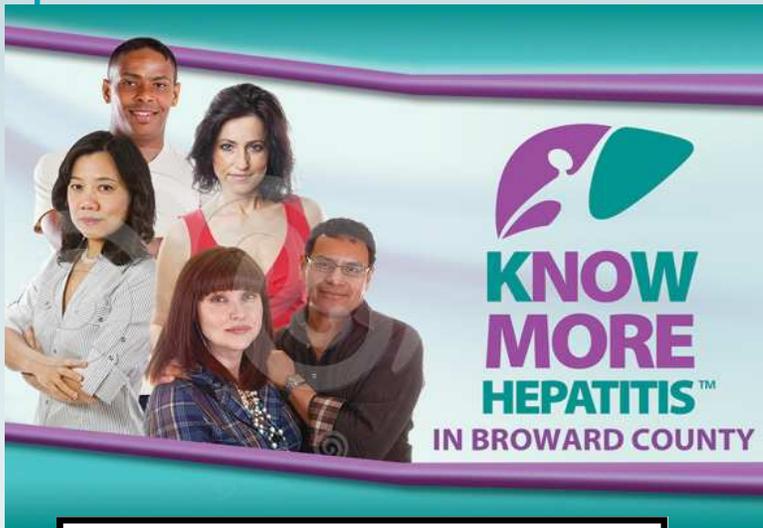
The Department of Health in Broward County has adopted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) *Know More Hepatitis* and Baby Boomer campaigns to target Broward's at-risk populations.

Below are the palm cards (front and back) Broward developed and distributed throughout its clinics, outreach events and community-based venues.

In addition, the cards were reformulated into 11 x 17 placards which have been placed on Broward County buses. Each theme appears on bus routes that target specific populations, especially those born from 1945-1965, and will run for a minimum of four weeks.



Marie E. McMillan



Front of *Know More Hepatitis* palm card

Are you at risk for hepatitis?

You should get screened if you:

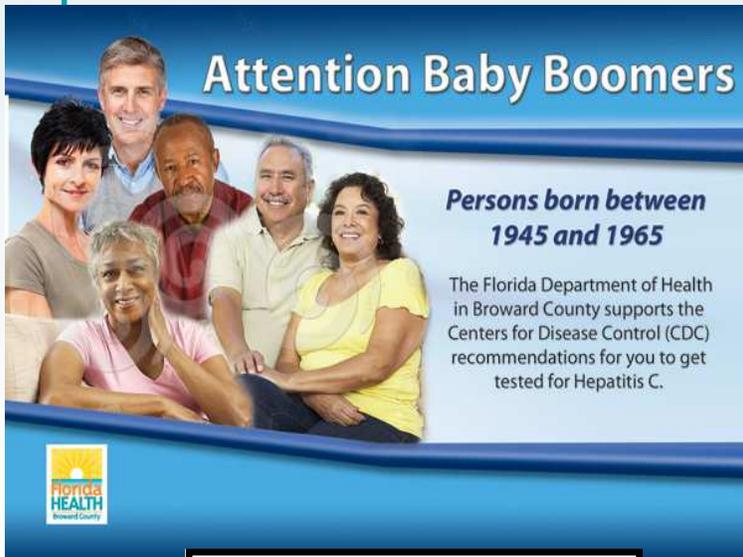
- Received a blood transfusion before 1992.
- Received clotting factors concentrates before 1987.
- Ever injected and/or inhaled drugs (even once).
- Ever had an abnormal liver enzyme test.
- Received an organ donation before 1992.
- Had hemodialysis.
- Had unprotected sex with multiple sex partners.
- Had tattoos, body piercing or permanent make up.
- Ever had exposure to human blood (in a job, accidentally or in the military).

GET THE FACTS • GET TESTED • GET VACCINATED
HEPATITIS SCREENING

(954) 467-4705



Back of *Know More Hepatitis* palm card



Front of *Baby Boomer* palm card

Getting Tested...

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has recommended a one-time hepatitis C (HCV) test for anyone born between 1945 and 1965 (Baby Boomers). The one-time test will identify 800,000 people who can then seek medical care and a treatment cure. More than a million Americans are infected with HCV and most - 7 out of 10 people - do not know they are infected. Talk to your medical provider about being tested.

Don't put off getting tested for HCV~

It just might save your life!

THE FACTS

- HCV is spread by blood-to-blood contact.
- Most people infected with HCV do not have symptoms and may not realize they are sick until the liver has become damaged.
- In those people who have symptoms - the most common are fatigue (light to severe), stomach aches, joint and muscle pain, brain-fog and many other symptoms.

- The hepatitis C virus mainly infects the liver.
- If left unchecked - HCV can lead to serious health problems including cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), liver cancer and death.
- Hepatitis C is curable in 8 out of 10 people who take HCV medications.
- The hepatitis C test is a simple blood test.



Back of *Baby Boomer* palm card

Hepatitis B Palm Cards

By April Crowley

The Hepatitis Prevention Program, with help from FDOH graphic artist Kathy Franklin-Smith, recently created a palm card encouraging adults to get vaccinated for hepatitis B.

Palm cards are a great way to convey a message in a powerful, economical manner. These particular cards are printed on two sides and can easily fit into a wallet, someone’s pocket, backpack or purse. Sometimes people are hesitant to walk around in public with a brochure or fact sheet that shouts out the word “hepatitis.” Palm cards are a bit more discreet.

Because palm cards are small, they are easy to store. They are also very effortless to transport when you are doing outreach. These hepatitis B palm cards are tri-folds (consisting of three parts) which makes them even more convenient.

The front panel features an antique and somewhat unconventional timepiece that says, “It’s time 2 B vaccinated for hepatitis B.” The back panel offers a space where county health departments can provide local contact information to their community. The inside panels provide facts about hepatitis B (e.g., how it’s transmitted and why it’s important to be vaccinated). There is also an area for people to keep a record of their vaccinations.



These two photos (above and below) should help give you an idea of what the completed palm card looks like.



In the future, we are hoping to provide another palm card about hepatitis C. If your organization would like to distribute these palm cards (they’re free), please contact Jessi Embleton at 850-245-4139 or email her at jessi_embleton@doh.state.fl.us.

Shine a Light on Marcia Woodham

By April Crowley

Not only is Marcia Woodham the Hepatitis Coordinator for the Department of Health in Okeechobee, she's also the nurse for the Immunization, TB and Epidemiology programs.

A typical day for her includes investigating reportable diseases, directly observed therapy (DOT) visits for TB clients, administering vaccines, following up on animal bite reports and rabies cases, checking on completion treatment for STD clients, and being the backup for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). Marcia is also an active member of the Project Public Health Ready and Strategic Planning teams.



Marcia Woodham

Marcia earned her LPN certification in 1994 from Indian River State College and worked as a dialysis nurse for the next 10 years on a per diem basis. During that time, Marcia also worked in a pediatric clinic and in a correctional facility.

In 2003 she started in public health as a school nurse. In 2007, there was a TB exposure in the county jail and the epidemiology department needed help with the contact investigation, so Marcia signed up. Little did she know that this would lead to her current position. Marcia feels like she was "baptized by fire" into public health and continues to learn and grow everyday.

Marcia was born and raised in Okeechobee. She is happily married and has two daughters, one stepson, one stepdaughter and five grandchildren.

Welcome Cindy Kruty

By April Crowley

The Hepatitis Prevention Program recently hired Cindy Kruty, MPH, to help support hepatitis B vaccine delivery to adults, 18+ years old, who are at risk for hepatitis B and have not previously been fully vaccinated. The counties Cindy is working with are Clay, Duval, Miami-Dade, Orange, Polk and Sarasota.

Cindy is a graduate of Florida State University (FSU) in Tallahassee with a Bachelor of Science degree. She started out majoring in Marine Biology and then switched her major to psychology. After interviewing a public health professor for a project she was working on, she became fascinated with public health and went on to earn her master's degree in May of 2012. Prior to working at the Department of Health, Cindy worked at FSU as an admission officer and was in charge of the Telecounseling Office.



Here is the Hepatitis Program staff in Tallahassee.

Standing, left to right: Donna Wheeler, Phil Reichert and Cyndena (Dena) Hall.

Sitting, left to right: Jessi Embleton, Cindy Kruty and April Crowley.

Hepatitis Health Report is brought to you by the Bureau of Communicable Diseases, HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Section at the Florida Department of Health.